

# K9YA Telegraph

Robert F. Heytow Memorial Radio Club

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## Schooner Yankee

The 1939 Around the World Cruise

Philip Cala-Lazar, K9PL

One of the joys of growing up in Chicago was the broad range of programming provided by independent television station WGN,\* channel 9. Weekdays after school WGN aired *The Three Stooges*; *Clutch Cargo*; *The Little Rascals*; *Mickey*

*McGuire*, starring a very young Mickey Rooney; and other video fare *du jour*. Weekends we were treated to an array of globe trotting adventurers including Thor Heyerdahl aboard *Kon-Tiki*, Osa and Martin Johnson flying their animal-liveried Sikorsky S-38 (*Osa's Ark*) and S-39 (*Spirit of Africa*) amphibians, and Irving and Electa Johnson aboard their schooner *Yankee*.

The amateur radio community is well versed in Thor Heyerdahl's reliance on the service during *Kon-Tiki's* epic and comprehensively documented voyage. Not so well remembered is amateur radio aboard *Yankee*. In this article we examine ham radio's role in the schooner's 1939 globe circling cruise on the precipice of WWII.

### Schooner Yankee

*Yankee* started life afloat in 1897 as the Dutch-built deep-sea pilot schooner *Loodschooner 4*. She was designed to guide ships to port on the notoriously stormy North Sea. The vessel was "...92 feet overall, 76 feet on the water, with a 21-foot beam and drew 11 feet." In 1933 she was purchased by Irving Johnson and renamed *Yankee*. Johnson, before acquiring the schooner, had served variously in the Merchant Marine and as crewman and captain aboard several yachts. The *Yankee*, in this 1933-1941 version, made three around the world cruises and a number of shorter voyages, each time with a new crew.

### Radio, June 1939

*Yankee's* first circumnavigation was made without a transmitter aboard. For her second world-circling voyage she received a transmitter designed by her radio operator Alan R. Eurich, W8IGQ, and granted the call sign WCFT.

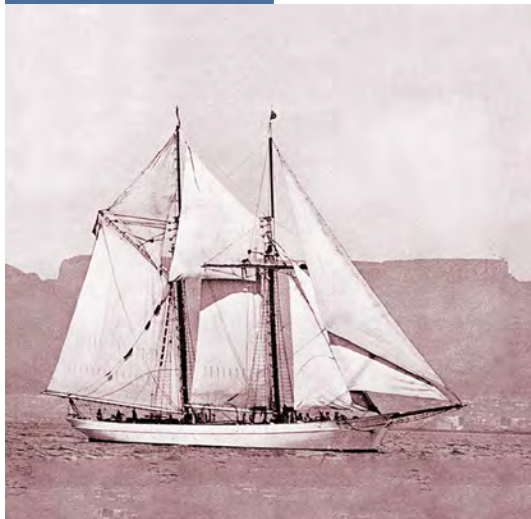
In 1939, for her third 18-month, 35,000-mile, trip, radio operator Eurich sought his replacement with this notice in *Radio* magazine: *Alan would like the information passed along that he is anxious to obtain*

*an operator for this year's cruise, which starts October 29 from Gloucester, Mass. The operator must hold a 2<sup>nd</sup> class telegraph ticket, and preferably be a ham with some dx and tfc [traffic] experience. He would be required to carry about an hour or so of radio work daily, and stand 4 on and 8 off on deck with the rest of the gang at sailing the ship. Most of the radio work would be in skeds with U.S.A.*

*hams. That means he would be working daily traffic skeds with W from PK [Netherlands Territory] and VS [British Territory], the Indian Ocean, etc. He would be a member of the crew, as there are no passengers, and would be expected to share in the work and cost of the trip like all the others. It is a swell chance to take a trip.*

CONTINUED - SCHOONER YANKEE ON PAGE 8

"Loodschooner 4"



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# A Ham Radio Love Story

**Patti Donahue, KE7IR**



Patti, KE7IR, and Tom Donahue, W7PD (SK) from 2017.

Tom lived in Kent, Ohio, in Silver Meadows apartments. Patti lived in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, in a three-story brick, standalone, apartment building.

Both of them had recently begun enjoying citizens band radio as a pastime. Tom was learning about antennas and having restrictions in his apartment complex, decided to shove his newly purchased 11-meter vertical antenna into a closet bending it as required to fit the space. Need-

less to say, it didn't transmit very well. So, Tom did not exist so far as Patti knew.

Patti, on the other hand, had no lease agreement restricting antennas. So, already having adopted the philosophy that begging forgiveness was far easier than asking permission, Patti's brother erected a vertical antenna on the top of her apartment building. Her signal was strong enough for Tom to hear Patti.

As a result, Patti did exist in Tom's world. A CB Picnic was being arranged by some of the local CB'ers and Peppermint Patti was planning to attend right after her cousin's wedding that Saturday in 1973.

Tom arrived at the picnic on a loud motorcycle wearing pointed-toe black boots with horseshoe cleats, looking like he had been up all night. (He likely had been up all night.) Patti was dressed in a baby blue knit top with matching shorts and sandals. An odd couple from the start.

After monopolizing Patti's time and conversation the whole afternoon, Tom, aka T-bird, asked her to go out that evening. Patti replied it wouldn't be possible as her cousin's reception was that night and her parents, aunts and uncles, the whole family, would be there, "I'm sure it would be very boring for you," said she.

Unknown to Patti, Tom was not going to be easily deterred once he had set his sights on something. He assured her nothing would be more fun for him than meeting her family. He would be at Patti's apartment at the agreed time to attend the reception.

She walked to her parked car, a 1972 powder blue Plymouth Duster with a standard, on the floor, three-speed transmission, to drive home. For reasons unknown, the car was stuck in second gear and would not shift to any other gear. Patti drove the car home, carefully parking in the bank parking lot behind the apartment. Even though a bit rattled, Patti realized parking in the garage would require the unattainable reverse gear to get the car out. Driving a car stuck in second gear was not so bad in home territory, but out of the question for a trip across several towns to the reception hall. She was sure the motorcycling CB'er would never show. But, just in case, she got ready for the reception wearing a sleek,

black, halter top evening dress. At that time in Patti's life, she "cleaned up" pretty well and could fill out an evening dress nicely.

Tom arrived in his maroon Ford Thunderbird, dressed in navy blue pants and a maroon sports coat, looking far different from the motorcycling CB'er Patti met earlier.

*"Tom, aka  
T-bird"*

While still in shock over the chameleon act just witnessed, Patti excitedly told him of her car's problem. With no regard for apparel, Tom immediately went down the three stories of the apartment building and fixed her car. In later years, this habit of getting right to work without regard to clothing choice was considered less gallant by Patti. However, at that time, she found it most appealing. Never in its remaining life did the Blue Dustpan (so named by Patti's dad) ever get stuck in any gear again.

Love would soon follow as Tom had become Patti's knight in shining armor, handsome companion, and more importantly her personal handyman! For the next nearly 50 years, Tom would cleverly fix the multitude of things Patti managed to break. So strong was her reputation that in years to follow, Patti, also



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known as Mighty Matilda, became the test driver/user for any newly-repaired item, because, if it could be broken, Patti would accomplish it without even trying.

About six months after they met, Tom drove west to Tucson, Arizona to visit his sister. Tom's brother-in-law was attending the University of Arizona. The wide open Sonoran Desert quickly captured Tom's heart and he decided to move there.

A long distance friendship ensued for about two years while Patti continued working for General Electric as a secretary and attending night classes at the University of Akron. Initially, Patti thought this was a phase that would quickly pass, but she was wrong!

Vacations were taken in both directions, but after Tom's visit to Ohio, Christmas of 1976, a change was coming.

Tom called Patti and told her they had a geography problem. There was too much land between them. Although love was in full bloom by then, ever the realist, Patti announced she would have to get a job and make sure her college credits would transfer before a move could be made. In about this same time frame, both of them passed the Novice test administered by volunteer examiners in Ohio for Patti and Arizona for Tom. CB radio was still their main pastime but a new course heading toward amateur radio was set.

In June of 1977, Patti purchased a small trailer, loaded up her belongings and used her two weeks vacation to relocate to their new home in Tucson, Ariz. Tom's GI loan and Patti's down payment allowed them to be first-time home owners. I need not tell you, Patti's parents were sure she had lost her mind; while Tom's parents were praising God and being thankful Patti and her "cautious nature" might be a balancing influence. The journey made by Patti with her small, not so strong trailer, is worthy of its own story. Suffice it to say, CB radio came to her rescue several times. But eventually, in early July, Patti came rolling in, dust swirling behind the blue Duster and trailer, to a rural field where Tom was participating in a ham radio Field Day event.

Their home was a ranch-style three-bedroom home with two bathrooms. It was about 1,600 sq. ft. with liberal use of bright pink paint. Standing in the

kitchen, Tom laughingly told Patti he felt as though he were living in the "Pepto Bismol" stomach. For those too young to remember, look up old commercials for the stomach relief product and you will understand. They set about painting, wallpapering and making the house their home.

One of their first projects was to rent a jackhammer to get through the cement-like caliche that was the prominent "soil" in their yard. Caliche is as hard as low quality concrete. And yes, Patti was down in that 6 ft x 6 ft x 5 ft hole shoveling out "dirt" right alongside her man.

Amateur radio was growing in importance during this timeframe. Tom was attending classes at Johnny Taylor's home. Patti studied amateur radio independently along with working full-time and finishing her BS in business at the University of Arizona, Tucson. Both got their General licenses: Tom, WB7EAW, and Patti, WB7QXW. Later, Tom upgraded first to Advanced then Extra, WQ7Q, then vanity call, W7PD. Patti later upgraded to Advanced Class and luckily was assigned KE7IR, which she retains to this day.

Meanwhile, they decided to marry December 22, 1978. Always pragmatic, in November, Patti figured their taxes for 1976 as single vs. joint returns and showed Tom how they could save

\$800 or so. That was a good enough reason for Tom and so, they married before year end. Very romantic, right? Patti was 26 and Tom was 33 when they married. Both wanted children, so, before long, son #1 was conceived.

Patti graduated from U of A in May of 1979. That same year Thomas Timothy was born. He was a beautiful, blue-eyed, baby boy who taught us how to parent. His brothers can be grateful we improved with practice.

Tom was a night owl, often hamming well into the night. Tommy, dubbed W7BABY by our dear friend Bart Paine, K7CC, was often with Tom at night while Patti slept. Tom said Tommy could really drive the microphone well with his piercing cry.



Patti, KE7IR

*"Tommy, dubbed  
W7BABY"*



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Nineteen months after Tommy arrived, Jonathan James was born. And 22 months later, Christopher Clark joined our team.

Needless to say, with three little ones, work, and Tom's satellite TV business to run, we were very busy and Patti's air time reduced to the occasional add-on in a QSO of Tom's, or 2-meter conversations to and from work.



TH7DX Beam at 60 ft. with 90 ft. Tower in Background

For the next 30 years, Tom was active in many facets of ham radio, along with running a business, volunteering at the school, and playing the role of Mr. Mom while Patti concentrated on a management career, which included a fair amount of travel and being a good mom, whenever she was home.

Tom and Patti centered their lives around their sons. Seldom did a trip or event not

include the boys. From taking Tommy for his first trip to the sand dunes at one-month old to vacations at the lakes, they always traveled as a team. Some thought they didn't trust anyone else to watch their boys. And, without family nearby, that may have been an element in their thinking; but, mainly they just didn't want to give up a moment of joy watching and growing with their sons.

There are so many stories to tell, many hilarious, but this story will end by explaining how amateur radio has become the revived hobby to bring purpose and life back to Patti.

On February 24, 2022, Tom became a silent key. All during the month that Tom was in the hospital, Patti's mom had been quite ill. Patti had to go to Ohio one week after his passing to care for her dying mother, honoring her mother's wish to spend her remaining days at home. One month after Tom's departure, Evelyn Friedrichsen Clark joined him, Patti's dad Dick Clark, and so many other loved ones waiting for her in their heavenly home. A sad time here on earth, but a joyous time in heaven, to be sure.

In April, Patti flew home to Arizona. In the middle of May, Patti drove to Ohio to assist her siblings in preparing properties owned by her parents for sale. And then she drove to her cottage in Canada, on

Lake Nipissing for a time of respite. Surrounded by loving island friends, and with visits from her sons to help with maintenance/projects, it was a time of rest, learning, and confidence building.

After about three months, Patti returned home to Arizona and discovered eldest son Tommy had been communing with his father's spirit by working in the shop and learning about the gear in the radio room. He had purchased a gold, engraved Heil PR-40 microphone, honoring W7PD, and set it up. Tommy wanted us to be able to "talk to Santa" via ham radio with the grandchildren for Christmas. He didn't want Tom's tradition to end. And so, Tommy and Patti worked together to streamline, clean and organize the radio room to allow this to happen.

Right after Thanksgiving, we signed the children up for an online visit with Santa through the 3.916 Amateur Radio Group. Each ham could only sign up three children. So Tommy, W7EAW, was control operator for Anthony, Aron, and Adeline Donahue, son Chris's children. Patti, KE7IR, was control operator for Hailee Donahue, Tommy's daughter. That was a happy night, in sharp contrast to months of finding it hard to smile.

After Christmas, Patti started just listening to the radio to drown out the quiet of an empty house at night. Then, gradually she learned how to tune the antenna for operating on 80-meters. Eventually, she did the same for 40-meters. Finally, by taking copious notes and cautiously trying new bands, Patti has gone from short-wave listener to "Dxing." Amateur radio opened up a convenient and safe new world of possibilities. Smiles and hope have returned thanks to the magic of ham radio. ■

*"...the magic of ham radio."*



Family Christmas (2022) with 5 hams... Patti, KE7IR; son, Tommy W7PD; son, Jonathan, KK7MGG; son, Christopher, WB7EAW; and grandson, Cody, KK7MLR



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**Karl Zuk, N2KZ**

You are never too old to learn new things. A case in point: While casually tuning around 40-meters, I came across the [Trans Provincial Net](#) on 7100 kHz LSB filled with a cornucopia of Canadian, British and Scottish accents. Please appreciate my opening impression of this quite active gang: “Who are these people who have taken root on what used to be CW-only territory?” I listened along for a while to the seemingly endless traffic from all over Ontario and as far away as England. The net host was Barry, VE3ISX, from Hamilton—just southwest of Toronto. The net runs from 0800 to 1700 hours Eastern daily on 7100 kHz LSB.

At 3:30 pm Barry read a long TCN introductory statement which included a warning to American amateurs to not join in with voice although they would welcome check-ins in Morse CW. (American hams are not allocated for voice operations way down on 7100 kHz.) I took this as a personal invitation to give a call using CW. It didn't occur to me what error I was about to fall into!

The only other place I had ever tried to gain attention cross-mode has been on 6-meters. Morse operators usually listen to upper sideband on any band as a rule. On six meters, a USB amateur operating on 50.130 MHz would likely hear a CW operator transmitting at 50.130.700 MHz creating a 700 hertz note that should be heard aurally.

Of course, I sent my call this day on 7.100.700 forgetting I was in LSB territory! Another station prompted Barry saying: “I think someone is trying to call you on CW but they are on the wrong sideband!” Barry twiddled around with his RIT and found me immediately. I was completely embarrassed by my basic mistake.

Lesson learned! When on 40 and below send cross-mode calls in *LSB* CW! Doesn't everybody live in the CW-only world? Sadly, I think not! Do you know Canadians can send voice transmissions as low

as 7040 kHz? Is anything sacred? 40-meters used to be an all CW band!

Today's 40-meters is packed with all sorts of operators using every mode imaginable. 7100 kHz down to about 7060 kHz is long gone to digital modes especially FT8. With other digital modes taking root from 7040 down to 7030 or even 7028 or below, everyone who sends CW (especially slow speed CW) is being smashed further down the band to 7025 to 7028 kHz.

Below 7025 is indeed exclusive Extra Class licensee territory where you must carefully honor DX windows and regular operating spots by very fast CW operators. Indeed, half of the old 40-meter Novice segment from 7100 to 7150 kHz (now 7100 to 7125 kHz) can still suffice as a home for slow-speed CW operators but only if they are willing to dodge “quacky-duck” sidebanders from outside American borders. A similar allocation mess can be found on 80-meters. When I first became an amateur, I used to be found almost exclusively on 3600 kHz CW. The 80-meter voice allocation now reaches down to exactly 3600 kHz making it very hard to still operate CW on my first watering hole.

I knew things were looking bad when federal regulations completely outlawed spark as a Morse mode back in 1926. I knew trouble was brewing when the new bands - 80-, 40-, 20- and 5-meters - were allocated in 1924. Using these new allocations demanded spark-free operation only. One hundred years later, continuous wave CW is now slowly being pushed out of existence. I guess times change and you must adapt, you *old goat!* ■



*“...adapt, you old goat!”*



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# A Rock and a Hard Place

Editorial

Bill Salyers, AJ8B



## THE ARRL LOGBOOK OF THE WORLD™

After the recent outage at ARRL Headquarters, I felt like another opinion might be in order. I am not an ARRL apologist, nor am I someone who normally enters the fray just to be heard. However, after reviewing the comments in various locations such as groups.io forums, eHam forums, Facebook comments, and Twitter, I felt it was time to provide some potential insight surrounding the recent ARRL situation. I have no

insider information, but quite a bit of knowledge can be gleaned from what was said and what was NOT said. Anyone who thinks the ARRL took this lightly or were too casual about it doesn't realize what was at stake or the people involved. There are some folks at the League I have not agreed with, but I never questioned their dedication to the League or the hobby.

I am not a White Hat hacker and not an expert. I have learned things the hard way and then spent considerable time and energy to learn after the fact. In 2019, our company suffered a ransomware attack at one of our locations shutting down a district office for several days while we dealt with getting 20-plus users back online in a way we felt confident we could safely move forward.

After instituting our layered defensive scheme, we have received a top rating from our cyber insurance provider, been asked to speak at several conferences, and to be a reference for some of the products we use. If learning the hard way makes you a bit more of an expert, then I am the guy to share some information.

As soon as the ARRL announced there was an issue with most of their services and systems, one had to conclude that this was a complex and widespread attack. When they listed most of the services that had been shut down, LoTW was not on that list. As a

very active and popular service, I assumed some sort of nefarious activity was ongoing such as ransomware. The idea behind ransomware is that your files are rendered useless when the attacker applies some sort of encryption to them. Often you can open them, but they are filled with gibberish. You are then contacted by the attackers, either via email or in a pop-up window when you attempt to open an infected file, to supply some sort of payment (typically bitcoin) and the attackers will supply the reverse encryption key. (You hope.)

When we suffered our attack, we immediately contacted our cyber insurance provider for guidance. We had already isolated the office from the rest of our network. Our provider directed us to contact the FBI who assigned a special agent. The first order of business was to minimize our exposure to the public. We were told not to use terms such as cyber-attack or ransomware even to our users. We notified our users that we had a network component failure. The FBI's reasoning was simple. The attackers would be less likely to negotiate if they knew the entire picture and knew they had you "over a barrel."

### Rock and a Hard Place #1

Presumably, the ARRL identified a ransomware attack and notified the FBI. I am confident they were told not to mention anything about the severity of the attack. So, ARRL members wanted a full and accurate update and the ARRL *could not* provide one lest they compromise their bargaining position. When the ARRL did not give a LoTW update, wild speculation filled the void. Never helpful, but it happens.

The second step involves identifying the attack vector. Was it social engineering, via email or a text message, for instance? Was it a website drive-by attack when someone visited a rogue website? Was it something brought in from the outside via a non-approved laptop, tablet, or a USB device? Perhaps a terminated employee was taking revenge!

There is a scarier situation than we have already discussed—what if something loaded on to a PC

*"White Hat  
hacker"*



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months ago was part of the objects backed up back then? Now, when you restore from backup, you could be starting all over again.

### Rock and a Hard Place #2

All this takes time. The more time you take, the more frustrated the user community gets—I know, I have been there!

Assuming it is a ransomware attack, while you are going through the evaluation of how you were attacked, the extent of the attack, and the state of your backups, you are also performing a business analysis. I have no idea if a demand was made or what it was, but the average starting demand in 2023 was approximately \$568,000.<sup>1</sup> So now, you are comparing your lost business, functionality, and risk versus the demand. You might set up a test environment and restore your backups to see how quickly you can get things up and running. How stale is the latest backup? Conducting a forced rebuild is not the time to learn you no longer have the correct tape drives, backup drives, software, or code words!

### Rock and a Hard Place #3

Money! It always comes down to money. Most organizations don't have unlimited funds and I am sure the ARRL is no exception. In fact, with all the anguish and gnashing of teeth that recently occurred during the membership dues increase, the thought of buying new hardware, cloud services, new software, cyber engineers etc., would be the last thing on the League's mind.

A practice some companies employ, is to relegate old servers to the data center. In many cases, a large server running windows will do a fine job running UNIX even as the hardware ages. It allows companies to avoid the capital expense needed and is a common practice in non-profit organizations. They are hoping they will never be a critical point of failure. "If it isn't broke, don't fix it!" Once these servers are set aside for a specific task, they are often neglected. It is easy to see how any company might use old hardware to support a project and then forget about it. Suddenly, it becomes a liability that only shows up during an audit or an attack.

We had one such server we had to physically remove from the network. The software that ran on it was

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1409510/ransom-payment-us-quarterly-amount/>

*"starting all over again."*

used by our HR department and the last version of Windows server it could run on was Server 2007! That is no longer supported and is a huge liability. Once we identified the issue, we took it completely off the network and mothballed it.

Like I mentioned, I have no insider knowledge of what the League was facing. I do know these problems are complex, difficult, and are not aided by sages and experts who seem to know better. Also mentioned, I am not an apologist, but I thought another viewpoint might help clarify what the League may have been going through.

Your thoughts and input are appreciated via the [ARRL-LOTW](#) group at [ARRL Online Groups](#).

See you in the pileups. ■



Bill, AJ8B

Bill was first licensed as WN8IQN in 1971. His OM, K8DWE (SK), insisted he not be an appliance operator and had him build a keyer, tuner and a dummy load. He was 12 and it seemed like quite a challenge, but a few RF burns later, and he was on the air.

Bill is an active operator, heavily involved in the Southwest Ohio DX Association. SWODXA is the group that bestows the "DXPeditoner of the Year" award at the DX Dinner SWODXA hosts during Hamvention. They also sponsor the DX Forum on Saturday of Hamvention.

AJ8B first published an article in *The DX Magazine* in 1985. Since then, he has been published in *QST*, *CQ*, and the *NCJ*. Bill is also the editor of the weekly DX column in the *Ohio Section Journal*, the webmaster for SWODXA, and the newsletter editor for SWODXA, and the newsletter editor for the Twin City DX Association.

Additionally, Bill is the Host of *The DX Mentor* podcast, *The DX Mentor* YouTube channel, and the weekly DX provider for the *This Week in Amateur Radio* podcast.

Bill resides with his wife of 38 years, Karen, in Waynesville, Ohio. He is an IT Director in Cincinnati and has a two-hour commute, which allows plenty of time for DXing from his car with a Yaesu FT-857.



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Alan went into 116 different ports. And then, too, it might be the answer to the dx expedition problem. If any of you are interested you might get in touch with Alan by writing him at Jigger Ranch, Melville, Montana. It would certainly be a fine opportunity for someone who could take the time and has the money. It should be noted here that crewmen paid handsomely<sup>†</sup> (“has the money”) to join the voyage.



The Johnsons

For this cruise *Yankee's* extensive travel itinerary included: Gloucester-Panama Canal-South Pacific-Solomon Islands-New Guinea-Dutch East Indies-Singapore-Sumatra-Indian Ocean-Zanzibar-Cape of Good Hope-Cape Town-South Atlantic-Brazil-Guiana-West Indies-Bermuda-Gloucester. Postwar, there would be additional cruises aboard a new vessel, also christened *Yankee*.

## Radio Equipment

**QST, June 1939**

### “Bermuda Cruise–WCFT”

Newly hired radio operator Oakes A. Spalding, W1FTR, with Eurich on a radio shakedown cruise from Gloucester to Bermuda, June 3-17. Their transmitter, designed and built by Eurich, ran “...200 watts output, either c.w. or i.c.w. [interrupted continuous wave], on 3105, 4140, 5520, 5210, 8280, 11,040, 12,420, 16,560 and 22,080 kcs.... It is desired to work as many amateurs as possible in order to test the coverage of the new transmitter... CQ calls will follow each QSO, with an indication of the band on which amateurs should answer, ‘Ans 40,’ etc.”

The transmitter was of brass construction to resist corrosion, a “...RCA 803 [HF transmitting pentode] was used in an electron-coupled oscillator circuit.... The oscillator circuit was operated at half the desired frequency and the harmonic taken in the plate section in order to maintain stability and minimize frequency changes due to swinging of the antenna. An ingenious ‘plug-in’ coil drawer [like that fitted to Anne Lindbergh’s transmitter aboard a Lockheed Sirius: See *K9YA Telegraph*, “Anne Morrow Lindbergh,” Oct.

2022] with pretuned circuits was provided so that the transmitter could be changed instantly for use on the intermediate ship wavelengths of 600 to 800 meters and the short wavelengths of 18, 24, 27, 36 meters. Since 36 meters [8.32 MHz] was found to be by far the best all-around wave, it was used about 90% of the time.”

A motor-generator, fed by the ship’s 110-volt, 500-cycle, a.c., was stepped up and rectified by 866s (half-wave mercury-vapor rectifier) to supply 2,000 volts for the transmitter’s 803. The onboard a.c. voltage was stepped down to supply the rig’s filaments. None of the tube filaments “...were lit until the generator was started and transmission always began with cold tubes. When the ship’s batteries were low the line voltage would be down to around 95, with corresponding lowering of the filament voltages. Yet in a year and a half of operating no trouble of any kind was experienced.”

For this cruise, replacing a TRF receiver, was Spalding’s personal National HRO converted to 6-volt operation powered by “A” and “B” batteries. In Singapore a Mallory Vibrapack (vibrator power supply introduced 1937) was secured to replace the “B” batteries “...it worked very well.”

The antenna was a vertical wire running from the deck to the mainmast’s cross trees. “The length to the set was approximately a half wave on 36 meters, and it worked out remarkably well. Of course, on 600 meters it had to be loaded so heavily in the cabin that not very much was radiated. Nevertheless, the results were satisfactory for our use as our only

“National HRO”



VR6AY’s XMTR in Packing Case



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K9YA Telegraph



600-meter contacts were with passing ships and with coastal stations when we approached a port.”

FCC order 72 of 1940 banned QSOs with foreign stations and ships at sea. The Johnsons requested and were granted permission to contact designated American amateur stations for the duration, October 1939-April 1941, of the cruise. The ARRL was instrumental in persuading the FCC to amend order 72 in *Yankee's* favor. (See: *K9YA Telegraph*, July 2023, “Step-by-Step,” p. 8)

### **Radio and Television Retailing, Dec. 1939**

Appliance manufacturer derives publicity from the voyage: “Kelvinator’s *J. Nelson Stuart* takes a last lingering look at one of his firm’s refrigerators in the galley, says goodbye [*sic*] to skipper Irving Johnson of the schooner ‘Yankee’ on her way from Gloucester around the world via the south seas.”

### **Ham Highlights**

*Radio*, Jan. 1940

Alan Eurich, former *Yankee* radio operator states the vessel “...is off on another cruise and will operate on 8260, 14,420 and 16,560 kc. Give them a listen, gang; they will work hams.” During *Yankee's* voyage her radio op made many on-air and eyeball QSOs. At most every port of call he visited local hams and enjoyed their hospitality.

While navigating the Western Pacific, 40-meters was rendered nearly useless due to the number of Japanese and Chinese government stations. “It is no wonder that more 40-meter U.S. signals are not reported from the Far East.”

“Andrew Young,  
VR6AY”

### **The Earhart Request**

The Amelia Earhart Foundation requested *Yankee* search the area around Gilbert [Kiribati] and Ellice [Tuvalu] Islands to see if there were any traces of her plane lost on July 2, 1937. “Needless to say we found no such traces....”

### **Pitcairn Island**

Andrew Young, VR6AY, hosted *Yankee's* radio operator. “Andrew has sent out over 4000 QSL cards, perhaps half of which represented contacts.”

### **QST, June 1940**

“The *Yankee* picked up VR6AY’s transmitter at Panama and reinstalled it at Pitcairn—but Andrew Young has been forbidden to go on the air at all on account of the war, so any ham station using this call is a bootlegger.”

*In all parts of the British Empire was found that the amateurs had formed the first line of defense in communications. With the tremendous expansion necessary to maintain wartime communication, the hams had cheerfully contributed their services and equipment. It was another striking indication of the solidarity of the British Empire.*

### **Dutch East Indies**

Landing at Batavia, it was revealed that “Listening posts had been established all around the coast of Java to warn in case of invasion, and the amateurs were being called upon to take up this work.”

### **Canton Island**

“This is the first stop of the Pan-Am Clippers on the run to New Zealand. In addition, Canton Island has become an important outpost for the defenses of Honolulu [Pearl Harbor] and several flights of Navy planes had visited the air base.” Operators of the U.S. weather station, KF6JEG, on the island included Henry Lee and Jim Stein....” (See: *K9YA Telegraph*, Jan. 2021, “Baker, Howland & Jarvis Islands”)



Andrew Young, VR6AY

### **Hawaii**

Spalding in Honolulu, “Frank Bishop, K6PAS, very kindly arranged a 10-meter ‘phone contact with W1AW and I was able to talk to my wife in Hartford.” Bishop’s QSL card is one of several displayed on the wall of actor Gene Reynold’s shack in the 1938 film *Love Finds Andy Hardy* as cited

in the *K9YA Telegraph* article, “Andy Hardy’s QSP,” October 2020.

“Through the cooperation of the ARRL, daily schedules had been arranged with W1AW. The outstanding signal of W1AW all around the world and the patience and operating ability of Hal Bubb [W1JTD] and George Hart [W1NJM] in copying our signal through the heavy QRM on the 36-meter ship band enabled us to maintain these daily schedules.”

In addition to W1AW’s traffic: “In six months W1ZB [Carl Madsen, East Springfield, Mass.] has handled about 150 messages bound for WCFT (Schooner *Yankee*) and about 250 from WCFT.”



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## Salmon Arm, B.C.

### 2-Metre QRV

By Cliff Hine, VE7FD



I lived in a place in British Columbia called Salmon Arm, located about 60 miles east of Kamloops. In 1968 there were no 2-metre repeaters and very few hams on 2-metres.

At the time commercial VHF radios were coming available for \$5, or so, due to the narrow bandwidth ruling for commercial radios. I had one and converted it for 147.33 MHz. The few that were 2-metre capable all used that frequency. I made a 3-element beam for that band and doing some testing with it in the house I suddenly heard Joe (forgot his call) in Kamloops, but not the other op talking to him.

I called him to advise him what happened and soon I got a call from someone in the Kamloops club who asked me to come to their next meeting to give a little run down on how this happened. Buddy of mine, Mike, VE7BCT, and I did that. A short while later Mike and I attended a club meeting in Vernon B.C. and told the members that if they would obtain one of those taxi or police radios for next to nothing and pay \$4 for the tx and rx 147.33 crystals, then Mike and I would convert the radios and we could get that band going in the Okanagan valley. Didn't go over too well as they turned us down with the opinion that 2-metres would never amount to much. Of course that opinion was just a bit off...lol. ■

Photo: Andrewbrenner from [Wikipedia](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Salmon_Arm_B.C._Sign.jpg) Commons

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### RCA Ham Tips, Jan. 1942

“WCFT, the schooner Yankee, maintained round-the-world communication using an RCA-803 225-watt transmitting pentode during its cruise in 1939-1941. Circuit used was an E.C.O. on 18, 24, 27, 36 and 600 meters.” ■

\*WGN—World's Greatest Newspaper—the Chicago Tribune

†Crewman John A. Hayes III's journal states crewmen paid \$4.00 to \$6.00 per day to join the cruise. Those fees were based on duties performed aboard for every day of the 18-month voyage. That comes to about \$3,285 (\$72,571.80 in 2024) at the higher rate and \$2,190 (\$49,047.87) at the lower rate.  
<https://yankee3rd.wordpress.com/>

### Resources

*Amateur Radio Call Book Magazine*, Fall 1937

*QST*, June 1939, June 1940, Oct. 1941

*Radio*, June 1939, Jan. 1940

*Radio and Television Retailing*, Dec. 1939

*RCA Ham Tips*, Jan. 1942

<https://oceannavigator.com/seven-times-around-the-world/>

<https://research.mysticseaport.org/coll/coll240/>

<https://sites.williams.edu/searchableseal/j/johnson-irving/>

Yankee cruise film in color: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0BwLo0m-1fK2bY1Nqb315ZEZ4YjA?resourcekey=0-ihOIG6hYvuwnA49ZYMAouA>

