The Repeater

K7MFR AMATEUR RADIO CLUB — Rogue Valley — SINCE 1936 — MEDFORD, OREGON

Volume 2020, Issue 4   **April 2020**

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Club Web Page:			http://k7mfr.org	

Club Notes

The April club meeting has been **cancelled** due to the Corona Virus COVID-19. The club officers will make a decision about the May meeting in about a month (probably via so-cially distant email).

The state of Oregon issued a ban on all meetings of 25 or more, and recommends that folks 60 or older not meet in groups larg-er than 10 people. Originally this was to last until the end of March, but has been extend-ed to mid April. Schools are closed through April 28th. Church services have been can-celled, bars and restaurants are closed, and the shelves at grocery stores have gaping holes were the toilet paper used to be.

The Repeater is the official newsletter of the Rogue Valley Amateur Radio Club, Inc. It is published 10 times a year—once per month excluding July and August.

Secretary's Report

RVARC Meeting Minutes 2020-03-05

7:09pm Meeting called to order by Tom, N5EG, since no President or Vice Present was available (and both the treasurer and secretary were busy). About 21 attendees present.

Discussion on the May 2-3 7QP contest lo-cation settled on either Agate Lake or the 3-county point on King Mountain, depending on the weather.

The June Field Day location was also to be Agate Lake, since there are minimum bu-reaucratic hurdles to surmount in getting per-mits there.

Treasurer, Mike Bach, WB6FFC, reported $1.25 in petty cash and a bank balance of $5108.38 that includes $314.50 reimburse-ment from the CARE club for half of 2019 Field day expenses plus dual membership

Club Notes

The Dayton Hamvention has been cancelled, the first time in its history.

I was planning to attend the HAMSCI 2020 conference in Scranton Pennsylvania this weekend and present a paper, but that was cancelled.

The conference instead will be held virtually on-line (using the zoom video conference system). The University of Scranton recently ramped up its contract with zoom to support larger meetings. The conference can now handle 1,000 people on-line. Attendance and registration for HAMSCI is now free, so expect a lot of new folks to attend (parts of) it. It's easy to attend, and the client software is free and automatically installed when you open the conference link (Windows, MAC, and Linux).

https://hamsci.org/article/2020-hamsci-workshop-moving-virtual-workshop

Many people have some unexpected time off. Eventually they may start to go stir-crazy or want to talk with old friends or new acquaintances. **Get on the air.** The virus has had an impossible time travelling through the aether, so:

- Join a net
- Talk to folks on the repeater
- Try 2M SSB
- Operate FT8 or CW
- Try a contest
- Fire up the radio and
- **Operate**.

Secretary's Report

dues.

John Laybourne, AC7S, said that a Middle School science teacher was asking if someone from the club could give a presentation on Amateur Radio at Kids Unlimited in April.

Pat, KD7MPA, has set up a web store for club swag at shop.k7mfr.org and any proceeds will first go towards a DMR repeater setup. The items are screen-printed on demand, so no funds are tied up in unused inventory. Shirts, jackets, mugs, pillows, and totes are available with the club logo or your custom design. Contact Pat for details.

7:20pm Presentation on an early spark-gap transmitter and receiver (from around 1917) by Lud Sibley, KB2EVN.

Lud showed several parts from the 'transceiver' including wood-enclosed high-voltage coil, a stacked glass plate condenser made from 8x10 photo glass, ceramic spark-gap, vintage headphones, along with the F. B. Chambers' Loose Coupled Receiving Transformer and (vertical) Oscillation Transformer. The transmitter power handling capacity was possibly up to a kilowatt.(images of the Chambers parts were featured in Lud's article.).

The overall setup is shown in Fig 80 of Morgan's 1916 book Experimental Wireless Construction.It was interesting to note the Fig 80 T/R switch was a cleverly modified DPST knife-switch. The Ham Station's owner, Harry McWade, was ordered to dismantle and lock it up upon the US entry into WWI in 1917.(An entry for a Harry J. McWade of 26 Hillcrest Road, Watchung, N.J. is listed in the Jun. 30, 1920 issue of 'Amateur Radio Stations of the U.S. as having callsign 3BEZ. Could he have been the owner of this set? [note added by John A., KF7UMK].

Another curious part in the Fig80 setup is

Secretary's Report

use of a variable transmitting condenser made from paralleled test tubes in a rack, whose value is adjustable by adding or removing tubes from the set.The F.B. Chambers parts were also works of art in wood and copper.

Refs:
Experimental Wireless Construction: A Practical Handbook Giving Detailed Instructions for Building, Installing and Operating Amateur Wireless Telegraph Apparatus, Alfred Powell Morgan 1916

Reprint from August 1997 Radio Age: F.B CHAMBERS & Co.: Philadelphia's First Radio Maker? showing #748 Loose Coupler and #914 Oscillation Transformer

7:32pm Break for snacks and visiting

8:00pm Second Presentation. (ed note: Scott was sick and not available to present the main program as previously scheduled).

Pat, KD7MPA, demonstrated the shop.k7mfr.org online store where T-shirts, mugs, etc can be ordered with custom logos. He also has plastic license ID cards available directly. Pat & Forrest showed the newly operational DMR repeater using a Motorola CDM1550 radio, with a MMDVM STM32 interface board and a raspberry pi computer. It is running on 442.8MHz CC1 (Color Code 1), at around 20 watts.

DMR ID's can be registered at radioid.org Many talk groups are accessible from Motorola's dmr-marc.net or from the brandmeister.network

See Pat or Forrest for more info on how to get your setup going.

8:30pm Third Presentation

John, KF7UMK, demonstrated a portable SDR receiver setup to receive and decode natural-gas meter radio signals. The hardware was a raspberry pi with a Nooelec SDR dongle and whip antenna, (using the rtlsdr drivers) and the rtltcp and rtlamr programs working together to decode the AMR (Automatic Meter Reading) data that was transmitted by the meter around 912MHz. It decoded several neighborhood gas meters, and they can be filtered by ID#, which usually is found on the meter face.
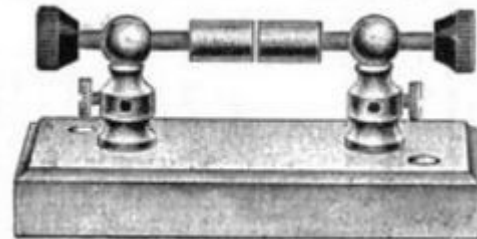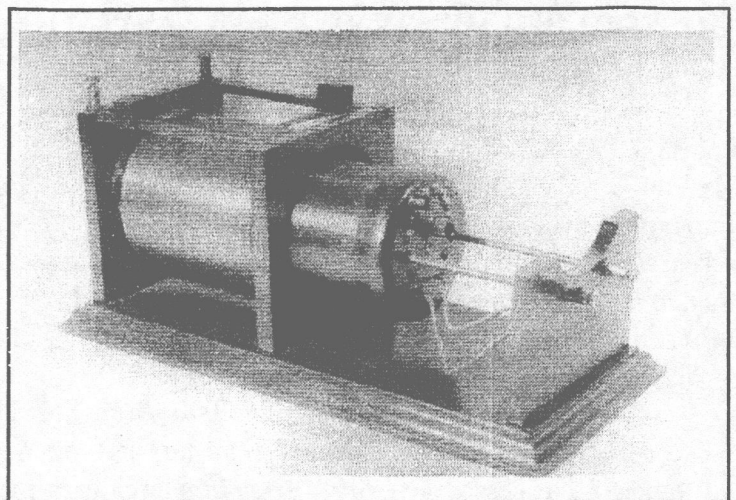
More info can be found at:

www.rtl-sdr.com/tag/rtlamr/

github.com/bemasher/rtlamr

8:48pm Meeting Adjourned

- John, KF7UMK, Secretary

Sparkgap

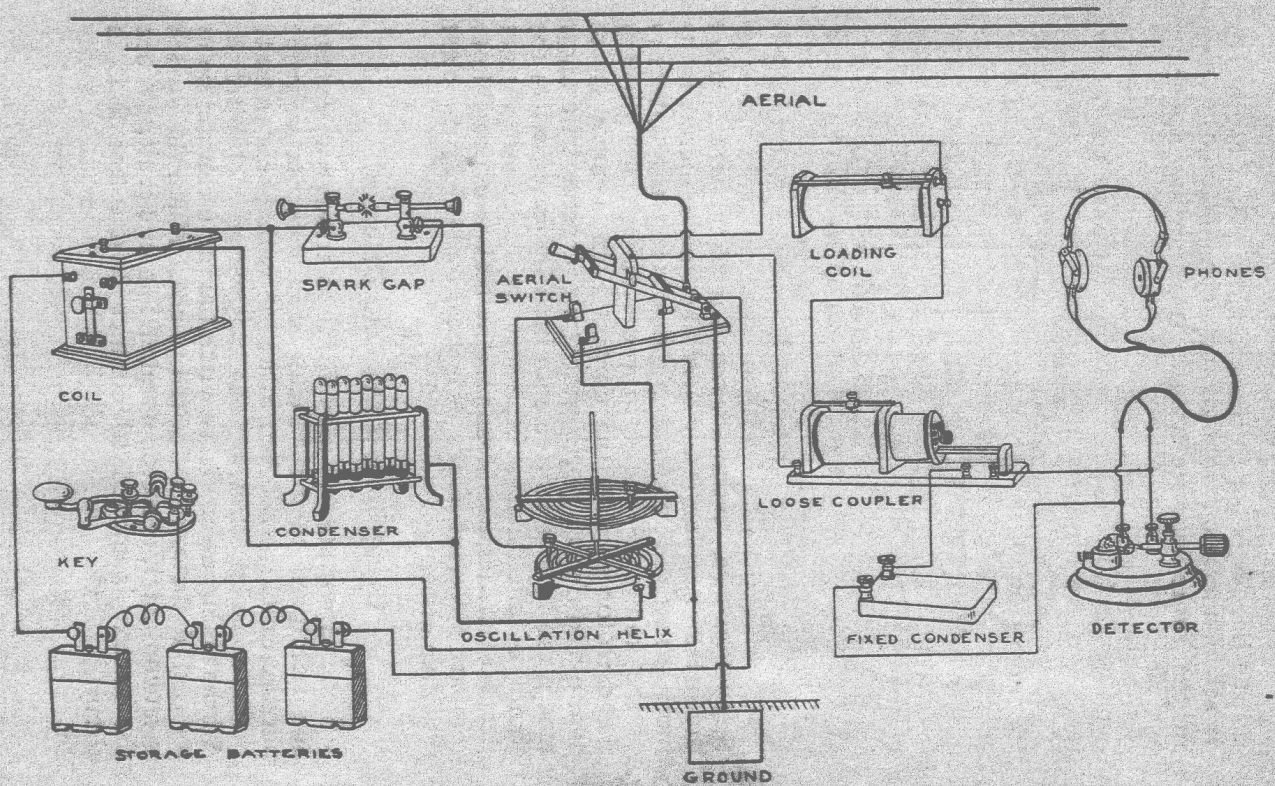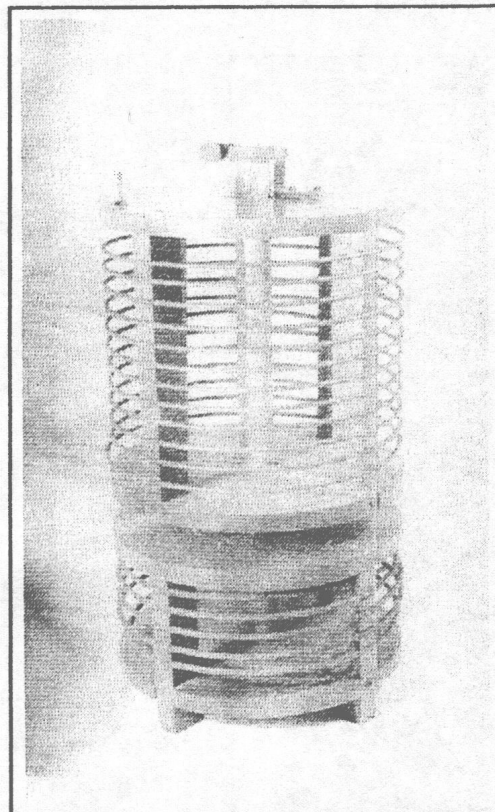Number 748 Loose coupler. Loose couplers were one of Chambers' best-selling items.

FIG. 80.—A Diagram showing how to connect a complete Transmitting and Receiving Outfit.

1-kW oscillation transformer.

This Month's Program

1. Cancelled

- **Program:** Meeting Cancelled..

- **Biography**: .

2. Cancelled

- **Program:** .

- **Biography**: .

Planned Programs (now out of date):

- ~~March~~—my favorite RX tools— Presenter Scott
- Mini-program 1917 Ham Station—Presenter Lud Sibley
- ~~April~~—Detailed dive into N1MM+ logger. — Presenter TBA.
- May
  Mini-program Dakota Otto—how to fill-out & use a radiogram.
  WSJTX update and use—Presenter Pat Cunningham or John Laybourne.
- June—SDR Update, plus Field Day plans.—Presenter TBA.
- August/September—club swapmeet. Details TBD.
- September—Smith Charts, S21, S11. How to use—Presenter Tom McDermott
- October—Antenna measuring workshop using nanoVNA. Bring your (hopefully VHF/UHF and above) antennas for measurement.—Presenter TBA.
- November—Book Review of N6BT's book on antennas. -- Presenter: Allan Taylor.
- December—club holiday party.

This was relayed via Amy and Scott.

As a seasoned, well lightly seasoned, "Contester." I felt it time to take the "bull by the horns" and truly immerses myself in a contest alone from start to finish. My plan, and rational, was in the future I wanted to be able to be able to operate and compete from my own QTH should I choose to. In the past contests I have relied on the wisdom, fortitude and knowledge of my teammates. Now that is not to say there were no issues with these adventures but those complications added to my desire to try to add to what I thought I knew. Anyway, I digress… In past contests my efforts meant total complacency in the logging program setup, submission, and editing if necessary. To be honest, being lazier than the average hound dog, why subject myself to the effort to do so. So, in past contests, I was more than happy to just show up and load incoming Q's. Sure I edited the occasion "typo" or RST report to the file prior to final submission to the contest authorities but was only involved in the upper dust on the surface of what truly happens. Hell, can't be that hard right? Unfortunately, I think Clint Eastwood had it right, "A man has to know his limitations."

The first thing I learned was that planning and preparation are paramount to success. Failure to do do-diligence to the two "P's" will cause big problems, or ruin a contest well into it. I was about to learn this lesson and had I been in the contest at hand to make a good showing I would have been devastated. Fortunately, I was only trying to increase my DX log count and didn't plan to even submit my log to the contest officials. However, I was persuaded into do so by my Friend/Elmer. Doing so was enlightening as "P's" or lack there of came in crystal clear focus.

So, the first thing in the Planning Process is to choose the right contest well in advance to the start date and READ THE RULES Completely. I figured the ARRL DX SSB contest surely fit my goal to pad my DX log count. Yet, I only discovered the date and times a day prior and only read that it was a DX SSB contest disregarding and other information.

MY first mistake… As, I said I'm lazy. After all, my Elmer told me what I needed to know about it, right? Well, not so much… The take away was one should have set aside ample time to ensure the preferred logging program is available and set for the said contest. Read and understand the Rules, Exchange, and how to submit the finished log. My mistake! Armed with what I was told... That being, "Report RST and Section." I set my log program fields to accommodate that exchange. All was going swimmingly for the first 16 hours, then my weak and feeble mind began to question why all these DX countries are in the same Section (K). Now I realized I was lazy and feeble minded, but I was a bit uplifted to know that I was able to recognize something was a miss. So I question why all these entities are from the same Section "K" and my Elmer responded, "You KNOB, you report their power!" One "K" is 1000w or >. Great Scott! (I meant that figuratively not literally Scott) Well, being optimistic, and figuring even a blind squirrel finds a nut once in a while. The problem would be easily edited. NOT so much… I will explain latter.

So back to choosing a logging program. I went with HRD, as I had the latest up to date version and it appeared to be quite user friendly even had that contest as an option in the menu. I used N1MM for past contest but balked at it as it is way over kill with to many menus and setup screens in my opinion. However, this was an experiment and by golly I was determined to use this Expensive New software. A plus was one touch transfer of QSO'S to my QRZ account and Lotw. That meant not file export and ADI files to sign and upload through TQSL. Way easier! Did I mention I am lazy? In the end I had three gripes with HRD. First, the fields re-

quired for contests need to be setup and verified that they meet the contest requirements. Second, if you shut off the program and didn't save the fields needed you start over setting the fields again. Third, and even more frustrating was as my Q count grew I could no longer recall who I worked. Yep, I Duped… Ugh. Yes, HRD will tell you but after the fact. N1MM is great for preventing a potential Dupe before entering it into the log. However, HRD does work if properly setup. Some advantages were one touch lookup on QRZ. Made finding and recalling if I worked the station way easy. I could recall their web page far easier than their call sign.

With day one over. I tossed and turned in bed worrying if I wasted my time and would get zero DX credits for an entire days work. In the end I figured I would edit the Cabrillo file after the fact and if I loose a few then so be it. Hence I changed my format and got after it again. Once the contest ended I hit upload to Lotw and was done with that part. Then I sent those contacts to QRZ again at a touch of a button. However, ARRL contest scoring was another story. I still had to export the file out of HRD and upload the produced file to their site.

It went right through but almost all of them, if not all of my file was rejected. They do not specify why exactly but I figured the power not the section deal. So, they recommended editing. With some 70 contacts I could not recall what South Korea said their power setting was so ended up putting in "K" for all of them in the RST BOX. IE (59K). Resubmitted...nope. Tried to edit again with K 1000 in the RST box. NOPE. So lesson learned. I could try it a fourth try but since I know I was not a contender doing my Search and Pounce contest hunting I will forgo the fourth try.

So in the end:

1. Read the Rules and know the exchange
2. Be accurate in the log record. RST and

Power or Section if part of the mandatory exchange.
3. Use a Logging program that you know that works and your familiar with. (I downloaded N1MM now)
4. Don't rely on word of mouth for any part of prior prep.
5. Brag often and lie a little about who you logged
6. Have fun

NA7RW
Ron W.

April 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 • 2M SSB Net	2 • ARES Net	3	4
5 • CP ERC Net	6 • CARE Net	7 • 2M SSB Net	8 • 2M SSB Net	9 • ARES Net	10	11
12 • CP ERC Net	13 • CARE Net	14 • 2M SSB Net	15 • 2M SSB Net	16 • ARES Net	17	18
19 • CP ERC Net	20 • CARE Net	21 • 2M SSB Net	22 • 2M SSB Net	23 • ARES Net	24	25
26 • CP ERC Net	27 • CARE Net	28 • 2M SSB Net	29 • 2M SSB Net	30 • ARES Net		

Events

Meetings

- **RVARC**   CANCELLED.
- **Rogue Hack Lab** UNKNOWN status.
- **CARE**   UNKNOWN status.
- **JC-ARES**   UNKNOWN status.

Nets

- **JC-ARES** Thursdays 7:30 PM - K7JAX Mt. Baldy Repeater 146.840 (-) [PL 123.0]
- **CARE** Mondays 7:00 PM—. KB7SKB Jacksonville Repeater 147.100 (-) [PL 136.5], open, directed net, visitors welcome
- **2 Meter SSB** Tuesdays 7:00PM and Wednesdays 10:00 AM—144.200 USB
- **Central Point Emergency Radio Communications** Sundays 8:30 PM—— KB7QMV Medford Repeater 145.410 (-) [PL none]. Move to simplex net on 147.585 MHz when finished. Directed net.
- **Siskiyou County ARC** Thursdays 7:00 PM—Net K6SIS Repeater 146.79 (-) [PL 100.0]

RVARC Membership	For Sale / Wanted

RVARC Membership

RVARC membership dues run from January 1 through December 31. Please bring cash or a check payable to RVARC to a club meeting, or mail (checks only) to:

    RVARC Membership
    c/o 1940 Stevens Rd.
    Eagle Point OR 97524-6523

Regular Member:	$20.00
Senior Member (62 and over):	$15.00
Family Member:	$20.00
Student Member:	$10.00

For Sale / Wanted

WANTED:

I am looking for a working <u>Drake L4B Amplifier with power supply</u>.

(I have a set of Drake twins (T4XC / R4C) and want to complete the set.)

Thanks.

Mike Bach, WB6FFC
eaglepoint.or@juno.com
(541) 830-3346

2020 Amateur Radio Examinations

In the Rogue Valley, amateur radio exams are provided by the RVARC and the SOARC. New exam participants need to provide identification, while upgrading amateurs need to **provide a copy of their current license** as well as show identification. The exam fee for 2019 remains $15.00. All license candidates must provide a picture ID. Upgrading amateurs must also provide a photocopy of their current license to send in with their application. To search for other exam locations, see:
    http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml or our club webpage: http://w7dta.org

Medford—Phoenix, OR
Time: Saturdays, Registration 8:30 AM. Exam session at 9:00 AM. Walk-ins welcome.
Location: Fire District 5 HQ. 5811 South Pacific Highway, Phoenix, Oregon 97535
<u>**Dates 2020:**</u>   **Jan 25**   **Apr 25**   **Jul 25**   **Oct 31**
Contact: Don Bennett, Email: kg7bp@arrl.net Phone: (541) 973-3625

Grants Pass
Time: Fridays Registration 6:00 PM. Exam session at 6:30 PM. Walk-ins welcome.
Location: Fruitdale Grange. 1440 Parkdale Dr., Grants Pass OR 97527-5288
<u>**Dates 2020:**</u>   **Feb 21**   **May 15**   **Aug 21**   **Nov 20**
Contact: John Stubbe, K7VSU, email: jstubbe7@gmail.com Phone: (541) 218-2244

Roseburg, Bend, Redding, Brookings, Crescent City — Please see our club webpage, http://k7mfr.org for updates as we receive schedules for these cities.

Next Club Meeting
Thursday Apr 2, 2020, 7:00 PM

Medford Police Department Community Room
219 S. Ivy St., Medford, OR

Program: CANCELLED