

CQ

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RADIO AMATEURS' JOURNAL



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... de K2ORS

The range and roar of ham radio goes on unabated and, in fact seems to grow fatter and more catlike as we "progress". It has occurred to many over the years that all the evils, prejudices, desires, charities, and other assorted and unclassified qualities of Man are present in every act he does. Even the most social. Actually, some have pointed out that the more social the contact he has, the more these various seemingly disparate qualities come into play.

Let's take good old friendly ham radio for an example of the typical social activity of *homo neandertalis*. It is possible to observe every known human failing, and positive quality too, in a couple of hours of casual listening on any band. Provided, of course, the band is reasonably open and busy.

Has it ever occurred to you that a "dead" band in many ways is a thing of beauty? On lucky days it is possible to tune from one end of the ten-meter band to the other and hear not a single splatter or roar of an overmodulated gallon bellowing inanities over three million square miles of earth and even perhaps (we have reason to suspect) a couple or more planets of our solar system who have done nothing to warrant such a blatant invasion of their privacy. In many ways a "dead" band is like a beautiful forest glade before the picnickers arrive prepared to litter the moss with empty beer cans, half-eaten sandwiches, egg shells, and things too revolting to discuss in a family magazine.

However not all picnickers, or hams for that matter, are beer-can throwers, it just seems that way. It is my opinion that there are just as many gentlemen around as ever before, but the egg-shell tossers and beer-can throwers are more plentiful.

Frederick Lewis Allen, the late editor of *Harper's*, said a few months before his death that we had entered the Age of The Slob and our era would be so known in history. It is surprising to note that Allen made this observation without first scanning the forty-meter phone band on a good busy night when the littoral was crowded with fat redfaced beer drinkers dropping potato salad on the trampled forest grass. Too bad he missed it. I shudder to think what he might have written had he known.

But I digress.

My basic theme here is the diverse qualities peculiar to Man that are displayed through the medium of ham radio. And remember, this ham radio of ours is far more than just a hobby.

It essentially remains a social contact between two or more human entities regardless of the technical furbelows that might conceal the fact. It is funny, and yet sad in a way, to hear the conversation of two people who would never have spoken had they met in a subway or bar since they both are rather shy introverts with more than a touch of snobbishness in their makeup. Suddenly, thru the medium of ham radio, they find themselves in conversation with each other and both vaguely aware that the other is an utter stranger and quite possibly beyond his own social pale. Immediately the air is filled with stock phony phrases of goodwill such as "Old Man", "call me Jack", "the XYL is ringing the dinner gong", all of these things are as pat as a form letter from *TIME* magazine begging for subscriptions, and just as personal.

The real use of this guff is to *sound* as tho' our two heroes are having a real conversation without actually having one. But if one of them strays from the beaten path of Worn Cliche for as much as an instant the other immediately clams up and hears the "dinner gong" and "must pull the Big Switch since the QRM is getting rough". Actually if we were to analyze carefully the full transcript (an embarrassing thought!) of the "ragchew" between our two introverts, we would find that a full 99% of the content is a discussion of the *means* by which they were enabled to make contact and the other 1% is a collection of homilies regarding weather conditions and like trivia.

In over seventeen years of ranging the ham bands from 2 to the old 160-meter band (and what a haven for "joiners" that one was! It, in fact, will be subject of my next tirade). I cannot recall more than three or four instances where the conversation became a few ounces heavier than the usual lightweight gabble.

And perhaps the saddest of all is the DX'er. Here is a man who is in nightly contact with the world and yet knows nothing of it. I caught a complete QSO on fifteen this morning between an LA in Oslo and some yokel in Jersey. They "talked" for better than twenty minutes under perfect conditions for a change. Here were two humans separated by thousands of miles, from two widely differing cultures, one from a Monarchy and the other from a Republic, and yet all they spoke of was the inevitable weather and QSL card. Apparently neither had any curiosity about the other and was secure in his own provincialism. I almost felt as tho' I should

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Converting TU-75-A for 6

[from page 27]

R-305 and R-306 and ground. The center plates of the tuning condensers are not at ground potential in these compartments. The oscillator-doubler grid can be completed by placing a 47-ohm 1/2-watt resistor between the post through the terminal board that has the 27K resistor and the small condenser fastened to it and a wire (White and brown tracer) going back into the cable. Remove the wire and place resistor from terminal to nearby ground stud. This resistor and condenser is located in the compartment containing socket V-301 and is the nearest to the back from the terminal board. This completes all grid returns.

If you plan to use CR-1 crystals you can use the crystal socket in the unit. If you have FT-243 crystals you can replace the present crystal socket with a Millen 33102 socket. Remove the shield from the crystal socket to make changing crystals easier. You can place the crystal socket on the front panel if you wish.

You can now tune up the rig and apply modulation. Get on six meters and have a good QRM-free QSO for a change! W8ZCV is open for schedules. Helen, W1HOY (Mrs. Sam, W1FZJ) will be on there with a gallon, from Boston.

BCNU on six.

73, Walt.

The TU-75-A shown was obtained from *Lapirou Brothers of Cincinnati, Ohio*, and I wish to express my thanks for their help. They have been selling the unit for \$14.95, a real bargain for a complete six meter transmitter.

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... de K2ORS

[from page 11]

apologize to my beautiful new NC-300 for all this much ado about nothing.

Not more than thirty minutes later I heard a friend of mine in contact with a bird in Johannesburg and the same thing happened. However, the real tragedy of this contact was that I knew my friend was a normal, intelligent human being and not more than three days before we had discussed over a drink the miserable political situation that now is blighting South Africa. He was tremendously interested in that mess but it apparently never entered his head to ask this guy in Johannesburg what *he* thought about it. I guess ham radio does that to a person. It is simple and natural to forget that you are actually in contact with another human cipher. A contact becomes a technical thing and not a social act. Too bad. If there is anything we need more than increased understanding between people in the world today, I don't know of it. And understanding comes from knowledge which in turn results from familiarity with others. In short, "contacts" between people.

Ham radio has become a sort of classic example of that old human failing. That of confusing means and ends.

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[from page 108]

Even as I write this, my 300 is tuned to twenty where some lout is "tuning up" what he calls "a full gallon" which actually means two. He has been doing this for over an hour on the high end of the phone band. He probably is a wispy thin breath of a man who is low man on the totem pole at the office and is married to an ex-lady wrestler who has taken up bridge in later life and who runs over him like a Juggernaut. But at the high end of twenty he is King and it is there he really can spread himself! I'd dare say about fifteen kc (unmodulated). Poor little man. He has found his means to his own private end. "Be the first in your neighborhood. . . ."

Jean Shepherd K2ORS

YASME

[from page 22]

as hard as I could to get them to fit into the local picture but it was no go. So like anyone else would have done I blamed the chart and the compass, someone had to be wrong and it couldn't be me. That's one of the snags of being alone on a boat, you can't blame anyone else so you resort to inanimate objects, which for one thing, can't argue back! Anyway, that wasn't helping me in this predicament so I took my own advice and stayed on course. The entire night was spent in avoiding rocks and islands. Heaven knows how many reefs I must have unwittingly passed over without touching. How I prayed for that mist to lift as there was a full moon and I could be reasonably safe whilst I could still keep my eyes open and, of course, my night glasses were continually glued to my eyes for any change in the surface of the water which would denote reefs.

Finally daylight broke, without a sound, and the mist also departed in peace. All around me were islands, some big, some small, and not one of them seemed to tally up with my assumed position. I want to impress on all of you that my position had to be "assumed" at all times as there were no lights on these islands to aid navigation, the land was obscured by mist 99 percent of the time, and celestial navigation was out of the question. Add all these together and mix in a rough sea, uncertain currents and not much wind and you have me, a single-handed sailor who wondered if he would be around to see the next dawn! So I kept southwest knowing that, with luck, I would eventually reach the open sea.

When the sun came up, out came the sextant. Now, I thought, I shall know exactly where we are. In my log I had entered that I had passed the Equator about an hour ago according to my reckoning, but when I had worked out my sights they just wouldn't tally up with my assumed position. Again I took sights and they

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