

**The Central Texas Amateur Radio Club meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Bell County Communications Center, 798 West Avenue O, in Belton**

## From the Editor's Desk...

Rick Murray, K6WXA

August has been said to be, "the summer's last messenger of misery" but for ham radio, it's probably the hottest month of the year! Coming up on the 1st and 2nd is the ARRL UHF Contest, then on the 15th and 16th is the International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend - a chance to put something unusual in your log. The ILLW has always held a special place to me as I've operated several times from inside the Point Vicente Lighthouse, when I was back in California. Google it sometime and at least look at the images. On that same weekend, it's bedlam on the bands during the North American QSO Party - a great opportunity if you're new to HF and want only to make brief contacts and put a few new one's in the log. Then coming up on the weekend of the 7th and 8th, is the Austin Summerfest, hosting the summer meeting of the Texas VHF-FM Society and the ARRL Texas State Convention. More on all of these events, further on.

August is also the month where we have to select a Nominations Committee to mull over candidates for our club officers for the coming year. We'll discuss what positions are up for grabs and we'll need to ask for three volunteers to make up the committee, only one of which, may be a sitting board member.

It would also be nice if we could have one volunteer - no real work involved, to research and at least think about, maybe even coordinate, a place where we could have our club Christmas Dinner get-together, which would be on December 1st.

Then later on in the month, on August 18th, we're going to try out having a club meeting over the air. This was a concept that was tried out by a radio club back in 1924. The idea was very popular with our members when it was proposed, so we'll give it a try. This on-the-air meeting is not meant to be a meeting in-lieu of a regular meeting, just something different to try out. More on this further on.

Our next club meeting is on Tuesday evening, August 4th, at 7:00 PM, at the Bell County Communications Center and I hope you all get a chance to make it.

Hope to see y'all then, as well as on the air!

73 de Rick, K6WXA

*The air is full of things you shouldn't miss.*





"Now we present once again, *Backstage Wife*, the story of Mary Noble, a little Iowa girl who married one of America's most handsome actors, Larry Noble, matinee idol of a million other women — the story of what it means to be the wife of a famous star."



Vivian Fridell portrayed Mary Noble on *Backstage Wife* in the 1930s and early 1940s

***Backstage Wife*** first aired over WGN on the Mutual Broadcasting System, August 5th, 1935 and was a show that centered around the life of Mary Noble.

Mary was a small town girl that came to the big city of New York, and married Larry Noble, a very prominent actor, and a matinee idol of a million other women. Mary had to compete with hussies, jezebels, and schemers that made an art form for the shenanigans. Life was really hard for Mary, though she would not admit it. Deceit, jealousy, rage, avarice and amnesia beset her as she suffered her through her marriage with her fickle husband.

This soap opera drama aired until January 2nd, 1959. You can listen-in again to the plight and times of Mary by visiting: [https://archive.org/details/Backstate\\_Wife](https://archive.org/details/Backstate_Wife)



The Central Texas Amateur Radio Net meets every Thursday at 8:00 PM on the N5ZXJ repeater, on 145.310(-) PL 123.0 Join Us!

August NCS and Back-Up NCS Schedule

August 6th:	August 13th:
Net Control: KE5ISN	N5JLL
Back-Up: N5JLL	K6WXA

August 20th:	August 27th:
Net Control: K6WXA	KD5FJF
Back-Up: KD5FJF	W5VEX

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## August UHF Contest

Contest period runs from 1800 UTC, August 1st through 1800 UTC August 2nd on all authorized amateur frequencies of 222 MHz and up. For further details please visit: <http://www.arrl.org/august-uhf>

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## Austin Summerfest

Once again the capitol city is the place to be August 7th & 8th, at the Crowne Plaza Austin, 6121 N. IH-35 in Austin for the summer meeting of the Texas VHF-FM Society and the ARRL Texas State Convention. Talk-in frequency is 146.940(-) PL 107.2 and call for W5KA. For more information please visit: [www.austinsummerfest.org](http://www.austinsummerfest.org)

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## International Lighthouse & Lightship Weekend

Not a contest, but this operating event runs from 0001 UTC, August 15th to 2359 UTC August 16th. For more info on this event, please visit: <http://illw.net>

## New Refrigerator Has Built-In Radio Receiver

*Modern Mechanix - August, 1937*



A refrigerator equipped with a built-in radio has been placed on the market. This has been accomplished by having the radio mounted in the top of the refrigerator, and having the refrigerator constructed so that a top equipped with radio may be substituted for one without.

It has been said that the housewife spends sixty per cent of her time in the kitchen. Now by having a radio installed in the refrigerator, she may listen to her favorite program while working.

Because most radios are placed in the living room, usually the housewife, when she is in the kitchen, finds it necessary either to miss a program or turn the volume up to a point where it is objectionable to the rest of the family. With this popular combination the housewife may work and listen at the same time.



## North American QSO Party

Contest period is from 1800 UTC, August 15th to 0600 UTC August 16th, on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters. This is a great opportunity for anyone working towards their Worked All States or for anyone new to the HF bands, as the contestants aren't interested in "ragchewing" but rather, in making contacts and moving on. For more info, visit: <http://ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf>



## The First Radio Commercial

Imagine what radio was like in the summer of 1922, broadcasting's problem was that it had much to give but nothing to sell. But, where other stations had spoken only for themselves, WEAF spoke for no one. It had no cause to promote, no interest to represent. Its only purpose was to trade time for money. The station's first customer was the Hawthorne Court Apartments in Jackson Heights, New York.

At around 5 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, **August 28th, 1922**, an officer of the company made his sales pitch... *"Friend, you owe it to yourself and your family to leave the congested city and enjoy what nature intended you to enjoy. Visit our new apartment homes in Hawthorne Court, Jackson Heights, where you may enjoy community life in a friendly environment."*

With those words, modern broadcast advertising was born.

WEAF understood from the beginning exactly what it was that radio could sell. It was time. A communication system for hire.

# Quist Quiz

Your Editor grew up as a kid in the 1960's in southern California when rock and roll was king, and the station to listen to it on was "93-KHJ" (930kc AM, Los Angeles).



*At the mic at KHJ - The Real Don Steele*

One of the legendary voices over the air from KHJ, was 'The Real Don Steele' who had a reputation for playing a sound byte between records of a woman screaming: "*Tina Delgado is alive, alive!*" Sadly, Don Steele passed away on August 5th, 1997, without ever revealing the meaning behind his moniker.

Any clues?



## CTARC Special Meeting \* *On-the-Air* \*

In last month's newsletter, I ran an article about a radio club who in 1924, held a club meeting on the air. This idea was very popular among our members who thought maybe we should try this a couple of times a year.

So... On August 18th, at 8:00 PM, we will try the same thing over the N5ZXJ repeater. The date was selected as it's toward the middle of the month, and the time was selected so as not to interfere with people who might want to check-in on other nets on the same evening.

This will essentially be a 'closed net' limited to CTARC members only. At the conclusion of any and all club business, time permitting, visitors may be invited to check-in.

Net Control will be conducted by the club President, if he's available. If not, the Vice President will preside over the air and call the roll. The Secretary will note attendance and take applicable notes. There will be no Treasurer's report over the air for obvious reasons. Comments from club officers will be invited first, then from the membership. Any new business, old business, announcements, thoughts or ideas as well as motions may be brought up.

Lastly, we'll invite comments from any visitors - perhaps this meeting on-the-air may spark an interest to any non-member(s) listening-in.

*Note...* we will still have our regular club meeting at the Bell County Communications Center on August 4th at 7:00 PM.





IZ2DPX will be active from Seychelles as **S79DPX** between August 9th and the 23rd. QSL via his home callsign.

Special event station **K5R** will be active from 1400-2000 UTC, August 29th, in observance of the 10th anniversaries of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. Operations take place on: 7.200, 7.250, 14.155 & 14.255 MHz. QSL via WB5NET.

**VK4AAC** is active from Kangaroo Island signing **portable 5**, through the 25th of August. See his QRZ.com page for QSL info.

VE3LYC will be active from Melville Island, Canada, 3-11 August as **VYØM**. QSL via his home call.

F5LCI is active from Djibouti until the middle of September as **J2ØJM**. QSL via his home call.

**IZ8EGM** will be active from Monaco 7 - 15 August signing **stroke 3A**. QSL via his home call.

A group of South African's will be active from Dassen Island, 15 - 16 August **ZS1FUN**. QSL requests go via email to: [zs1fan.sa@gmail.com](mailto:zs1fan.sa@gmail.com)

**IW2NEF** will be active from Naxos Island in the Cyclades Archipelago until August 6th, signing **stroke SV8**. QSL via IK2DUW.

ZL2AGY will be active from Rarotonga Island, through the 4th of August as **E51AGY**. QSL via his home call.

VE6SH will be active from Antigua Island through the 8th of August as **V29SH**. QSL via his home call.

**F4GGQ** will be active from Iceland, 10 - 16 August signing **stroke TF**. QSL via F4EFI.

**JO1LVZ** will be active from Chichijima Island, Ogasawara Islands 6 - 9 August, signing **stroke JD1**. QSL via his home call.

Special event station **PA12HJ** will be active until August 10th, for the 12th Haarlem Jamborette. QSL via PA9LUC.

UR4LRQ, UW7LL, & UY5LW will be active from Ethiopia until 21 August as **ET3AA**. QSL via USØLW.

UA4RX will be active from Heiss Island, Franz Josef Land in Antarctica for the next year as **RI1FJ**. QSL via UA2FM.

Nikola Tesla Radio Club is on the air as **E7TESLA** until August 10th. QSL via E77E.

**DL2JRM** will be active from Faroe Islands 7-10 August signing **stroke OY**. QSL via his home call.

Special Event Station **N6L** will be on the air from the Lassen Volcanic National Park, August 8-15 for the parks 99th Anniversary. QSL via K6LSN.

A group of YL's will be active from Luxembourg as **LX9YL**, 7-10 August. QSL via LX2A.

**LU9EFO** will be active from the Galapagos Islands signing **stroke HC8**, 3-24 August. QSL via his home call.

OZ1BLL will be active from the Cayman Islands as **ZF2EE**, 7-8 August. QSL via his home call.

A group of Japanese operators will be active from the Mariana Islands as **NHØJ**, 8-13 August. QSL via JJ2VLY.

ON7WP will be active from Gambia as **C5WP**, August 15 - September 1st. QSL via his home call.

**IZ1FRM** will be active from Corsica signing **stroke TK**, 24 - 29 August. QSL via IW1RLS.

**PP1CJ** will be active signing **stroke PYØF** from Fernando de Noronja, 26-31 August. QSL via his home call.

## Spooks on the Airways

*Mechanix Illustrated* - August, 1950

Mrs. Constance Rellis, sat down in her luxurious bubble bath and soaked contentedly. "I'm forever blowing bubbles," crooned a soothing voice from underneath. She screamed and hopped out of the tub but the voice had stopped. Imagining herself the victim of her own delusions, she climbed back into the bathtub only to be startled by the same voice again. As it reached the end of the number, this time another voice boomed out with a commercial for a cigarette manufacturer.



She then began to realize that somehow her bathtub had turned into a radio receiver. Every time she entered the tub, the water was raised to just the correct level for maximum reception giving her the only crooning bathtub in the world.

Radio waves have manifested themselves in many weird and freakish ways. The technical explanation for these spooks on the airways is usually that an oxidized or rusty metal surface "rectifies" the powerful electro-magnetic waves, turning them into sound waves. And a rusty section of the tub was responsible for the crooning bubbles.

Then there's the case of John Morskowsky, a New York workman who thought he was ready for a psychiatrist. Every day as he walked to and from work he heard voices saying all sorts of nonsensical things. Just as he was about to consult a brain specialist, he realized that the phenomenon occurred only when he was near WOR's transmitter. Investigation disclosed that the machine shop in which he worked was filled with emery dust, and whenever grains of the dust in his mouth came in contact with the fillings in his teeth, they operated like an old-fashioned crystal pickup.

It has been found that a great majority of these incidents occur within a half mile of a radio station. Many cases have been reported where metal objects within this area were able to pick up carrier current. For example, a Gushing, Oklahoma resident doesn't require a radio for his evening listening pleasure. He merely places his ear against an iron fence post, settles back, and listens-in to WKY.

The list of objects that have suddenly become radio receivers would amaze you. The records show there have been musical furnaces, talking bedsprings, water faucets and barnyard wells that have suddenly developed conversational abilities.



A radio furnace was a feature in the home of a New York businessman. Without the aid of radio equipment, the furnace reproduced programs clearly and conscientiously. Volume was controlled by the smoke-pipe damper. A Seattle lawyer recently reported that he owned a singing bed. The bed had not always been talented, however. It was only after a new transmitter went into action near the attorney's home that it began to hit high C. Rusty springs, sensitive to resonance, were responsible.



Acting on the knowledge that the human body is an electrochemical mechanism, a Harvard University psychologist performed an experiment not long ago to prove that his body could be made to act like a radio receiver. He filled one ear with salt water, inserted a piece of wire into the water and strapped a second piece of wire to another part of his body. Seconds later he succeeded in receiving radio signals.

Imagine the expression on the face of a farmer near Edmonton, Alberta, one morning when he lifted the cover of his well and was greeted by orchestra music. Astonished, he dropped the cover and the music stopped. He lifted the cover again and the music resumed. He excitedly reported the incident and soon police and neighbors were at the scene to hear the musical well perform. The theory was advanced that it was caused by a radio grounded in a nearby stream. But the farmer didn't own a radio. However, his nearest neighbor did, and when his set was silenced, so was the musical well.

A California housewife, Mrs. Albert Clark, was going to have guests for dinner. As she started to cook on her electric range, the clear, dulcet tones of a Schubert melody filled the kitchen. She called in her neighbors to witness the strange performance and by the time they arrived, a crisp voice from the stove was giving advice to housewives.

Reports of telephones picking up radio broadcasts and radio sets picking up telephone conversations were far more common in the early days of broadcasting, and utility engineers have now almost eliminated these occurrences.



Perhaps the strangest "ghost" story occurred in Cleveland, Ohio. Fire Chief Carl Ehrler was returning from a fire when he was notified by radio by the dispatcher to go to the scene of another blaze. The dispatcher ordered him to "2620 Lake View Terrace." "There isn't any such address," Ehrler replied in a puzzled voice. "Mean to tell me I don't know Los Angeles?" replied the dispatcher. "Maybe so," Ehrler answered, grinning now, "but this is Cleveland." A spook on the airways had brought the two widely separated departments together!

# Heroes of the S.O.S.

## *The loss of the S.S. State of California*

Standing at the lower end of Battery Park, where the tip end of New York looks out toward the remorseless ocean stands a memorial fountain to wireless operators lost at sea. The monument was dedicated on May 12th, 1915, and bore the names of ten young wireless operators who, in the midst of storm and terror, stuck to their post of duty and went down with their ships.

One of those men was Donald C. Perkins, the wireless operator of the *S.S. State of California*.

The *S.S. State of California* was a 306 foot-long iron steamship that was comfortably appointed, offering spacious cabins and public rooms. The 2,266 ton ship was one of the fastest vessels in service along the northwest coast, and she proved very popular among passengers and members of her crew.



It was a clear, bright Sunday morning, on August 17th, 1913, the ship left the wharf at the Gambier Bay Cannery, ninety miles south of Juneau, Alaska. Captain Thomas H. Cann Jr., an experienced master who had sailed Alaskan waters since 1889, stood in the pilot house, looking out at the placid waters of Gambier Bay and signaled the engine room for full speed ahead toward the mouth of the harbor.

At 8:29 A.M., just four minutes after the command for full steam was received by the engine room crew, the men standing in *California's* wheel house felt a tremendous bump that resonated up from the iron keel far below. Metal shrieked as a submerged rock tore through the ship's hull.



*All that remains of the Gambier Bay Cannery today*

As soon as *California* struck, Chief Wireless Operator Perkins rushed to the wireless room in his pajamas, and rang the chart room for instructions, but he could raise no one on the bridge. Perkins knew the ship was in trouble and took responsibility on himself for sending an SOS call without orders or approval from the Captain.

It had been only three minutes since the ship ran over the rock, but her bow was now well down with water covering all but the stern portion of the top decks. In the space of only two minutes, dozens of small dramas were enacted throughout the sinking liner.

The dynamos failed and the main wireless set was rendered useless. However, in those three minutes, Perkins brought the auxiliary set which runs on batteries, into use and succeeded in getting out his call for help several times.

Then, the Captain was able to beach the vessel on a rocky shore, but, no sooner had she reached the beach than the stern settled beneath the surface and she slid back into the deep water, taking with her many of the passengers and crew.

As she sank, the decks were raised as by an explosion; the bridge floated off with the Captain shouting his orders as it drifted away; the masts went overboard smashing the lifeboats that lay in their path. There was one lifeboat immediately in front of the wireless cabin which they were unable to launch. As the vessel took a sudden list to port this boat broke adrift and jammed fast in the door, making Perkins a prisoner. Realizing fully that every second counted if he was to make his escape, the young man elected to stand by his key and give further directions to the summoned rescue vessel. There, in the wireless room, with all avenues of escape cut off by wreckage, Donald Campbell Perkins sank with the ship. His body was never recovered.

The next moment there was nothing on the surface but a struggling mass of human beings among the wreckage. The cannery tenders and available small boats rendered every assistance possible. But of the hundred and forty-six persons on board the ship, thirty one went down to their death. Passengers trapped in their staterooms, crewman in her now silent engine room and the wireless operator in his shack, now some 100 feet below the surface of Gambier Bay.



Postcard from the S.S. State of California

Had it not been for the swift actions of the wireless operator and his devotion to duty, there would not have been a single survivor.

Captain Cann and the other officers aboard the *S.S. State of California* were absolved of any wrong doing or dereliction of duty in two separate inquiries that were held in Juneau and Seattle. The passengers and crew unanimously praised Cann's decisive actions and professional demeanor for launching the boats quickly and saving as many people as he did. The erroneous chart that showed a clear passage through the Gambier Bay passage was amended to mark the newly found obstruction, but the correction came at the cost of 31 lives and a 2,206 ton steamship.



Diver at the S.S. State of California wreck site in 2010

The tragedy struck Captain Cann very deeply, and he remarked later, "When a chart is incorrect, it is much, much worse than none at all."

Today, the *S.S. State of California* lies upright at a steep angle, with her bow in 70 feet of water and her stern in 210 feet. With the remote location and challenging dive conditions, there are many portions of the wreck that have hardly been seen at all.

May the sport divers who visit the *S.S. State of California*, realize and respect the fact that she is more than just a wonder of the deep; she is more than just a sunken ship. She is a graveyard and there are souls still aboard her. Passengers trapped in their state rooms; crewmen in her now silent engine room; and Donald C. Perkins in the wireless.

May they rest in peace, and may they find fair winds and following seas.

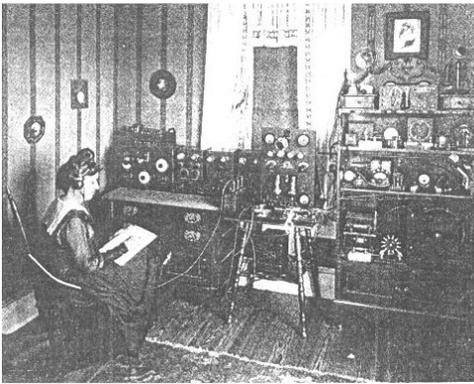


## Radio Station of Miss May L. Smith 1DBE

*Radio News - August, 1920*

It is with pleasure that I present to readers a short description of my station as well as include a photograph of myself seated at the instruments. From this photograph may plainly be seen the essential parts which go toward making my set most effective.

I am located at Manchester, N. H., and I may say that this city (and probably the state as well) has frequently boasted of its pioneer lady radio operator. I have been interested in Radio Amateurs for several years and as a result, I have graduated from the crystal-detector-tuning-coil stage to my present rather complete radiophone outfit. Of course the station was dismantled during the war but when the order went out to resume operation again, I did not hesitate to start in again with renewed vigor.



Recently, I conducted a radiophone experiment employing music and conversation with Dr. A. Gale Straw, who is another enthusiast located nearby. In this case we made use of a talking machine and sent out the strains of "The Long Long Trail."

It is needless to say that a great amount of pleasure is expected from the phone set, not only to myself but to my local radio friends as well, who number quite a few. A general description of my instruments is as follows: The aerial,

which is of the T type, consists of four wires No. 10 B.S. hard drawn copper, 100 ft. long, spaced 3 ft. apart, 42 ft. high, a 55 ft lead-in, with a ground a 15 ft. in length from the instruments. The sending set, which is in a case, with glass doors for safety, is made up for a ½ K.W. Transmitter, a Rotary Spark Gap, an Oscillation Transformer and Transmitting Condenser. I also have a DeForest Type O., A. C. Radio Telephone and Telegraph Oscillation Transmitter, which has given me excellent results. For receiving, I have the DeForest Type T 100 Differentially Balanced Double Multi-wave Tuner, Type P 300 Combination Audion-Ultraudion and 1-step Amplifier, two Type P 2-step Amplifiers and one 6-volt storage battery with Tungar Rectifier for charging. My receivers are the Holtzer Cabot 3000 ohms type.

I know of no more interesting pastime than Radio. Even with my first set, when NAA was the most distant station to be heard, I found it very interesting, but now, when I have only to put on the long wave coils to get MUU, LCM, POZ and many nearer stations, it is indeed most fascinating and instructive. The Radiophone is proving interesting, especially to those who are not familiar with the code.

*The high powered radiotelegraph stations which she reported hearing were located as follows: NAA Arlington, Virginia; MUU Carnavon, Wales; LCM Stavanger, Norway; and POZ Nauen, Germany.*