



Next Meeting

**Wednesday, 9 October
7:30PM**

**Lunenburg
Public Safety Complex**

**Paul Andrews WB1EWS
“Broadcast Radio”**

The MARA October General Meeting will be held in the training room of the Lunenburg Public Safety Complex. We thank Chief Sullivan and Chief Marinos for providing this room when the Wallace Room at the Lunenburg Library is unavailable.

The October presenter is scheduled to be Paul Andrews WB1EWS. Paul is well-known to the Amateur Radio community as the owner and maintainer of three area repeaters on 2m, 6m, and 440cm.

Professionally, Paul is a commercial radio broadcast engineer and has maintained several broadcast radio transmitters throughout eastern and central Massachusetts. Paul has many photographs and stories about what is inside those QRO transmitter shacks and what it takes to maintain them.

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Contributors To This Issue:

NZ1D, W1HFN

In the Glow of the Filaments

de Bill NZ1D

Part 6: "Young Wizard with Wireless"

This part might have been called Part 2 Redux Squared, for it continues Part 2 Redux, published recently (vol. 55 no. 9, June 2013) and once again returns us to the beginning of the series to present a more detailed look at Nestor Stolba's early amateur radio experience and his first license at the age of 15. Although this series is more about the genesis of an amateur radio club, it turns out that separating Stolba, W1GZ (sk), from the evolution of local club activity may not be that simple. Thus I have decided to simply return to the original series numbering schema, making this Part 6.

December 11, 1914: Nine months after Nestor Stolba had earned his amateur radio
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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, 1900 local 145.37-
Gardner/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

11-12 October, Deerfield NH
NEARfest XIV

19-20 October, Wakefield MA
Photographica; Americal Center
Photographic Historical Society of New
England

Additional ham fest and flea market information
can be found on the W1GSL New England Area
Ham - Electronic Flea Market list at
<http://web.mit.edu/w1gsl/Public/ne-fleas>

VE Team Report

There were no pre-registered candidates for
the September Volunteer Exam session
therefore the session was canceled as is the
Team's normal practice.

The October exam session is scheduled for
October 23rd.

The VE Team schedules Amateur Radio
license exam sessions on the fourth
Wednesday of the month. The sessions
begin at 7pm and are held in the Training
Room of the Lunenburg Public Safety
Complex. All classes of Amateur Radio
license exam are available.

Persons wishing to take one or more exams
are asked to pre-register with Paul Upham
KD1YH by phone at 978.597.6535 or by
email at phupham@verizon.net. Walk-ins
are accepted however the session will be
canceled if no candidates are pre-registered.

The exam fee is \$15 for the session. Upon
getting a passing score for one level of exam
each candidate may take the next level of
exam in the same session under the same
fee. If a candidate wishes to re-take the
same level exam a new session fee must be
paid.

In addition to the exam fee, candidates
should bring photo identification or two forms
of non-photo ID, the original and a photocopy
of an existing Amateur Radio license, and the
original and a photocopy of any CSCE
(Certificate of Successful Completion of
Examination) being used as evidence of
passing an exam that is not reflected in the
existing Amateur Radio license.

The MARA W1/GaZette

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The deadline for materials to appear in the W1/GaZette is noon on the Sunday before the first Wednesday of the month.

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Annual Dues: Regular \$25
Family \$30
Fixed income \$15
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September to June
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MARA owns and operates the W1GZ repeater on 145.45 (CTCSS 74.4) in Fitchburg.

September Meeting Report

Minutes of the Montachusett Amateur Radio Association Meeting

13 Sept 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:30PM. Those in attendance were: Tom AB1GF, Gordon N1MGO, Ray KB1LRL, Paul KD1YH, Charlie KT1I, Ralph KD1SM, Gary K1YTS, Ken KB1UVP, John KK1X, Mark KB1ZGC, Bruce KB1YRS, Tim W0TJP, Steve KC1AHU, Chatmon WA1FIA, Norm W5NJT, Barry W1HFN and our guest speaker Dave KM3T.

Introductions were made with name and call signs. Treasurer's report; ending balance of \$1885.10 plus \$447.50 in the repeater fund. Motion to accept, seconded and passed.

Due to the non-availability of the library meeting room, the Oct meeting will be held at the Lunenburg Public Safety Building. Please do not show up before 7PM.

Ray KB1LRL will be out of town in Nov, the meeting will be presided over by VP Tom AB1GF.

AB1GF to provide coffee and W0TJP snacks for the Oct meeting.

Tech Committee report: there was a meeting of the IRLP folks in Gardner. The W1GZ repeater site was visited and connectors on the duplexer were tightened and an intermittent COR disable switch was discovered. The 220 repeater TX is still inop, the finals are suspected as bad. Gary K1YTS discussed the repeater move. The

new site is 10X30 feet and has HVAC. Will probably move the antennas and feedline first, then the repeater.

Non-dues paid up members will be dropped from the mailing list but still welcome to the meeting and functions.

The Fitchburg PD has expressed interest in having ham radio as an adjunct to their duties. Tom AB1GF to gather more details.

The club will gladly accept donations to be used as raffle prizes.

There was a ten minute break for goodies and socializing. After that, Dave KM3T gave a talk on the 2014 WRTC event. All were urged to volunteer. This is a very big event for New England, ham radio and MARA so let's support it.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 9:10PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Barry – W1HFN, Secretary

In the Glow of the Filaments

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license, an article that influenced the title of this part appeared in the Fitchburg Daily Sentinel. Perhaps written or influenced by Nestor's brother Ernest, a reporter for the Sentinel at the time, the article presented a very lengthy and detailed description of the 15-year-old "Wizard's" amateur radio station activities. It is much too long to republish here, so excerpts of key parts will be presented in this series.

**YOUNG WIZARD
WITH WIRELESS**

**Nestor Stolba, Youngest Licensed
Operator in Bay State, Loves
the Game**

A Fitchburg boy, Nestor W. Stolba, aged 15 years, living at 171 Mt. Vernon street, is the youngest licensed amateur wireless operator in the state of Massachusetts, and probably the youngest to be licensed by the government in the whole of New England. He was granted his license, which is of the first grade amateur class on his 15th birthday, February 27, 1914 after having passed a severe examination at the Boston custom house. He was given ratings of "excellent," both in the care and operation of wireless instruments and in knowledge of the rules and regulations regarding wireless operation. His license, issued by the United States government, places his station under certain restrictions and makes it available for government use if it is ever ~~necessary~~.

above: from the Fitchburg Mass.,
Daily Sentinel, December 14, 1914.

"A Fitchburg boy, Nestor W. Stolba," the article boasted, "aged 15 years, living at 171 Mt. Vernon street, is the youngest licensed amateur wireless operator in the state of Massachusetts, and probably the youngest to be licensed by the government in the whole of New England. He was granted his license, which is of the first grade amateur class on his 15th birthday, February 27, 1914 after having passed a severe

examination at the Boston custom house.” (Perhaps even more impressive is that the intrepid young Nestor made his lonely trek to Boston to take his examination only six weeks after the sudden death of his father.)

After her husband's death, Julia Stolba moved the family from 171 Blossom to nearby Mt Vernon street. At this location, Nestor's radio shack consisted of a small shed in the yard “containing one of the most powerful amateur stations in this section of New England, filled with complicated instruments, many of which were constructed by himself. He has received messages from Arlington, Virginia and other distant points and is able to transmit messages a distance of probably fifteen miles.”

His receiver consisted of a home brew tuning transformer (also called a 'loose coupler', where coupling was varied by “sliding” a smaller diameter secondary coil into the primary); this was coupled to a silicon detector, “two fixed condensers, known as the Wachusett type” and a pair of 300 (3000?) ohm solid receivers (headphones). His “aerial,” probably configured as an inverted “L,” or top-loaded Marconi, “is 150 feet long and is strung from a mast 35 feet high to a 60 foot tree, consisting of three strands of wire, two feet apart.”

For transmitting, his “sending set” consisted of a 100 watt spark coil, a brass commercial sending key with 30 ampere contact points, a commercial spark gap suitable for a 1/2 K.W., and an oscillation transformer which tuned the waves to the required 200 meters. Amateur operators were relegated to 200 meters or shorter wavelengths (1.5 MHz and above) because it was thought those wavelengths had no military or commercial value. “For varying the pitch of the sending stations, the youthful operator has employed

a secondary condenser, connected with a rheostat.” A future article will present a diagram of Nestor's “apparatus.”

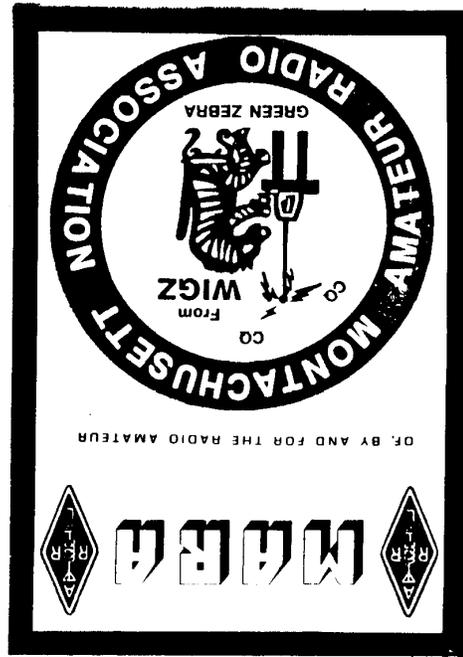
Nestor also had a lower power auxiliary set for demonstrations and short range work. His set was made by the “Wachusett wireless company,” consisting of Nestor and two other amateurs. They made the sets during the summer and then during the winter sold them “all over this and other countries.” An amateur from Sydney, Australia purchased one of the sets and “apparently gave good satisfaction.” Unfortunately the names of the partners were not given although some clues to who they may have been may be presented in a later part.

In closing the original Part 2 (vol. 54 no. 4, April 2012), I boldly announced I had found a reference to Stolba's earlier call letters in a 1949 QST article and that his first station license had been 1GY. I was fairly confident that I had found the “grail.” That is until I discovered that the December 1914 Sentinel article stated that “the official call given to this station by the Radio Inspector is 1KU and the station is registered under this title.”

WHAT? NOW WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO? I just told the world his station call letters were 1GY for crying out loud! I must say, that's very disconcerting. “In the course of my life,” said Churchill, “I have often had to eat my words, and I must confess that I have always found it a wholesome diet.” Well, I'm not Churchill (you've noticed?) and I find it causes me serious indigestion! Alas, those who write about the past are often condemned to re-'right' it.

Next time, in Part 7: A Typical Day with the "Young Wizard with Wireless"

Headline and excerpt from the Fitchburg Mass., Daily Sentinel, December 14, 1914.



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