

MARA W1GaZette



November 2012

MONTACHUSETT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

Vol 55 No. 3

Next Meeting

Wednesday, 14 November
7:30PM
Lunenburg Public Library

“Sound Card Modes”
Gordon N1MGO

President's Corner

Greetings! As I write this, I see the breeze has kicked up and also the clouds for more impending weather. Up here in our neck of the woods we really did not suffer much as far as damage is concerned from Sandy, but, this storm was very potent and when you look at the pictures in the news or on tv just vision in your head at what would our area look like if we took the full force of the storm. I have also talked to people in Jersey and heard some interesting stories. The media and the emergency management community did a good job in predicting, planning, and executing preparedness for this event. With all that said, I ask myself and you should ask yourself....Was I ready? Would you have been prepared if this was a far greater impact? You should always look at and review your preparedness to make sure.

Ok, the first couple of meetings have shown a spark of renewal since June and I am

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Contributors To This Issue:

KB1LRL, W1HFN, NZ1D, KB1UVP

hoping this little spark will start to grow into a flame. We still need participation, presenters, and lots of interesting things for the meetings, old or new, this is an important part of the clubs health. Look at what you can contribute to keep things interesting. Stay tuned for Decembers Christmas plans; there will be a new twist to it this year!

This month we will have Gordon N1MGO give us an updated presentation in sound-card modes. If anyone has an interest in RTTY, JT65, PSK31, this is “THE MAN” he is the guru of this and he can and has assisted us in getting started in this great mode of communication. I look forward to his presentation.

I hope everyone is enjoying the band conditions of late, I heard 15 and 10 have been wide open at times around the world.

I hope to see you at the meeting!
73 de Ray KB1LRL

Watt's Happening

Sundays, 0800 local 5330.5 (ch 1) USB
Western Mass Emergency 60M Net
Alternate frequencies are 5346.5 (ch 2),
5366.5 (ch 3), 5371.5 (ch 4), and 5403.5 (ch 5).

Sundays, 0830 local 3937

Western Mass Emergency Net. Alternate
frequency is 3942 in case of QRN, QRM, or
frequency in-use. Also a good idea to scan up
and down 10kHz if you cannot find the net.

Sundays, 0900 local 145.45-
Montachusett Emergency Net

Mondays, 2000 local 147.525 simplex
Worcester Emergency Simplex Net

Tuesdays, 1930 local 145.37-
Templeton Emergency Net

Wednesdays, 2100 local 28.341
Harvard Repeater Club
10 meter sideband net "Activity Night"

Nightly, 2100 local 146.97-
Central Mass Traffic Net

First Monday, 1900 local 3943, 7245
RACES Net

First Wednesday, 2000 local 3915
K1ARC Red Cross Net
<http://www.qsl.net/k1arc/>

17 November, Salem NH
Rockingham Park

16 February 2013, Marlboro MA
Algonquin ARC

17 February 2013, Westford MA
NEARC

Additional ham fest and flea market
information can be found on the W1GSL
New England Area Ham - Electronic Flea
Market list at <http://www.swapfest.us>

VE Report

The MARA Volunteer Examiner Team
conducted a license exam session on October
24. One new Technician Class license was
earned as well as two upgrades to General
Class and one upgrade to Extra Class.

The examiners were Tom K1JHC, Gary
K1YTS, Ralph KD1SM, Paul KD1YH, John
KK1X, and Don N1HVA.

The MARA Volunteer Exam Team sched-
ules sessions for the fourth Wednesday of
every month at the Lunenburg Senior
Center, 25 Memorial Drive, Lunenburg MA.

All levels of examination are available.
Candidates should pre-register with Paul
KD1YH at 978.597.6535 or
phupham@verizon.net. If no candidates have
pre-registered by the Saturday prior to the
scheduled session the session will be canceled.

Holiday Celebration

<i>When</i>	2 December 2012
<i>Time</i>	1-3pm
<i>Where</i>	QTH Pauline & Gordon
<i>Address</i>	144 Wilder Road Leominster MA 01453
<i>RSVP</i>	28 November 2012 pauline_c@verizon.net nimgo@arrl.net

What to bring

- A dessert to share
- A Yankee Swap gift per person
(Value \$10- \$15 each)

Provided

- A warm welcome
- Coffee, Tea, Punch

The MARA W1/GaZette

is published by the Montachusett Amateur Radio Association just prior to the monthly meeting. The newsletter is distributed free to members and friends of Amateur Radio.

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Annual Dues: Regular \$25
Family \$30
Fixed income \$15
Meetings: 2nd Wednesday, 7:30pm
September to June

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MARA owns and operates the W1GZ repeater on 145.45 (CTCSS 74.4) in Fitchburg.

October Meeting Report

Minutes of the Montachusett Amateur Association

10 Oct 2012

The meeting was held in the Lunenburg Public Safety Center and was called to order at 7:30PM by the President, Ray KB1LRL. Other officers present were: Vice-president, Tom AB1GF; Treasurer, Gordon N1MGO and Secretary, Barry W1HFN. Members in attendance were: Ralph KD1SM, Charlie KT1I, Gary K1YTS, Norm W1BYH, Walter K1CMF, Al KB1TNN, Tom K1JHC, Paul KD1YH, John KK1X, Ken KB1UVP, Bill N1UZ, Tim KQ1Y, Tim W0TJP and Steve-an aspiring ham.

Introductions were made and the Treasurers report given. The current balance is \$1317.04 with \$182.50 in the repeater fund. A motion to accept was made and seconded.

A suggestion was adopted by the board that hams newly licensed by the MARA VEC team be given a years free membership in MARA.

The raffle raised \$24.00 of which there were three winners. KB1TNN opted for the Field-Day Hat, KD1SM for the knife and note pad and N1MGO for the Repeater Manual.

Tim KQ1Y mentioned the Leominster shelter exercise had been postponed to a date to be determined. Also, Tim was the grand prize winner at the Boxborough Convention and told us how great his new TS-590 is.

MARA has been invited to participate in the NVARC QSL sort Oct 18th at 7:30PM at the Pepperell Senior Center. As usual, pizza and soda will be served afterwards.

Welcome to Tim Pandiscio W0TJP our newest member.

Gordon N1MGO gave a summary of the results of his station for the CQ WW RTTY Contest. They did quite well, possibly in the top ten world-wide in class.

Bill N1UZ volunteered to provide refreshments for next months' meeting.

There was a ten minute break for coffee, munchies and socializing. Thanks to Tom AB1GF and the King Buffet for refreshments.

In lieu of a guest speaker, names were drawn to allow members to give 5 minute talks on some aspect of ham radio. First up was Al KB1TNN who declined and got second choice, which was to answer some questions from the license manual. Next up, Ralph KD1SM led us through the differences between an ISP, email, Domain Register and a Hosting Service. Then Gary K1YTS talked on his start in ham radio by way of his Grandfathers' exploits, which were quite entertaining. Next Tom AB1GF spoke of his taking down a tower for Charlie KT1I and a lightning encouraged departure down Paul WB1EWS' tower. Next Walter K1CMF related the "Carrington Event" who witnessed the largest CME back in 1859 which resulted in a massive EMP. Next Tom K1JHC told of his introduction to ham radio by Ellis W1GUI. Next Paul KD1YH talked of his experiences with ham radio and the Boy Scouts. Lastly, Norm W1BYH spoke on providing wide-area coverage during emergencies and the effects of EMP on our radios.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58PM.

Respectfully submitted
Barry Fox, W1HFN, Secretary

In the Glow of the Filaments...

de Bill, NZ1D

Part 4: Local Radio Pioneers -- Scientist or Spy?

By now, the purists among you are saying, "C'mon, aren't you stretching it a little here? Claiming MARA's roots go back to when Moby Dick was a guppy, for crying out loud!" But, as we shall see, there are at least two links that take us back to 1914. We've already met Nes Stolba, local Fitchburg amateur licensed in February of that year as 1GY and who came back as W1GZ to organize our modern club in 1951. The second is a young Canadian electrician, involved in amateur radio as early as 1914 and who, in 1920, organized the earliest local club found so far.

Several years before teen-aged Nes Stolba of Fitchburg received his first amateur radio license, a few miles away in Townsend, next door to this writer's grandfather, a young WPI graduate named Albert Bumstead was experimenting with the wireless on his farm on Townsend Harbor's South Row Road. Neighbors wondered, sometimes suspiciously, *"What do you suppose he's doing with all those wires in the trees?"* Local lore says that he had intercepted the Titanic's distress calls. Others whispered that perhaps he was a German spy or in communication with other foreign agents.

Whether Bumstead ever held an official amateur license is not known to this writer. His name does not appear in the somewhat sketchy earliest licensing records. He did make his mark on the scientific community in later years, however, in events which

caught the attention of amateur radio enthusiasts nation wide.

Unofficial amateur activity predated the government issued "permits" by several years, perhaps as much as a decade. There were 12 southern New England amateur stations listed in Gernsbach's May 1909 Wireless Association of America Blue Book: nine in eastern Mass and three in RI. When licensing finally did occur, three years later, Bumstead's two alma maters, WPI and Harvard, were among the first to receive official school station call letters (1YK and 1YH), an indication of some earlier activity there.

Bumstead did not stay permanently in the area. A few months after the Titanic disaster grabbed the world's attention, and about the time that the government formalized amateur radio licensing, he temporarily moved to New Haven, CT to work on the Yale-Peruvian exploration, an expedition to survey the country of Peru.

He then went on to work for the National Geographic Society in Washington, DC., eventually becoming the Society's Chief Cartographer, while retaining his "second" home in Townsend. While at the NGS, he would invent a device called the Bumstead Sun Compass, which he built for Navy Commander Richard Byrd. The standard magnetic compasses of the day were rendered useless by the proximity of the earth's magnetic poles, but Bumstead's ingenious device allowed Byrd to successfully navigate the polar regions by airplane. Amateur radio operators played crucial roles in the success of Byrd's and other explorers' polar expeditions over the subsequent years, providing critical contacts with the outside world.

Although Bumstead may not have figured prominently in local amateur activity, I include him here to show what activity there was during the birth of amateur radio experimentation in our area. What was happening locally? Bumstead was here in 1903, apparently busy in local society; he was very active in the Congregational church and a Selectman. Struthers, whose father was the Congregational church's pastor, arrived as a 13-year-old from Maine in late 1910 or early 1911, and Rusk, whose father was perhaps the town's biggest employer, had been here since late 1900. Rusk and Struthers, born two months apart, undoubtedly attended high school together (the 1916 senior class graduated 11 students). Was there a common denominator? Did they "talk" to each other via wireless? Who else was available? It was, after all, a "fraternity" in the loose sense of the word (girls were allowed!).

One key may have been manual arts, also known as manual training. The precursor to the modern vocational training programs, the movement was first used in the US after the Civil War to train engineers. It spread rapidly to general public education, especially in Massachusetts. Students learned skills in drafting, mechanics, wood or metal working. Could this have been a link? Such "hands on" training was often a path to electricity and wireless experimentation, such as that of Boston students Breck and Thompson in 1904, touted as the "biggest surprise that has come to the management of Boston's schools during all the years that manual training has been part of the system." (Amateur Work, June 1904, p. 223.)

Manual training was introduced into Townsend's school in 1900, supervised by William Holman from the Practical Arts School of Fitchburg. Holman, a machinist,

went on to teach in Newton and Waltham schools and eventually taught industrial arts in Watertown. Perhaps coincidentally, Willis Brown, later 1GZ, who was the same age and also had attended high school in Massachusetts, was himself a manual arts teacher in Arlington. (In an interesting but somewhat bizarre twist, the research for this narrative uncovered the fact that Holman's father, and this writer's grandfather, mentioned earlier as Bumstead's Townsend neighbor, were half-brothers!) "*Curiouser and curiouser!*" cried Alice.

Another link to this era was a 24-year-old electrician from Canada. In 1911, as Bumstead busily strung wires among the trees in Townsend, the clanging of riveters rose above the Titanic's massive hull in Belfast, Ireland, and a young man left his home town of Cambridge, New Brunswick, to seek greener pastures. George Starkey found work in New Hampshire, taking up residence in a Manchester rooming house where he met up with a machinist named Robert Worrall. Within three years, the after-shock of the Titanic disaster had transformed wireless. In Fitchburg, Stolba was sporting the station call letters 1GY, and Starkey and Worrall had made friends with two more amateur radio experimenters in the Manchester area, Hitchcock, Webber.

Starkey was at the time a Canadian citizen and therefore not yet eligible for a US amateur station or operator's license. It's interesting to contemplate what influence these men had on his future amateur activity, or whether he actually had brought an amateur radio interest with him from Canada. Worrall left the area shortly after and went to Washington, DC, to work as an electrician with the Marconi Wireless Co.

and then as a radio operator and radio engineer with the Navy Dept. Starkey later would play a leading role as a local radio pioneer in the early amateur radio club activities in the Fitchburg-Leominster area, remaining active in the various subsequent clubs at least up to our club's immediate predecessor, the Montachusett Amateur Radio Club, c. 1984. But more of that later.

Next time, in Part 5: "Birds of a feather..."

November Old Timers' Lunch

de Tom K1JHC

The Old Timers met for lunch at Bickford's Restaurant on Wednesday November 7, 2012. The topics were many but gravitated to what we did growing up. These comments were vivid and interesting. Present were Don W1IBJ, Tom WA1RHP, Charlie KT1I, Gary K1YTS, Norm W1BYH, Paul N1QDX, Al WB1TNN, Tom K1JHC, Barry W1HFN, and Ken KB1UVP. Please join us the First Wednesday of each month at 12:00pm.



above and next page: W1HFN, W1BYH, K1JHC, KB1TNN, KT1I, N1QDX, K1YTS

photos courtesy KB1UVP



above: W1HFN, W1BYH, K1JHC, KB1TNN, KT1I, N1QDX, K1YTS

photos courtesy KB1UVP

QSL Sort

Several MARA members journeyed to Pepperell on October 18 for the Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club's QSL card sort.

The scenery will be familiar as Stan Pozerski KD1LE built distinctive sorting boxes for NVARC several years ago. MARA has benefited from Stan's generosity to bring them to recent MARA QSL sorts as well.



Barry W1HFN studies a card

KD1SM photo



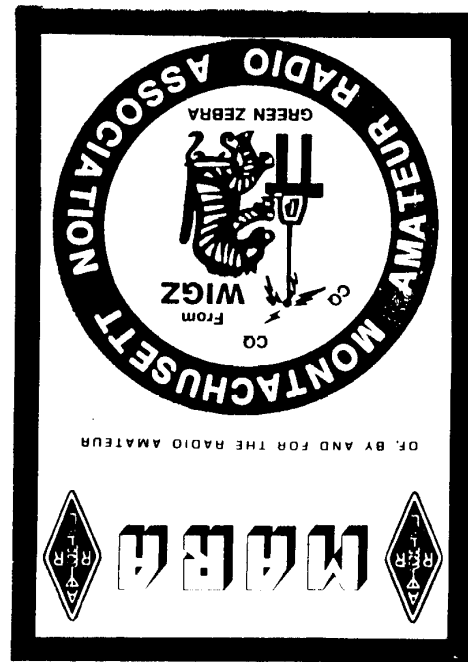
Above: Ken KB1UVP and Tom AB1GF work opposite sides of KD1LE's sorting boxes.

KD1SM photo

Below: Bob KB1JZU and John KK1X take advantage of the opportunity to look through the sorted cards for QSLs addressed to them.

KD1SM photo





Montachusett Amateur Radio Association
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