

The History Column

by Tom VE3MAH

This month's column will be a little short. This last 2 months have been very busy with projects I had not planned on. Any old information or pictures you may have is always welcome. As well, is there some aspect of the club you want to know about? Any and all suggestions are welcome.

Part 6

With the annual dinner/banquet coming up, I thought a look back at some of what came before may be in order. As I suggested in a past column, that early on, the December meeting of SWARC members became a dinner meeting. After a few years, XYL's were invited, but few wanted to join in on the business meeting. And so an annual dinner was scheduled to coincide with Valentine's Day in February and became a completely social affair. (With a few awards being handed out as well). The first such occasion on record was held at the Holiday Inn in Kitchener. A very pricey \$6 was required from each of the 25 attendees. In order to make the affair a bit of a money maker for the club, amateurs from both KWARC and GARC were invited. Very quickly, amateurs from these three clubs (and others) were supporting the efforts of each other. Sometime in the mid 70's, the local clubs agreed to hosting the dinner/banquet on a rotating basis. These were large affairs with many donated door prizes and entertainment. Attendance for these affairs was in the order of 80 to 100 persons.



Thanks to Joe Ketchabaw VE3JWK, we have a few pictures of one of the many banquets SWARC hosted at the Hespeler Masonic Temple hall with dinner served by the ladies of the Order of the Eastern Star. These pictures are from about 1976 or 1977.

Entertainment was sometimes provided.

Shown here is Rocco Furfaro VE3HGZ now VE3YJ on guitar and John Riddell VE3AMZ at the piano.



A few of the guests. I do not remember the name of the gentleman on the left. On the right are John VE3AMZ and his wife.

Note the lovely corsages worn by the ladies. These were supplied by the club.



Awards were a highlight of the evening.

Seen here is Rocco VE3HGZ/VE3YJ receiving the "Wide Signal on 20 meters" award.

Earl Kaufman VE3CTY with an award that had something to do with high voltage and aspirin.

Fred Creed VE3DZ (sk) with "The Old Drifter" award.

For those who don't remember, most transmitters built before mass produced Phase Locked circuitry was

available would 'drift' or change frequency slowly up then down around where the operator had it set. This meant that the amateur on the other end of the QSO needed to 'follow' by tuning his receiver to match.

Through 1980, 81, 82, and 83; our records show that we had a goodly number of attendees. Fraser Cooper and I procured the necessary liquor license and purchased the refreshments. (240 bottles of various beers and 640 ounces of the best whiskeys, scotch and rum) Tickets at that time cost \$10 each for the evening. A regular guest speaker was a very funny Bill Walker from the local DOC (Department of Communications) office in Kitchener. Other venues included the Galt Country Club in 1986 and the Kress Hotel in 1987. 1988 saw 12 attending at the Hespeler Holiday Inn where everyone ordered individually. For the first part of the 1990's we dined at the Grand Valley Golf Club with an average attendance of 22. As the 1990's drew to a close, interest declined with very low attendance. The 1996 dinner at Bellamy's restaurant saw only 6 attendees. In an effort to get things going again the SWARC dinner for 1999 moved to the Waterloo Regional Police Association hall. For this event the per person cost had risen to \$25 each with the club subsidising members tickets by an additional \$5. Back to the Grand Valley Golf club for the next number of years with prices ranging from \$16 to \$18 with increasing quality of food. A special treat in 2000 was entertainment provided by a local group called Music and Madness arranged by Gerry VE3NXV.

Generally presented at the annual dinner was a very special award. The Radio Society of Ontario sponsored an award with the aim of introducing new amateurs to Field Day. The more new amateurs a club had operating, the higher the point score. For a little history of the RSO see the link http://onradiohistory.ve3we.org/?page_id=10.

The Rusty Brennan Award was presented yearly to the club who had the largest number of new amateurs taking part in Field Day. SWARC received this award almost every year during the late 70's and through the 1980's. It was usually on display at the Hespeler Road Radio Shack store.



Harold Braun VE3DWH/VE3CD representing RSO presented the Rusty Brennan Award to SWARC a number of times.

Here Harold presents the award to John (Woody) Woodfield VE3CYK .

Looking on are President Earl Kaufman VE3CTY and Vice President Joe Ketchabaw VE3JWK.

Some short takes:

In 1993, Vice President Cec Hayward VE3MVO put a push on for SWARC to have a permanent home complete with radio shack and antenna farm in a city owned facility. After several months of meetings with city officials and proposals submitted to the Community Services Department for space in either the new Allan Reuter or the David Durward Centres, there was no home for SWARC in Cambridge. But – we did get a listing in the new Community Services Directory.

1994 was the 30th anniversary for SWARC and to commemorate the event, there was a motion on the floor for several months to change the club name and call sign. As you may remember, SWARC members discussed a name change in 1973 to reflect the new city of Cambridge. Some of the suggested names included (what were we thinking?) Radio Club of Cambridge (RCC); Amateur Radio Cambridge (ARC); Cambridge Amateur Radio Federation (CARF); Cambridge Amateur Radio People (CARP) and the winner Cambridge Amateur Radio Club (CARC). Since the procedure to legally change our name was very complex and expensive, we became on January 1st 1995, The Cambridge Amateur Radio Club (SWARC Inc.) A number of call signs were researched, but none were acceptable to the membership and so we retained VE3SWA and VE3SWR.

Clarence Fatt VE3LZZ/VA3CF and Julian Edgecomb VE3JUS started an on air code course on VE3SWR for students of the clubs' theory course. This proved very successful for many amateurs trying to both upgrade and qualify for the basic exam. Reports came into the club from Stratford and Caledonia from amateurs using the service. In future years, this service was continued by Fraser Cooper VE3FC and Dave Lott VE3BHZ. Code ran on our repeater from 1994 well into the 2000's.

Jerry VE3NXV became a member of SWARC in 1984. In my reading of the minutes, I believe he has the honoured distinction of making the most motions to adjourn meetings.

In 1998 the club needed a reliable method of making coffee at the meetings. Dave VE3BHZ took on the task with a borrowed urn. There were many compliments over the next several months – most of which I cannot print here! Since I do not drink coffee and cannot comment from personal experience, apparently it took several meetings of continuous adjustment to the mix in order to adjust the strength and consistency.

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the amalgamation of Galt Preston and Hespeler into Cambridge, SWARC applied for and received permission for all amateurs in Cambridge to use VF for VE and VG for VA for the period June 22nd to July 5th 1998.

From the last column –

The very tired CW operator is Larry Brown VE3IXW. Larry is one of those amateurs that can carry on two conversations at one time; one in morse via straight key at a respectable speed in excess of 20 wpm and one with the person sitting next to him. Larry, a chartered accountant, left the club in 1987 when he moved to British Columbia. I was very fortunate to have Larry partner with me for the 1981 FD where I operated 15 meter CW. My very poor code ability improved immensely in that 24 hour period helping our team to win the FD trophy for our efforts. (probably closer to the truth is that Larry could have more than doubled his score had I not helped)

Do you know any of these guys? – a gathering of members in Joe VE3JWK's back yard

