

# ***THE AERO AERIAL***

## **1946 - 2006 SIXTY YEARS OF PROMOTING AMATEUR RADIO In Eastern Baltimore County**



*W3JEH ca 1970s.*



*W3JEH 2001*

The newsletter of the Aero Amateur Radio Club

Volume 3 Issue 5  
May 2006

Editor Frank Stone AC3P

### Officers

Bob Landis	WA3SWA	President
Frank Stone	AC3P	Vice-President
Joe Miko	WB3FMT	Recording Secretary
Pat Stone	AC3F	Corresponding Secretary
Al Alexander	K3ROJ	Treasurer
Eric Carl	KB3JDE	Property Mgr

### Committees

Repeater	Phil Hock W3VRD
VE Testing	Pat Stone AC3F
Public Service	Frank Stone AC3P
ECOMMS	Joe Miko WB3FMT
Contests	Bob Landis WA3SWA
Trustee	Frank Stone AC3P

### **ABOUT THE AERO AMATUER RADIO CLUB**

Meetings: First and Third Wednesdays at 7:30 pm at Coffman's Diner  
(Middle River and Orem's Rd.)

Nets: See Local Area Net Schedule

Repeaters: W3PGA (147.24 MHz - / 449.575 MHz -)

WEBSITE: <http://mywebpages.comcast.net/w3pga/>

## Net Reports

2 Meter Net: WB3FMT(NCS) W3JEH K3ROJ AC3P KB3KRW AC3F KB3NEU KB3RMX  
70 Cm Net: WB3FMT (NCS) AC3P (ANC) W3JEH (via 223.52 MHz) KB3NEU KB3KRW  
10 Meter Net: WB3FMT (NCS) AC3P W3VRD KB3KRW K3ROJ

### LOCAL AREA NETS

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Frequency (MHz)</b>	<b>NET NAME</b>
Daily	9 – 10 am	147.03	ORIOLE Net
Daily	6 – 6:30 pm	3.920	Maryland Emergency Phone Net
Daily	6:30 – 7 pm	146.670	Baltimore Traffic Net
Daily	7 pm and 10 pm	3.643	Maryland/DC/Delaware Traffic Net
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues	7:30 pm	146.670	Baltimore County <u>RACES</u> Net
2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed.	8 pm	28.445	AERO ARC Net
4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	8 pm	147.240	AERO ARC Net
5 <sup>th</sup> Wed.	8 pm	449.575	AERO ARC Net

## Emergency Communications



The April COMMEX was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of the month. Joe WB3FMT led the team at St. Josephs Hospital. Eric, KB3JDE covered CCBC Essex. Doug KB3KRW joined the effort for the first time.

Mark your calendars now for the following events:

- The first ever weekly RACES net Thursday, May 4 at 1930 hours on BACO 1
- Skywarn Basic training: May 13 at 0830 hours at the Harford County EOC
- Skywarn Advanced training: May 13 at 1300 hours at the Harford County EOC
- County Wide Multi Agency Drill: Road Rescue 06, Sunday June 4, 0700 – 1400 hours

## Public Service

The Public Service season is back in full swing. Bob, WA3SWA, helped with the MS Walk in Towson April 2. Several events are coming up and help is needed.

April 22 - MS Baltimore Walk contact: [n3cva@hotmail.com](mailto:n3cva@hotmail.com)

April 30 - March of Dimes Walk America contact: [n3vej@arrl.net](mailto:n3vej@arrl.net)

May 13 – Baltimore County Waterfest contact: [ac3p21220@yahoo.com](mailto:ac3p21220@yahoo.com)

June 10-11 MS Bike Tour Salisbury, Md. Contact: [n3cva@hotmail.com](mailto:n3cva@hotmail.com)

## VE Report

*By AC3F*

A test session was held at the North Point Branch of the library on March 18. There were 5 applicants. One upgraded to General and two passed the Technician Exam.

Thanks to WB3FMT, KB3KRV, KB3KRW, KB3RMX and AC3P for helping with this session.

The next session will be May 20<sup>th</sup> at White Marsh.

## Station Activities

KB3JVP is sporting a Kenwood TS570D. Welcome to newcomer Dave, KB3NEU to the AERO nets. K3ROJ is putting in the crops for the planting season. Welcome to KB3KRW to the AERO VE Team. AC3P is studying grounding techniques for a planned station upgrade. W3JEH made a rare appearance on the 440 net being patched in via 223.52 Mhz.

## Calvert Hall Curse Broken?

Last month we ran an article that analyzed the weather data for the Timonium hamfest from 1970's to 2004. The article hypothesized that there may be something to the "Calvert Hall Curse" rumor regarding bad weather on the hamfest weekend.

Over the last weekend of March there was another Timonium Hamfest. Although the weather did not resemble the balmy Bahamas, rain clouds were held in abeyance and even the sun broke through to keep the temperatures in the mid 50's. BARC caught a break from the "curse" this year.

AERO members were well represented at this year's fest. W3VRD, W3JEH, and KB3RMX each displayed their electronic wares in the tailgate area. AC3P, K3CXC, KB3KRV, KB3KRW, WA3SWA and WB3FMT patrolled the buildings and tailgaters looking for goodies.

In general attendance seemed moderate and hopefully was good enough to prompt a repeat performance in 2007.

## Election Day May 17

Per the Club Constitution elections for officers will be held at the May 17 Meeting. Don't miss your opportunity to have your say.

# The Time Machine

By AC3P



*Drake R2B Receiver*

Last November my son Tim, KB3BVW, was helping haul away trash from a house that had been sold. In the backyard he found a pile of debris that he loaded into his truck to be hauled to the dump.

Tim lifted layer upon layer of trash until he came upon two black metal boxes. On close inspection he noted that one of the boxes looked like a radio with a slide-rule dial. Both boxes had the name “Drake” printed on them.

Tim brought both units home and showed them to me. One was a venerable Drake R2B ham band receiver. The other was its companion speaker and “Q” multiplier, the Drake 2CQ.

After four days of drying out, I connected the R2B to my Butternut Vertical and powered it up. It came alive with signals across the 20 meter band. I then checked the other bands to find that this vintage radio still had life in it. Nothing smoked, sparked or sputtered.

I then tuned in a CW signal and turned on the Q multiplier. The Q circuit went into action peaking the signal and filtering out any side-channel interference.

I had often read articles in QST about the old boat anchor stations some hams had been putting on the air and thought of trying my hand at such a project. With the receiving end of such a station retrieved from a garbage pile, the search for a companion transmitter was underway.



*Heathkit AT-1*



*Heathkit VF-1*

I scanned EBAY day after day intending to find a Drake 2NT CW transmitter to make a matched pair. I missed several auctions. Then Phil, W3VRD, told me he had an old Heathkit AT-1 CW transmitter and VF-1 VFO for sale. The price for both was considerably lower than the Drake transmitter, plus I wouldn’t need to shop for transmit crystals. A deal was struck.

Assembling the vintage station was a challenge to spatial planning. The AC3F/AC3P station consists of an ICOM 706 MKIIG, an Astron Power Supply, and MFJ Trans-match and a Pentium computer with monitor and printer on a small computer desk in a corner of the dining room. Finding room for two boat anchors would require a feat of legerdemain.

I decided to remove a computer monitor that was slated to be used for a WINLINK node a place the Drake R2b on that shelf. I then moved some CD cases from the top shelf and put the Qmult/Speaker there. Finally the IC-706 was moved to a space with the antenna tuner and a smaller switching supply replaced the massive Astron.

With the vintage station components in place an antenna switch was added to allow the antenna tuner to be switched manually between the 706, AT-1 and R2B.

All was ready for time travel.

First I powered up the Drake receiver. The S-meter pinned and settled to its resting point as is customary with Drake gear. After about a minute for the tube filaments to warm up, CW signals and static poured from the speaker.

Next I fired up the AT-1 and VF1. The green glow from the VFO dial shown dimly. I tuned around the 80 meter band on the receiver, hunting for a CQ. Nothing heard.

I decided to get the AT-1 ready. First I manually switched the antenna to the transmitter. Then I turned on the plate current to the 6L6 final and keyed the telegraph key.

The current meter literally spang into action, taking a few seconds to stabilize. I adjusted the grid drive to it's proper level and then checked the plate current on the 6L6. After dipping to resonance and peaking the current to 80 milliamps, the AT-1 was ready to go.

Then I switched the antenna back to the receiver.

Still no one calling CQ.

Now the antenna was put back on the AT-1 and I sent several CQs. The transmitter was pumping 12 Watts out to the H6V through the MFJ tuner, the only modern equipment in the pipeline. The RF was being picked up by the computer speakers as a low raucous buzz. One could almost imagine that instead of a Heathkit CW transmitter, there was a rotary spark gap in the room.

After scanning the band for a few more minutes I found a fellow calling CQ. I quickly zero-beated his frequency, switched the antenna to the transmitter, and turned on the transmitter plate voltage and began to call him.

After completing the call and reversing the switch-over process I listened. I heard my call coming back to me. Contact! I turned out the the other station was in St. Louis. My signal was weak, a 339. The QSB and static was bad and after one exchange contact was lost.

A few days later I cranked up the time machine again. This time I tuned up on 40 meters. Again the process of tuning the transmitter and using both hands to turn dials and flip switches took me back to the early 1960's when I was a nervous novice.

I started calling CQ and to my surprise a strong W1 signal was coming calling me. This time a nice ragchew ensued. Bob in Boston was giving me a 599. Not bad for 12 watts. We exchanged station information and weather, talked about our jobs. Only when I got the call for chow did we sign off.

Finally on a Sunday morning another 40 meter QSO began when I zero-beated WB4 in North Carolina. This time I got a 559. Not the band master but none the less a good signal. After few exchanges we signed to go to church.

After decades of transceivers, using separate transmitters and receivers and manually tuning and switching antennas was truly a journey back in time. Those old skills once used were a bit rusty but were still there to make contacts. It was a truly hands-on experience that put the operator in amateur radio.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Meeting Coffmans 7:30 PM	4	5	
7 town Hamfest <a href="http://www.w3cwc.o">www.w3cwc.o</a>	8	9	10 10 Meter Net 28.445 MHz 8:00 PM	11	12	WATERFEST 2006
14 r's Day	15	16	17 Meeting Coffmans 7:30 PM  ELECTIONS	18	19	License Testin 1 – 5 PM White Marsh I
21	22	23	24 2 Meter Net 147.24 Mhz Rptr 8:00 PM	25	26	
28 A Hamfest d County <a href="http://www.maryland">www.maryland</a>	29 Memorial Day	30	31 70 cm Net 449.575 MHz Rptr 8:00 PM			