

August 2011



A NOTE FROM PRESIDENT DEE

Our 35-foot tower is finally up. Thanks to Chris Story for donating the tower, as well as the labor to install it (see pictures below). Alabama Power Co. poured the base, and, with a little help from a few members on the ground, we erected it on a very hot Saturday. We hope to have a dipole or longwire antenna installed soon, as well as a multi-band vertical. The plan is to have coaxial drops at each workstation in the shop, using baluns to change the 50 ohm impedance to something more suitable for old AM radios. Thanks to Jack Bryant for the antenna engineering on this project.



Chris Climbing the tower



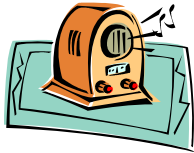
Dee and Chris beside tower

Thanks to all the publicity we have been receiving over the last month or so, we have gotten several donations of equipment and publications. So, now we have more stuff to sort out. Please join us next Saturday to help out.

One last thing, Chris Story's wife, Wendy, will be our featured speaker for this month's Monday night meeting on August 22, 2011. Wendy will tell us all we ever wanted to know and more about Facebook.

Dee Haynes

243-4630 or k4hfx@bellsouth.net



LISTEN TO THE RADIO!!

“Well sir, it's late afternoon as we look in on the small house halfway up in the next block. We find Mr. Victor Gook and his son, Mr. Rush Gook, sitting around the library table.” If you read those lines to a housewife back in the 1940's, she would immediately recognize that it was time for “Vic and Sade.” She would drop everything and pull up a kitchen chair and spend the next 12 minutes or so relaxing by the Philco radio on the kitchen counter.

I know I mentioned Vic and Sade last month, but the show is worth a second reminder to tell you to tune in so to speak whether on the internet or our own collection of OTR. Maybe. while you are listening, you could enjoy some beef punkles? (look it up).

Dee Haynes

243-4630 or k4hfx@bellsouth.net

RADIO IS FAR FROM DEAD IN ALABAMA, BUT IT DOES HAVE A MUSEUM

by Hoyt Harwell

Before television there was radio, and before radio became ubiquitous in Alabama, there was WSY, usually regarded as the oldest surviving station in the state, but with a different name. Now there are about 320 AM and FM stations in the Yellowhammer state.

That museum in Birmingham, named for its founder, the late Don Kresge, was established 22 years ago, so visitors can see and listen to radio sets stemming from more than half a century ago.

If you're old enough, you can recall folks listening to news, weather, market reports, sports and music coming from sets made by RCA, GE, Crosley, Westinghouse, FADA, Philco, Zenith, Atwater-Kent, Scott and other companies. The latter two, Atwater-Kent and Scott, were regarded as the best of the bunch.

An oddity was that listeners often watched the radio as if they could see who was doing all that talking or singing. It didn't make much sense, but that's the way it was.

One legacy of Alabama radio days is the number of engineers and on-air people who got their start with no TV cameras around, and then made the transition to TV.

David L. Cisco and Dee Haynes, who run the museum, plus working on old radios and teaching others how to work on them, invited a bunch of those old broadcast hands for a special gathering a month or so ago. They included me, presumably because for years I wrote news copy for broadcast use during my years with The Associated Press.

The names would be familiar to those who remember radio and early TV in this area, such as Joe Langston, Wendell Harris, Shelley Stewart, Everett Holley, Don Keith, Ed Boutwell and Lindy Martin. They visited the radio society's workshop for awhile and then shared lunch and took in a display of old radios in the museum in the Alabama Power building.

Alabama Power is the appropriate place, because the utility founded that early station WSY, called a radiophone, as a means of keeping in touch with line crews in isolated areas. WSY stood for We Serve You. However, the public became interested in the station, so it converted to entertainment programs.

In 1923, the company gave its broadcasting equipment to a new station being developed by Alabama Polytechnic Institute, which named it WAPI. The station later moved to Birmingham, but kept the WAPI name, although API changed to Auburn University.

Some of the early stations took their call letters from the initials of the owner, or the name of the owner, such as WBRC (Bell Radio Corporation), started by J.C. Bell with a wattage of only 10. His transmitter facilities and studios were in his home in Fountain Heights. Bell later sold the station, and it has since moved and increased its power, obviously.

Just about every town in Alabama has a radio station, and the larger ones have several, so radio lives and old radios survive in that museum.



Editor's Note

Hoyt Harwell is retired after 42 years with The Associated Press, the last 26 as the AP's North Alabama correspondent based in Birmingham. Harwell lives in Hoover, where he wonders whatever happened to "Dialing for Dollars" and "The Count and the Amount." This article will be printed in the August ***Senior Living Magazine***, published locally. We thank them for allowing the article to also be published in our newsletter.



Huntsville Hamfest Aug 20 & 21, 2011



We have purchased a flea market table (Number 107) at Huntsville and hope to sell a few extra pieces of ham gear. If you plan on going up and can carry an item or two, please check with us and plan on dropping by the shop downtown to pick up the items. Looks like I will not be able to attend this year due to prior commitments.

For a layout of the tables and to find where Table 107 is, go to the web site below:

<http://www.hamfest.org/FleaLayout.php>

MEETING TIMES

We meet nearly every Saturday of the month at 09:00 AM in the one-story building at the corner of 8th Avenue North and 18th Street (1801 8th Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203). Use the rear (Southeast) entrance.

Come to the Monday Night Meetings, TOO, on the 4th Monday of the month at 7 PM!

FREE ELECTRONICS CLASSES

The first Saturday of the month, there are electronics classes free to members. Topics include test equipment, Resistors and Capacitance testing, Inductors and coil winding, to name only a few subjects!

We hope to see you there!



DUES ARE NOW DUE

Membership dues are \$25 a year, payable beginning in January. If you have questions about your dues, you can contact Tom at 205-967-7000.

Dues can be mailed to AHRS @ P.O. Box 131418, Birmingham AL 35213.

WHO TO CONTACT

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