

ARRL Historical Committee Report July 2018

Document #18

Background

Activities of the ARRL Historical Committee in 2018 were conducted by volunteers working to organize, identify, catalog, and display the historical documents and artifacts at ARRL headquarters. Bob Allison, staff liaison, manages this cadre of volunteers who donate their time and labor to this important endeavor. This group also receives and restores donated vintage equipment. They design and implement interesting historical exhibits in the lab and front lobby of ARRL headquarters. The lobby exhibit is periodically refreshed with a different display and continues to gather positive comments by visitors. Some of the most significant ARRL historical artifacts are displayed in the CEO conference room.

In order to provide access by all ARRL members to the rich history of ARRL, our volunteers have created a virtual museum on the web site at: <http://www.arrl.org/arrl-heritage-museum>

A history page is found at: <http://www.arrl.org/ham-radio-history>

Unfortunately these web pages are not easily found by selecting items on the ARRL home page. For example, to get to the heritage museum one must look at the bottom under "Technology", then select "ARRL Lab", and finally "ARRL Heritage Museum". Finding the history page is even more obscure as one must type "History" as a key word under the "web site search" at the top of the home page.

Recommendations

The Historical Committee recommends the following improvements be implemented using the donated funds designated for historical preservation:

1. Implement necessary changes to the ARRL web site to improve the accessibility to the historical documents, photographs, and historical articles. It should be made obvious and easy for the visitor to access this information.
2. Include the requirements for development of an improved ARRL Virtual Museum in any future planned upgrade of the ARRL web management system. It must be made easy for our volunteers to manage the content.
3. Plan for expanded display space for historical artifacts in any future remodeling projects. The intention is not to drive a remodeling project but to include additional display space in conjunction with other remodeling objectives. One possibility is described in the activity report.

Activity Report

A detail report of the volunteer group's work in 2018 and prepared by Michael Marinaro, WN1M, follows:

The Historical Group at Headquarters

Report of Activities for first half 2018



Howard Mason (7BK) and Carl Petersen the principal operators at the Byrd 1928 Antarctic Expedition - Little America - radio shack call-sign WFA. Petersen used Mason's straight key to announce to the world the first over flight of the South Pole.

This is the subject of the upcoming HQ Lobby Exhibit of the WFA straight key – SOUTH POLE ADVENTURE – our tenth consecutive Lobby Exhibition.

The Historical Group activities at HQ continued uninterrupted. Specifically the group conducted the following core activities:

ON GOING ACTIVITIES

- Document Archive maintenance (Phase I)–*Word* and *Access* programs.
 - Secretary Minutes - 8 file drawers
 - *Word* programmed - 140 file drawers
- Executive Correspondence and Report Archive (Phase II) maintenance.
 - *Access* programmed - 140 archival boxes, 1500 line entries, 12 fireproof file drawers and a safe. Program is in accumulation phase.
- Media-slide, video and film collection supplementation.
- Vintage Technical Library maintenance – shelving 700 *Excel* recorded volumes..
- Exhibitions and displays.
 - Lobby-vintage equipment displays. We are in the process of mounting the tenth consecutive lobby display featuring the straight key used at the Byrd Antarctic expedition of 1929.
 - Laboratory Museum section – a portion of equipment collection and period operating station setups are arranged for viewing.
 - CEO Conference Room curated - Unique items of historical significance displayed including recent addition of Hiram Percy Maxim's key.

- *Heritage Museum* Equipment (hardware) Collection.
The contents are securely stored and being grouped by category. Items eligible for removal are being identified. More than 400 individual items have been recorded in an *Excel* database.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- *Heritage Museum* on-line.
Embedded within the web site, in the Laboratory section, are posted linked formal articles relating to the early history of amateur radio, the League, and significant events. Ten articles and a Power Point presentation have been posted as the Historian's View. This is a continuing work which will simultaneously present articles with detail information concerning the current Lobby exhibit and ongoing affairs. We are seeking more prominent recognition within the structure of the site.
- The Master Locator.
A directory or finders guide to the location of all the paper material which has been archived or preserved by the Historical Group has been prepared. It includes the various data bases in use as well as physical storage. It is primarily for staff use. The Discovery Guide will be published internally. This comprehensive five page guide records and reveals the extent of the Group's accomplishments over the past ten years.
- Gates Transmitter Restoration.
A Gates model BC-1T, one KW, AM Broadcast Transmitter is being displayed in the *Heritage Museum* section of the Laboratory. The unit is on loan from the Vintage Radio and Communications Museum of Connecticut (VRCMCT). It has been restored to operating condition on the 75 meter and 160 meter bands. This restoration was accomplished by museum volunteers with the assistance and guidance of AM enthusiast Tim Smith, WA1HLR.

DONATIONS

- The *Heritage Museum* Collection recently accepted a number of vintage test equipment from the estate of Paul F. Godley, 2ZE, (1889-1973) famed as the monitor of the 1921 Transatlantic Tests. The equipment was used by Godley when assisting Edwin H. Armstrong in establishing the first FM radio network – "The Yankee Network". Background information is being accumulated and exhibition contemplated.

ON GOING PROJECTS

- Continuation of the identification and cataloging of the 35mm slide collection. The collection will be centralized on a separate hard drive with those currently on an external systems. Two database programs are being evaluated to select the one most suitable for our application.
- The recently discovered register of the *first* members of the ARRL initially maintained by Secretary Clarence D. Tuska is still under study. We are attempting to establish the

correlation of entries with the listings in the first edition of *The List of Stations* of 1914. So far this approach has not revealed any cross relationships. We suspect that this register may be of only the stations initially qualified to participate in the relay trunk line system but have unable to verify this conjecture.

MAJOR PROPOSAL

The Group has proposed to management the creation of a physical *Heritage Museum* and Visitors Center designed and constructed to professional standards. This concept involves dismantling the current underutilized technical library attached to the Laboratory and revamping the adjoining display areas. The library contents would be melded into the equipment area and adjoining sections of the warehouse. The Library space would be completely redecorated and repurposed.

Although funds are available for this project we were requested to proceed gradually as other physical projects take precedent and disruption is to be avoided.

A PERT chart of project steps has been prepared. In anticipation of relocating the retained portions of the Library content an *Access* database is being created.

This is a long term project to be undertaken in stages while our other activities are underway.

THE GROUP

The Historical Committee team at Headquarters presently consists of four principals – Bob Allison, WB1BCM Assistant Laboratory Manager who is liaison to the Committee; Michael Marinaro, WN1M volunteer Historian, Archivist and Curator and a member of the Committee; Jonathan Allen, K2KKH volunteer curator of the Museum equipment and Archivist; and Pete Turbide, W1PT volunteer technical restorer and maintainer of the Museum and donated equipment. There are other occasional participants but regrettably no permanent additions

Organizationally, Allison and Marinaro inform the CEO and Historical Committee of their activities and interact directly with department managers to accomplish the prescribed objectives of the team on behalf of the Committee. The team aggressively pursues volunteer recruits as succession, continuance and knowledge of the activities is of concern.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rod Blocksome, K0DAS, Chair
Tom Frenaye, K1KI
Dick Norton, N6AA
Bill Hudzik, W2UDT
Bob Allison, WB1GCM, Staff Liaison
Michael Marinaro, WN1M