

## The First Ten Years



[From The Parasitic Emission Volume 13, Number 4, April 1985]

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In early 1975, many hams in the DuBois area were experimenting with the almost-new two meter FM mode of amateur communications. There were as yet no repeaters in the local area, and many nights were spent by local hams at the shack of WA3BUX, listening to various distant repeaters. K3QEQ had done some operating and experimentation with a tube.type repeater, using a Motorola transmitter and a Farnsworth receiver on 146.94/.34 (!) with some success. Much of the communications was on 146.94 simplex, and I recall my many trips to Penn State, trying to see how much farther each week's new antenna experiment would work.

It was during this time that I had the idea that a local ham radio club would be a nice thing to have. I dug out the Callbook and recorded the names and calls of everyone with a 158 or 168 zip code. When I was finished, the list contained 138 names! These hams all were located in the four-county area surrounding DuBois. I ran down to the keypunch, punched up the information, and ran it through the Penn State computer as a student project. Questionnaires were printed and sent to everyone on the list, inviting them to a meeting at the DuBois High School on Friday, April 17, 1975 at 7:30 pm, for the purpose of seeing if there was enough interest to form a local amateur radio club.

Twenty-three local hams showed up at that meeting, and the Quad County Amateur Radio Club was born. There was a humble schedule prepared for the meeting, tentatively called The Parasitic Emission, which was a take-off on the title of the Penn State ARC newsletter, The Unbiased Emitter. A vote was taken, and the unanimous decree was that a local club should be formed.

At the next meeting, WA3HSE suggested the name "Quad-County Amateur Radio Club", and for this he received the prize of a life membership. Nobody wanted to rename the newsletter, and so that prize was never awarded. W3GNR became the first president, dues were set at \$12.00 per year, and monthly payments were accepted. A raffle, coffee and doughnuts were part of each of the

meetings.

Several club members, led by K3TFL had jointly purchased a plot of land on a hill-top overlooking the Clear Run section of DuBois, and plans were made to hold Field Day activities there. The first QCARC Field Day was a fun-filled event, and the slides I took of the festivities were enjoyed for several seasons after.

During the fall, a spate of Novice code & theory classes were offered, and each issue of the Parasitic Emission featured artwork by K3TFL. A popular cartoon series was "Clem and Orville", two hillbilly hams, who never quite got on the air. In 1976, the first QCARC Spring Banquet was held at the Lithuanian Club in DuBois. During the summer, many hamfests were visited by our members?many of whom had never had any reason to go to a hamfest before! Field Day suffered from very sparse attendance, perhaps because the previous one was a tough act to follow. The newsletter had grown considerably, and featured advertising from local and not-so-local ham-type businesses. The big news of 1976 was the K3ZDR repeater. Coordinated on 146.13/.73, and located at the Clear Run hilltop, the repeater provided the QCARC area with reliable two meter coverage for the first time.

In 1977, work was started on the Rockton Mountain to establish a location for the repeater. A plot was leased from the State, and many spring and summer evenings were spent digging the foundation and putting up the cement block building, as well as erecting the 105 foot tower. I remember the thundershower that curtailed the tower raising one day, resulting in 18 hams packed into K3TFL's van!

Finally, at 11 am, on November 11, 1977, K3PS (ex-ZDR) flipped the switch and put the repeater on the air from its present location. Field Day was held at the farm of Daryl Boucher in the Beechwoods section near Falls Creek.

Joint banquets were held with the Nittany ARC of State College, and Horseshoe ARC of Altoona during this time. A group of members from Jefferson County formed the Punxsutawney ARC. The meeting location moved to Jeff Tech in Reynoldsville, and Field Day was held at WA3GMT's QTH, south of that town. Under the guidance of W3GNR, the "WIT" VHF Contest team' became a serious contender in the ARRL VHF contests of that day. Operating from the Clear Run VHF site, they frequently won WPA Section championships, beating arch-rival Nittany ARC teams in both the June and September outings.

For the next several years, the newsletter "came and went", and club activities tapered off. Many of the "old guard" faded away, and no one else came forth to take their place. Some people seriously questioned the club's survival. In 1983, a reorganizational meeting was held at the Clear Run VHF site.

A "steering committee" was appointed, and regular, scheduled meetings were again held at the Unilec building in DuBois. The Parasitic Emission has been published monthly since then, and is now created by word processing equipment. Meetings are held monthly at the DuBois Senior High School. and the club membership stands at just under 50 members. Novice and upgrade training classes are being offered on a regular basis by a team of interested hams, and the programs arranged by W3WM rival those in ANY club, Happy birthday, QCARC! And many, MANY happy returns!!!