

Harmonics 253

May 2007 Addendum

Thanks to all who read the Bio on Uncle Henry, N4UH, and notified me of the glitch.

“My Computer Hates me!” is the only excuse I can use. After proofing the story and, I guess, during conversion to PDF something came unglued. Following is the story as it should have been.

Know Our Members

The following autobiographical sketch was written for the old NC Tri -State Amateur Radio Club newsletter back about the start of 1997 by Uncle Henry aka Henry Elwell, N4UH, I feel I can use it without permission because that paper is now out of print and the editor is a SK. I would like to do a series of this type if only you readers would (could?) write. WB4AQK

I was born on Easter Sunday, April 20, 1919 in a caring family, which included a five year old sister, and a second sister was to follow five years later. We lived in Roselle, NJ. While in 10th grade, I discovered short wave radio and with a buddy, built a two tube SW receiver with plug in coils, and listened to VE9GW in Canada, GSB London Calling, and DJD the Voice of Berlin, and others around the world. Then we discovered the Amateur Radio Bands.

That was for us, so Bill and I studied the 10 wpm code requirements and the examination questions and took our examination at the FRC in New York City. In February 1936 I was issued **W2JKH**, and was off and running, working mostly CW on 80m, 40m, and 20m, using Zepp antennas and up to 100w of power. Forty meters in those day was exclusively CW. Later I built a modulator and spent most of the time on 160m phone with the other area kids.

Then December 7, 1942 came along, and we were shut down. I had received my BS in EE at the Newark College of Engineering (now NJIT) in 1940, and worked in the Weston Electrical Instrument Corp. after graduation. So in March 1942 I applied for and received a commission as a Navy Ensign, and spent three months at MIT in Boston studying all about radar. I was shipped to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and for two years, I was assigned as the Radar Officer for two different Patrol Bombing Squadrons flying PV1 aircraft, a two engine land based high performance bomber. We flew from Midway island, through Hawaii, and down into the south Pacific to the Admiralty island, north of New Guinea.

Returning to the States, and sent to refresher courses in Corpus Christi, Texas and San Diego California, I asked for and was assigned duty in the Engineering Div. of the Bureau of Aeronautics, Washington, D.C. where I went on inactive duty in February 1946. During the period in the Pacific I had been promoted to Lt. jg, and when I returned to the States I was made a full Lt.

In September 1946, I married Millicent Livingston, a girl my younger sister had suggested she write to her lonely brother in the Pacific, which she did. The morning of the day of my marriage, I was helping my brother-in-law, **W2KXD**, get his station going by climbing some trees for his antennas, much to my father-in-law's concern.

I worked three years for Tung-Sol in the electron tube division to get back to “speed” about tube applications. Then I was offered a position with what became an aero/space division of the Bendix Corp, located in Teterboro, NJ, and remained there until my retirement in 1977.

In 1965, the FCC offered two-letter suffix calls to Extra Class licensees; the first advantage of that classification. So with that incentive, I went for my Extra License, and was issued the call, **W2MB**, I thought of using the phonetics, Mr. Bendix, but that seemed too extreme, so I settled for W2 Mike Baker.

During the years at Bendix, I did a bit of writing for *CQ* magazine, and one of my articles was about the first amateur try at a synthesized frequency generator. I used about 30 crystals in mixer circuits, one bank being separated by 1 kHz, the next by 10 kHz, and the next by 100 kHz. The crystals were selected by three banks of push buttons, enabling me to punch in the operating frequency that I wanted. Our friend, Wayne Green, **W2NSD**, was editor at that time. Other articles mainly concerning antennas were published in *73*, *Ham Radio*, and *Communication Quarterly* in later years.

I was always interested in DXing and contesting, and still am. I won a number of Sweepstakes, and ARRL contests while in NJ. I also picked up my WAS, 5BDXCC, and other awards during that periods. I built all my receivers and transmitters, the

biggest task being a 4-1000 tube linear in 1965. From 1936 until that time, I never used more than 100w, but I found it is much easier in the pile-ups with higher power. With the advent of SSB, I finally gave up home-brew, and put together a Heath SB100, followed by a Kenwood TS-520, a Yaesu FT102, and currently a Kenwood TS850 with a Heath SB1000 linear amplifier.

Upon retirement in 1977, I moved to Cleveland NC and asked for and received my present call, N4 Uncle Henry. My purpose in retirement was to have a rhombic antenna, and room for other antennas. So with my wife's permission, I selected the land; it's 22 acres. Her reward was to pick out the plans for the house we would build. The rhombic was designed and installed two years after we arrived, and it is a world beater into Europe on all bands from 80m through 10m. Other antennas are a TH7 at 60 feet, a TH6 at 45 feet, a sloper for 80m suspended from the 60 foot tower, a ¼ wave vertical for 40m, and a Lazy U for 160m. One of my achievements was to get verification for 122 countries on the 160m band, and currently stand at 354 for the all band count.

Life has been good with two sons, and two daughters, all married, but technology is starting to eclipse my current ability to stay up with it. Although I am into computers, packet, and now e-mail, I find I no longer am able to fully comprehend how they work. Do you feel that way at times?

From the Editor: Every time I read this I sink a little lower and the effort of putting up a G5RV twice in two weeks because of the wind breaking an old rope really seems small. How many of you knew of the giant among us? I probably should have built up to this as the last in the series. Who's next? Tell me your story.

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