



AWA Newsletter

Issue 29

May 2008

Antique Wireless Association of Southern Africa

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- * President—Rad ZS6RAD
- * Treasurer—Willie ZS5WI
- * Technical—Don ZS5DR
- * Net Controller—Willem ZS6ALL
- * Newsletter/PRO—Andy ZS6ADY

How Well are you Grounded :

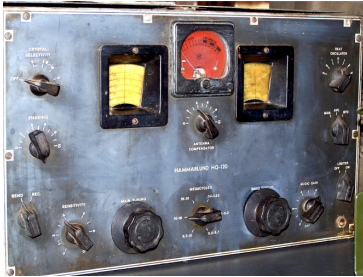
You know that old saying about having both feet planted firmly on the ground, well it may be a bit late now with our summer storms at an end, but I been wondering about how well our shacks are earthed.

This all came about after experiencing a problem with my Collins 32V-3 Am Transmitter. Partly self imposed I might add, but it was just something that I kept on missing.

It all came about when I tried out the rig after doing the normal foam bath and shampoo, that when connected to the dummy load the rig showed good, normal output of about 80w on low power. After fiddling around for a while, I thought now is a

good time to connect up to the antenna. So while holding the antenna lead in one hand I moved to the tuner and as I touched it, got a good healthy hair raising experience, which kicked out the earth leakage in the shack. After composing myself I connected the rig to the tuner, while the power was off mind you, connected an earth to the rig and switched on again. Immediately, the e/l tripped again.

When I disconnected all from the ground system, I put a meter across the earth and the chassis of the rig and measured a sound 110v across the two. The problem was eventually sorted out, thanks to



Hammurland HQ 120

Don ZS5DR, but it started me thinking how different things may have been had I not had a good earth in the shack. All the equipment in the shack is connected to a single 13mm copper cable that runs through and out to a big stake that has been driven in to the ground about 2m deep and gets watered regularly by the overflow from the water tank.

Andy ZS6ADY

UNITED STATES EARLY RADIO HISTORY THOMAS H. WHITE

WILLIAM CROOKES AND DAVID HUGHES

Both the telegraph and the telephone transformed communications in the 1800s, and, at the close of the century, radio was poised to start a third revolution. Some of the earliest speculation about radio's future centered on the almost mystical idea of portable individual communication. In the February, 1892 issue of *Fortnightly*

Review, Sir William Crookes' Some Possibilities of Electricity looked forward to the day when two persons could use radio signals to privately communicate with each other. Crookes' review included one particularly arresting sentence: "...some years ago I assisted at experiments where messages were transmitted from one part of a house to another without an intervening wire by almost the identical means here described". J. J. Fahie contacted

Crookes about this intriguing statement, and was told that the unidentified experimenter was David Hughes, who beginning in 1879 apparently had transmitted and received radio signals, although he was discouraged from further research by reviewers who thought he had not done anything unusual. In 1899, Fahie convinced Hughes to write a short memoir of what he had accomplished twenty years

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CW Net:

Well I'm afraid that activity from my side has not been that great this month, what with the AWA open day at Rand Airport and all the load shedding, I have missed a few Saturdays. However, I have now discovered how to run my FT902 on 12v QRP and will probably be able to get back on the net with load shedding.

My thanks to Barry ZS6AJY who has valiantly stood in for me each time I have had problems, or been away for some reason or another. It's good to know that the group is not dependant on one person being there.

The bands are still very unpredictable with conditions ranging from

599 to almost inaudible within a few overs and back again. But there is at least still some activity taking place with the old faithful's being around.

Heard on frequency this month has been Barrie ZS6AJY, Pierre ZS6BQS, Clive ZS6AVP, John ZS6JBJ, John ZS5JON, Ben ZS5SIB, Barrie ZS5ZB and of course Andy ZS6ADY.

We are still waiting patiently for all those who have promised to come along and support the CW net. Do come up and join us on frequency. 7020 on Saturday afternoon at 14:00.

De ZS0AWA/CW—SK



Bletchley Park Museum Radio Station in the UK. Bletchley Park was the HQ for code breaking during WW2. It was here that the 'enigma' code was broken. Picture by Bruce ZS6BK.

SSB activity:

The Saturday SSB net has been quite active this last month, but with conditions being poor on a few occasions, nearly driving Willem back to drink never mind alkaloids.

Still we manage to get anything from 18 plus calls on the net between 80m and 40m, so we can still regard ourselves as fairly popular on a Saturday morning.

Apologies to those who were expecting a station to be run from the Open

Day at Rand Airport. I never thought we would have so many requests for a station to be run from there, so next year for sure. We even had a few guys volunteer to put up an antenna for us. Thanks Berridge and Ray for the offer. We have your names and numbers now.

For local stations, try using the 80m relay.

The net continues to grow and every month we are getting new call signs on the log and on the newsletter address list. So welcome to all of the newcomers and may your stay with the AWA be a long and glowing experience.

Keep those calls coming in guys. We look forward to hearing from as many as possible on the nets. Conditions are never that bad that we can't hear you on either 40m or 80m.

AM:

AM is still not a very popular mode of communication, except of course to some who have an absolute love for it. It does however remain the easiest means of communication and always seems to work so well.

We have had some really noisy evenings when even the hardened SSB groups have pulled out, but with a strong enough signal on AM, the noise just seems to be overridden by the carrier and it becomes a good Q5

copy. We have found this out so many times during the year.

Well with the promise of my 32V-3 to be up and running by the time the AM QSO party comes around, we are looking forward to hearing how much activity we will be able to entice on the bands. It's going to be an interesting weekend.

Looking forward to hearing as many as possible on AM.



Collins 32V-3 Transmitter

AWA Open Day at Rand Airport TAC April 2008

This was the 3rd annual Open Day to be held at the TAC (Transvaal Aviation Center) at Rand Airport and was as big a success as the previous years have been. Once again people from all over Gauteng came to grace us with their presence.



Rod ZS5RK and Don ZS5DR, drove up from Durban for the day as they have done for the past 3 years and it's always great to see them while two guys flew in from Rustenburg.

The flea market was a success, with lots of antique's changing hands at not too bad prices and some of the goods on sale in pretty decent condition.



Sam was there as usual with his great support for the Amateur community and proved to be a popular stall with the usual banter going on.

My biggest thanks must go to the guys who supported us with donations to buy an AVO Valve tester for the AWA. The support that we had was tremendous and it did not take long to raise the required amount for the tester. Now at least we'll be able to test all the valves in our stock and make sure that any valves being supplied, will have been tested and be in working condition.



Rad gave a welcome speech to all there and then it was back to the festivities once again.

Our Thanks to Debbie and her team at the TAC for allowing us the use of the TAC again this year and we look forward to the next one.

Swaziland DX Trip April 2008

Hot on the heels of the annual AWA gathering at Rand Airport came the AWA's expedition to the Kingdom of Swaziland. Lying ahead were four days of fun and laughter and oh, a couple of QSO's on the HF bands.

Cliff ZS6BOX set off from Johannesburg and Willie ZS5WI from Eshowe. Ron ZS5ABD soon met up with Willie just outside Vryheid whilst President Rad ZS6RAD arrived at the camp site the following day.

HF mobile communication between the travellers was not to be, however Willie 3DA0BD, the host, did check in from time to time to make sure all was going well, especially at the respective border posts. Having got through in no time we soon realised that he was merely being polite.

The rest of the day was devoted to erecting the tents, the rigs and the antennas. Some QSO's took place but as everyone partaking knew, conditions were not going to play along. Fellowship, if the truth be told, was what we had come for and that's exactly what it turned out to be.

Staying at the camp site on Willie 3DA0BD farm, just outside Mbabane, is always sheer magic. It's a haven for 4 x 4 enthusiasts as well as the quad bike riders, not to forget the likes of us who prefer a stroll along hill and dale. Fully lawned with ablutions catering for 30 people, its got to be a "best kept secret".

Whenever the bands opened, QSO's took place using an on site TH6 or one of the portable dipoles which had been slung from the many high tree tops in and around the camp. Not too many stations were worked on the Friday but Saturday did start with a call in on the weekly AWA Net. First was AM Net and then over to SSB. Once this Net had closed the call 3DA0AWA could still be heard until members of the Radio Society Of Swaziland arrived to provide a marvellous luncheon.

Pocket badges bearing the callsign 3DA0AWA were handed to the members of the host club in exchange for caps featuring a TH6 and the lettering "Radio Society of Swaziland" It was only a huge thunderstorm that could put a stop to a very sociable event which seemed to be destined for a very very late night.

All too soon the visitors were mobiling back to their respective homes with friendships renewed, vowing to ensure that this becomes an annual AWA pilgrimage.



UNITED STATES EARLY RADIO HISTORY

previously, which was included in the Researches of Prof. D. E. Hughes appendix of *A History of Wireless Telegraphy*. A few months later Hughes was dead -- his obituary appeared in the January 26, 1900 issue of *The Electrician*. Two decades after that, the March 31, 1922 issue of *The Electrician* carried an announcement in Wireless Notes (Hughes Equipment) that the inventor's original instruments had been found in a storage area, and put on display at the Science Museum in South Kensington. A photograph of some of this equipment appeared in *World's First Wireless Outfit Found in London Tenement*, from the August, 1922 issue of *Popular Science Monthly*. It is interesting to speculate how history might have been changed had Hughes been encouraged to continue his original research.



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Mission Statement

Our aim is to facilitate, generate and maintain an interest in the location, acquisition, repair and use of yester-days radio transmitters and receivers. To encourage all like minded amateurs to do the same thus ensuring the maintenance and preservation of our amateur heritage.

Membership of this group is free and by association.

Wanted / for Disposal / Notices

AWA Valve QSO Party

1. The aim of the AWA QSO party is to create activity on the 40 and 80 meter bands. It is a phone only contest.
2. Dates. The 2nd Saturday and Sunday of May. The Saturday will be an **AM** QSO Party and the Sunday an **SSB** QSO Party
3. Time. From 16:00 - 18:00 SAST (both dates)
4. Preferably, Valve radio's, or radio's with valves in them may be used. (No Linear Amplifiers). The output power may not exceed 100w, unless the rig itself has a higher output power. (FTdx400 etc)
5. Frequencies - 80m 3,600 to 3650 Mhz
40m 7,050 to 7,100 Mhz
6. Exchange - call sign, RS and consecutive serial numbers starting at 001, plus type of radio used. eg HT37 Tx.
7. Scoring - All valve radio 3 points per contact
Hybrid (valve & solid state) 2 points per contact
Solid State Radio 1 point per contact
8. Certificates will be awarded to the first three places in each category. (AM/SSB)
9. Sponsor : The Antique Wireless Association of Southern Africa (AWA).

All contact logs to be sent to the:
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