TELEGRAPH, WIRELESS

Newsday, Mar. 6, 1984

WILLIAM

SEXTON

How a Newfangled Invention Wound Up In Newfoundland

SHOREHAM'S engineers aren't the first in these parts to encounter fear and hostility against technology's onrush. Even Guglielmo Marconi, the revered inventor of the wireless telegraph, ran into such problems hereabouts.

Legend has it that the young Italian inventor conducted some of his early experiments in Babylon around the turn of the century. All that survives there, unfortunately, is a photo or two of the shack on Fire Island Avenue in which he supposedly worked, plus the hazy memories of a few oldtimers.

But if you happen into Babylon this week or next you'll see Marconi's name emblazoned on a banner flying over Deer Park Avenue. It invites visitors to a fascinating Smithsonian Institution exhibit making its debut at the village historical association.

Stop by on a Wednesday afternoon and your guide will be 75-year-old John Beinert, who can explain Marconi's experiments because as a boy he used the same gear to transmit two miles from his home in Glendale, Queens, to chums in Forest Park.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the Smithsonian show fails to chronicle Marconi's difficulties getting official support.

Marconi came to the United States for the first time in September, 1899, at the behest of James Gordon Bennett, the aggressive publisher of the New York Herald. Bennett wanted Marconi to transmit stories on the America's Cup race that autumn from the Atlantic off Sandy Hook. The project succeeded grandly.

Before Marconi returned to Europe in November, his British backers naturally moved to profit by the publicity. Let Marconi's eldest daughter, Degna, take over the story there.

"The company had arranged for him to make tests for the United States Navy, and the Army [Signal Corps] wanted him to demonstrate wireless between Fire Island and the Fire Island Lightship," she wrote in her 1962 biography of the inventor. There were some problems during the tests, but "the Bureau of Equipment recommended that Marconi apparatus be installed on several ships . . .

"The Navy was not convinced, citing that 'Communication might be interrupted altogether when tall buildings of iron intervene . . . The shock from the sending coil of wire may be quite severe and even dangerous to a person with a weak heart . . . The liability of accident from lightning has not been ascertained . . .'

"In other words," Degna Marconi went on, "the Navy was not prepared to go out on a limb for anything new and the Army, understandably, followed suit."

Marconi pressed on elsewhere, and two years later — Dec. 12, 1901 — he electrified the world with his transmission from England to Newfoundland. You have to wonder: If our bureaucrats had reacted differently in 1899, might Long Island have been focus of history that day instead of Newfoundland?

The immediately available record is confusing as to just how far Marconi's Fire Island Lightship experiments proceeded. The local belief is that Marconi launched a service to passing ships there in 1901. However, in that year and those following Marconi himself was totally engrossed in the transatlantic project.

When the first message from the United States was finally transmitted directly to Europe — President Theodore Roosevelt's greeting to King Edward VII, on Jan. 19, 1903 — the sending station was on Cape Cod. And when an American lightship was finally fitted out with radio in 1904, it was at Nantucket Shoals.

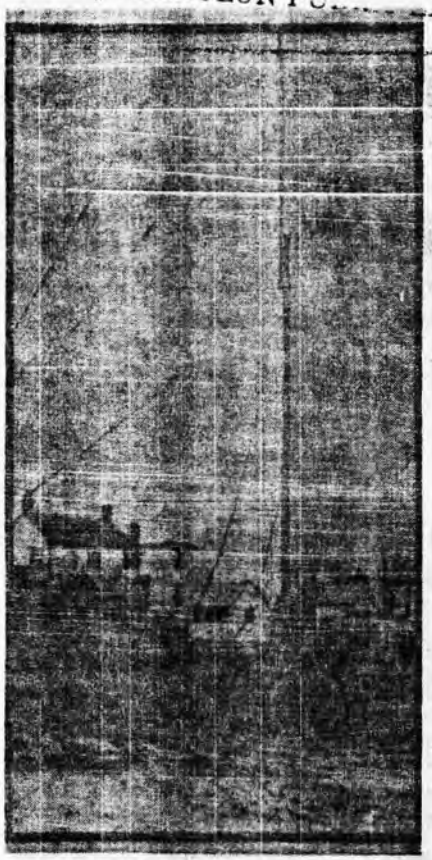
Long Island had missed the boat.

47

Newsday, March 6, 1984

Telegraph, Wireless

lth Co. - History



Young Marconi, right, conducted experiments from a shack in Babylon.

Marconi broadcasts over NBC. His experiments triggered the transformation of radio from a novelty into a central feature of modern life.

Marconi: He Filled the Empty Air

By Ridgely Ochs

On a blustery winter day in 1901, a young Italian inventor received a message in Newfoundland from across the Atlantic: three short clicks, the signal in Morse code for the letter S.

In that crude signal, physicist Guglielmo Marconi proved that his "wireless" could be used to transmit messages long distances. And he sounded the advent of an age in which the empty air would be forever filled with the din of human affairs.

That same winter, an unknown carpenter built a crude wooden shack at the corner of Fire Island Avenue and Virginia Road in Babylon Village. The 12-by-12-foot shack and the tall wooden pole next to it were erected for the 27-year-old inventor as a station for America's first shore-to-ship commercial wireless relay system — which Marconi's second wife, Maria Cristina, said in a 1958 letter was "really the cradle of the wireless in the United States of America." From there, Marconi's workers could communicate with ships up to 60 miles out at sea.

"My father loved ships — his father wanted him to go in the Navy," said Gioia Marconi Braga of Alpine, N.J., the third of the inventor's four children and the only one living in the United States. "He also lived so much on ships," she said, using them as floating laboratories for experiments, and he recognized the need for seamen to be able to communicate with the shore.

Thus, the relay station was important — and carefully guarded, according to Rosalind Rohl, head of the Village of Babylon Historical Society, which tomorrow is opening the first U.S. exhibition of "Marconi," a chronicle of the scientist's works and life put together by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

The secret nature of the station may explain why little is known about Marconi's work in Babylon and about the somewhat checkered past of the shack itself, Mrs. Rohl said. The station became obsolete around 1916, when Marconi began experiments using short electromagnetic waves, rather than long ones, for transmissions, enabling messages to be sent longer distances. But, Mrs. Rohl said, it is not clear when during that 15-year period the station was abandoned.

After many years of neglect, it was moved in 1929 to an RCA transmitting station in Rocky Point, and in 1971 to the grounds of the Joseph A. Edgar Elementary School on Route 25A. A plaque marking the original site of the physicist's station was erected in 1958 —and subsequently stolen.

Marconi's contribution to science has been similarly obscured, according to Mrs. Braga. "I remember when one of my children came home and said, 'Gee, mommy, I think you exaggerated. Nobody's heard of Marconi,'" she said.

Part of the reason may have been Marconi's modesty and reserve. "He didn't speak much; he was . . . introspective, sensitive," Mrs. Braga said. "He was very formal and kept a kind of distance between himself and others. But I felt that if my father squeezed my hand, it meant something. And if he said something happened, you could be sure it happened" — a reference to early skeptics, who doubted Marconi's transatlantic transmission.

Mrs. Braga, whose mother — like her father's — was Irish, came to the United States in the early 1950s and in 1974 established the Marconi International Fellowship, which honors scientists' contributions to telecommunications. The Smithsonian exhibition grew out of an exhibit by the fellowship at Columbia University three years ago commemorating the 80th anniversary of the first transatlantic transmission, according to Deborah Dawson, in charge of the museum's more than 100 traveling exhibits.

It took three years for the Smithsonian, which has enlarged many of the photographs from the first exhibit and borrowed artifacts from the Museum of American History, to put together this presentation, Ms. Dawson said. The exhibit is scheduled to go to museums in such far-flung places as Tampa, Fla., Oak Ridge, Tenn., and Logan, Kan., after it leaves Babylon on March 18.

Although Mrs. Braga, who was born 15 years after the relay station was built and was raised in Italy, said she knows little about Marconi's visits to Long Island, some Long Islanders do. Indeed, a square mile in Copiague was once named Marconiville by John Campagnoli, an engineer who had known Marconi in their native Bologna, and who bought the land abutting the railroad station in 1906-1907.

Renato Giorgini, 77, who grew up in Marconiville and now lives in a nursing home in Babylon, recalls how he and a group of villagers posed with Marconi for a picture taken about 1912 in front of what was the the Marconiville Hotel.

Eighty-nine-year-old Ester Sguanci, whose family owns the Italian Landmark, a restaurant in Copiague, remembers Marconi from when she was a young girl in Bologna and he was an elegantly dressed, by then world-renowned scientist.

"She was 11 years old and she lived in the building where he was going to the tailor," said Mrs. Sguanci's daughter-in-law, Maria. "She remembers that he always dressed very nicely and that he was nice and kind to her, talking to her, throwing her a kind word."

When she moved to Copiague, she began collecting Marconi memorabilia and corresponding with Mrs. Braga. Asked if Mrs. Sguanci plans to attend the 1 PM opening ceremonies tomorrow at the museum, 117 West Main St., her daughter-in-law said, "Oh yes, she is very excited . . . She has always been interested in him." The exhibition will be open 1 to 4 PM daily. Admission is free.

Newsday
SDAY, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1984

VF Telegraph

2/00

Wireless

Newsday

Long Islander of the Century™

Long Islander of the Century is a daily promotional feature produced by the Newsday Marketing Department

Monday – Thursday Newsday presents another nominee. Later this year, vote for your Long Islander of the Century choices.

Guglielmo Marconi

"Father of Radio" Revolutionized Communications

Newsday Photo

The sound was hardly monumental — just three short taps, Morse code for the letter "S." Yet Guglielmo Marconi's first transatlantic radio transmission marked the beginning of a communications revolution.

Born in Bologna, Italy Marconi was the son of a wealthy landowner father and an aristocratic Irish mother. After failing the University of Bologna entrance exam, he studied science on his own. He was only twenty years old when he built an apparatus capable of sending and receiving signals by electrical waves.

The Italian government's disinterest in his ideas prompted a move to England to start his own wireless telegraphy company. His transmissions traveled longer and longer distances: first across the English Channel, later across the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1902, shortly after sending those three earth-shattering taps across the ocean, he chose Long Island as the site for developing shore-to-ship transmissions. He eventually constructed a twelve-square-foot wooden shack in Babylon from which he sent the first shore-to-ship message. The shack has been preserved on the grounds of the Rocky Point School complex.

Marconi's wireless equipment summoned rescue ships for two well-known ocean liners that sank, the "Republic" and the "Titanic." The disasters resulted in laws requiring all large passenger ships to have wireless equipment.

Marconi received numerous awards, including the Nobel Prize and British knighthood. Locally, his close friend, John Campagnoli, honored him by building a hotel in Copaigue and naming it after him: the Marconiville Hotel. — Cynthia Blair

MILESTONES

in the life of Guglielmo Marconi

- 1874 - Born April 25 in Bologna, Italy
- 1894 - Sets up wireless telegraph system in his home
- 1899 - Sends first wireless telegraph message across the English Channel to France
- 1902 - Sends first wireless shore-to-ship radio message from Babylon
- 1909 - Wins Nobel Prize in physics
- 1909 - Is made a Senator of the kingdom of Italy for life
- 1919 - Represents Italy at Paris Peace Conference after World War I
- 1937 - Dies on July 20

FLASHBACK

to 1901 – the year...

Theodore Roosevelt A.P. Photo

- **Marconi sends the first transatlantic wireless signal**
- **Queen Victoria dies after 64-year reign**
- **First Nobel prizes are awarded**
- **License plates are required by law in New York City**
- **The electronic hearing aid is invented**
- **Theodore Roosevelt is inaugurated President. His Oyster Bay home is the summer White House.**
- **The Rockefeller Institute for medical research is founded**
- **Winston Churchill lectures at Carnegie Hall on the Boer War**

Pag

Birth Of The Wireless In Babylon

Reuter Talks Cpnit 1981

by Debbie Hyman

Not many residents of Babylon Village are aware of the important role their community played in history on an early winter day in 1901. It was from this community that an Italian immigrant by the name of Guglielmo Marconi sent the first wireless radio transmission across the Atlantic Ocean.

Commercial radio had its origins in a small shack on Fire Island Avenue and Virginia Beach Road in Babylon Village. According to various sources, Marconi used the shack to experiment with trasoceanic radio communications. He astonished the world by flashing the letter "S" across the Atlantic Ocean. The shed, which stood less than half a mile from the Great South Bay measured only 12 ft. by 14 ft., and resembled the shape of a doghouse. It provided ample room for two radio operators.

Major E. H. Armstrong, a radio engineer, wanted the shack to be preserved as a historic relic. He subsequently purchased it and sold it to the Radio Corporation of America (R.C.A.) .In the year 1929, officials of R.C.A. removed the shack from its site in Babylon and moved it to Rocky Point, L.I., as an historical artifact. Rocky Point was the locality of a large transmitting center for R.C.A. To this date, there is not sufficient data available locally concerning the exact nature of Marconi's experiments in the small Babylon shed. During that time period Marconi's inventions aroused universal scientific interest and as a result, his equipment was kept well guarded.

Marconi's prescence on L.I. can still be felt today. A man by the name of John Campagnoli, a colleague of Marconi since their days together in Italy, bought land on L.I. and named it in honor of his dear friend. "Marconiville" still survives, on a square mile area in Copaigue, lined with shady trees and historic names.

Unfortunately, the plaque that once marked the spot where Marconi's small wooden shed stood, was stolen years ago. The shed has been restored and stands in the schoolyard of the Joseph Edgar Elementary School on Route 25A in Rocky Point.

Appreciation is expressed once again to the cooperative people who helped compile the information needed for this article at the "Babylon Village Historical and Reservations Society." The museum is open to the public on Saturday afternoons from 2 P.M. to 4 P.M. A visit to the museum will prove quite worthwhile if you would care to learn more about the history of Babylon Village and see artifacts and exhibits concerning your historic area.

Thurs. July 27, 1972
Babylon Beacon

Pg 1 of 2

Telegraph, Wireless

The Home Of The Wireless

By Leslie Lehr,
St. Joseph's School

Near the corner of Virginia Avenue, the former Chew Property in Babylon, there stood a little shack which played an important part in the world of wireless telegraphy. It was here in this shack that commercial radio in the United States had its beginning. This radio station was moved to Rocky Point Long Island by the Radio Corporation of America. The officials of this company identified the shack about 1929.

This station was built in the late autumn of 1900, or the early winter of 1901 by Guglielmo Marconi according to the best available information.

After being in use in Babylon for about ten years, the shack was abandoned as a result of the appearance of newer stations. Major Edwin H. Armstrong said the shack would be preserved as a historic relic and that it would be used to display a radio exhibit.

The discovery of the station's existence and the verification of its part in American radio came about partly by coincidence. While Captain H.J. Round and Major Armstrong were in Bayport, Captain Round, who had been an associate with Guglielmo Marconi, mentioned the building to Major Armstrong. It was Major Armstrong who had established that the shack was actually the base of the present-day American system of wireless communications. After purchasing and offering the shack to the Radio Corporation of America, Armstrong came to Babylon, moved the station onto a truck and transported it to Rocky Point. At Rocky Point, the shack was placed beneath the great transmitting and receiving towers.

The shed itself is small in size and it measures twelve by fourteen feet. The shed provided room for two operators. It stood less than one-half mile from the Great South Bay, and Fire Island could be viewed from it on a clear day.

There had been a high mast erected by the shack, but it was not on the property when Major Armstrong made his discovery. It is probable that this mast was taken by a few of the neighbors who used it for kindling. In the early days of radio, it was a known and accepted fact that iron poles could not be used for antennae. This pole had to be spliced because a height of one hundred and seventy feet was Tuckerton New Jersey.

At that time it was necessary to use long waves for dependable long distance communication. As a result high steel towers were needed to support the massive antennae structures. Although the longwave system has been practically eliminated in favor of short waves, six of the original twelve four hundred foot towers still remain at the station. The towers help the navigators on Long Island Sound obtain a position and are well-known landmarks.

When the shortwave transmission began to be used, two transmitters were installed in a so-called tin shack some distance from the main building of the station. This became Building Number One where original experimental work was done. It is a single story structure with all equipment on one floor. Numerous shortwave transmitters and suitable transmitting antennas were later installed in two additional wings, which were later added onto the main building. In 1930, Building Number Nine was constructed about one and one-half mile from Building Number One. It is a two story structure with power equipment located on the first floor and transmitters on the second floor. The purpose of the construction of this building was that the area around had been utilized to capacity. Additional utilization in this area would have resulted in the extension of transmission lines and it would have brought on too much radio frequency energy loss.

One hundred and forty shortwave antennas are constructed on the approximately five-thousand acres of land which the station occupies. Eight transmitters are now operating two hundred different frequencies, and are now transmitting to fifty-one foreign countries. The staff of the Rocky Point station consists of eighty-five engineers, technicians, riggers, mechanics and supporting office force who operate under the direction of Mr. H.A. Taylor.

The Rocky Poin station serves the public in many useful and varied ways. It is connected with the Riverhead station which is its companion receiving station and with the central control point in New York City. These connections are made through an extensive wire system.

Read down columns - continuing on next page

The Home of the Wireless pg 2
Thurs. July 27, 1972
Babylon Beacon

desired. The antenna consisted of a verticle type wire which reached at only a slight angle to the ground. Buried in the earth there laid a large zinc ring which encircled the mast. This ring was forty feet in diameter and it provided the ground connection.

In order that the historic importance of this site might be remembered always, a stone marker has been placed by the Village of Babylon at the corner of Fire Island and Virginia Avenues.

The radio station at Rocky Point was officially opened on November 5, 1921 by President Harding. This station was built shortly after the organization of the American Radio Corporation and at the end of the first World War. At that time the demands for world-wide communication were increasing, and most major foreign countries were pressing to establish direct high speed communication with the United States. The Rocky Point station was known as Radio Central. The Radio Corporation of America planned to make the Rocky Point station it's main transmitting station in the corporation system. At that time, the corporation's system included Marion Massachusetts, New Brunswick and

The men at the Rocky Point station have done more than to conduct regular radio traffic operations. The station itself and those of its staff have contributed to the art of radio. From the gifted and inspired predecessors of the Rocky Point station, there have come many inventions and developments which have helped make the radio system the backbone of world-wide communications. This all started in Babylon. Indeed this has given Babylon great historic significance.

BATHING BEAUTIES of the past at Montauk Point.

Baby

Return to Full Record

10789108
TECH ISLAND / A Salute to Wireless Founder / New program at Polytechnic would make Marconi proud
Newsday
(ND)
- Sunday October 15, 2000
By: MARK HARRINGTON
Edition: NASSAU
Section: BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY
Page: C11
Word Count: 649

TEXT:
PASSING at even moderate speeds at the corner of Fire Island Avenue and Virginia Road in Babylon, it's easy to mistake the small black-iron sign for a warning about curbing your dog.

But there, in tiny silver letters, stands the following proclamation: "This is the site of the birth of the American wireless. A pioneer station here in 1901 first talked with ships at sea." Credit goes to Guglielmo Marconi.

Why Marconi was spending his time talking to ships at sea is a matter for another column. The point today? Who knew that Long Island was the birthplace of the American wireless? And just what is the American wireless, anyway?

As it turns out, what Marconi did in his little Babylon shack was to wirelessly transmit telegraph signals to boats for the first time. What's important now is that Long Island's legacy as a contributor to the growth of wireless is-like this column-about to take another great leap.

Companies like ThinkersGroup in Great River and Symbol Technology in Holtsville have been carrying legend forward, innovating in areas such as the wireless Web and wireless local area networks.

But there's more.

This month, the folks at Polytechnic University announced the creation of a wireless graduate program. The Masters in Wireless Innovation program, aimed at working professionals who already have engineering degrees, puts Long Island in league with other big tech regions that have come up with original ideas that help them keep ahead of the curve by cultivating higher-level tech innovators.

"This is a first," said Ivan Frisch, executive vice president and provost, who oversees the Long Island graduate center. "Why wireless? We have everything coming together here. It's a hot sector and one of our strongest focuses. We

have the strongest group of professors in the region, eight specialists."

A tour of the wireless laboratory in the Farmingdale campus provides an interesting window into the program, which kicks off in January.

A half-dozen work stations stacked with complex instruments are the lab's foundation. Watching green lines dance across oscilloscopes, you get the sense that Frank Cassara, professor of electrical engineering, would slap your hand if you answered the temptation to adjust even one of the knobs.

Cassara said the graduate program will focus on mobile computing, wireless e-commerce, tech strategy and management.

Frisch said he expects the current 350 Polytech grad students on Long Island to blossom to up to 2,000 as that and other masters programs are launched. Other academic masters programs include Management of Technology, and Telecommunications and Information Management, among others.

Frisch notes that Polytech on Long Island will shift its focus to graduate programs as it vacates the Farmingdale campus (which opened in 1964) and opens a new leased facility near here, with another at the Tech Center in Great River. Other locations are possible, Frisch said. Why not Babylon as a possible satellite location?

I did a little research on Marconi's facility there, with the help of Alison McDermott of the Babylon public library. Did you know Marconi was once so revered here that friends named a mile-wide swath of land adjacent to the Copiague train station Marconiville? And what of Marconi's little 12-by-12-foot wireless station, from whence he sent his first historic message? It now sits in front of the Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School, in Rocky Point.

I called the school last week to confirm it was still there. Sure enough. Just for kicks, I asked the receptionist if she knew what Marconi did.

"Of course," she said. "He invented the telephone."

CAPTION:
Courtesy of Babylon Historical and Presevation Society - 1) In a little shack in Babylon, above, 2) Guglielmo Marconi, inset, wirelessly transmitted telegraph signals to boats. Carrying on the legacy, officials at Polytechnic University have created a wireless graduate program. 3) This is a first, says provost Ivan Frisch, at right.

DESCRIPTORS: COLUMN PROGRAM POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY TECHNOLOGY TELEPHONE

ere Wireless Had Early Start

Commercial radio in the United States had its beginning in a little shack off Fire Island ave., near the corner of Virginia ave., the former Chew property, Babylon, now the site of a trim little housing development. While many residents of the village knew of tiny little radio station near the banks of the Sumpwams River, few suspected that it played such an important part in the world of wireless telegraphy. About 1929 it was identified by officials of the Radio Corporation of America who had it moved to corporation's reservation at Rocky Point, L. I.

Major Edwin H. Armstrong, radio engineer and inventor, at that time said the shack would be preserved as a historic relic and would later house a radio exhibit. The small building had been in use in Babylon for about ten years. Wider range of newer stations finally made its abandonment necessary.

According to the best information available, Guglielmo Marconi erected the station in the late autumn of 1900, or early winter of 1901. This gives it a date in wireless history while Marconi was experimenting with in transoceanic radio communications and about the time he amazed the world by flashing the letter "S" through the ether across the Atlantic Ocean.

After Major Armstrong established that the shack actually was the starting place of the present-day American system of wireless communications, he purchased it and offered it to the Radio Corporation of America. He then came to Babylon, loaded it on a truck and removed it to Rocky Point, where it was placed beneath the great transmitting and receiving towers.

Discovery of the existence of the station and verification of the part it played in early American radio came about partly by coincidence. Capt. H. J. Round, one of the leading engineers of the British Marconi Wireless Company, and an associate with Marconi in the latter's early work of extending the use of his discoveries and inventions happened to mention to Major Armstrong the existence of the building. The two were at Bayport at the time.

The shed is about the shape of the conventional doghouse. It could have been mistaken for a toolhouse, or a garage. It measures 12 by 14 feet, and in the days of its use merely provided room for two operators, one of whom lived in a house nearby, and which is no longer standing. It stood less than one-half mile from the Great South Bay, and from it on clear days, a view of Fire Island could be had.

A high mast which had been erected was no longer on the property when Major Armstrong made his discovery. Very probably it was used for guiding by some of the neighbors. It was a well-known and accepted scientific fact in the early days of radio that an iron pole could not be employed as a support for antennae (iron or steel masts are used exclusively today) and as a height of 170 feet was desired, the pole was spliced. The antenna was a single wire of the vertical type reaching at only a slight angle to the ground. About the mast was laid the large zinc ring, buried in the earth. It was approximately 40 feet in diameter, and provided the ground connection.

Because of the fact that Marconi's early inventions had aroused universal scientific interest and had set individuals to work in laboratories all over the world, Marconi's equipment at Babylon was carefully guarded. Visitors were not permitted at the station. This may explain why so little data was available locally on the work conducted there.

Quite recently the Village of Babylon through its historian, Miss Beulah Muncy, placed a stone marker at the curb, corner of Fire Island and Virginia aves., so that the historic nature of the site may be recalled for all time.

The story of the Rocky Point transmitting station is the important follow-up of the Marconi invention, and of the great role played by this locality in world-wide communication.

Officially opened Nov. 5, 1921, by President Harding, the Rocky Point station was built shortly after the organization of the Radio Corporation of America, and the end of World War I when the radio facilities of its predecessor, the American Marconi Company, were returned by the U. S. Government to private control. At that time the demands for world-wide communications were increasing rapidly and all major foreign governments were pressing for direct high speed radio communications with the United States. The Rocky Point station, known as Radio Central, was planned to be the main transmitting station in the RCA system which at that time also included Marion, Mass.; New Brunswick, and Tuckerton, N. J.

The state of the art at that time made it necessary to use long-waves for dependable long distance communications, which in turn dictated the use of high steel towers to support massive antenna structures. Although developements over the years have practically eliminated the longwave system in favor of shortwaves, six of the original twelve 400 ft. towers can still be seen at the station. As a matter of fact, they are a well known landmark and serve navigators in Long Island Sound for obtaining a "fix."

With the inauguration of shortwave transmission, two transmitters were installed in a so-called tin shack located some distance from the main building which became known as Building No. 1. The original experimental work was done at this location. Later, two additional wings were added to the main building and numerous shortwave transmitters installed together with suitable transmitting antennas. During the year 1930 an additional building, known as Building No. 9, was erected approximately one and one-half miles from Building No. 1 to house additional shortwave transmitters.

Building No. 1 is a single story structure with all equipment on one floor. Building No. 9 is a two story structure with the power equipment located on the first floor and the transmitters on the second floor. The necessity for the second building was primarily due to the fact that the area surrounding Building No. 1 had been utilized nearly as far as possible for shortwave antennas without making the transmission lines excessively long and thus incurring too much radio frequency energy loss.

Presently the operating facilities at the Rocky Point station consist of 54 short wave transmitters and 100 shortwave antennas. Two long-wave transmitters and the use of two long-wave antennas are also available.

On the approximately 5,000 acres which the station occupies there are now 140 shortwave and masts constructed on lower steel towers and wooden masts. Eighty transmitters working on 200 different frequencies now regularly transmit to 51 foreign countries. A staff of 45 engineers, technicians, riggers, mechanics, and supporting office force under the direction of Mr. H. A. Taylor, Engineer-in-Charge, keep the plant maintained and operating. Some idea of the magnitude of the operation may be gained from the fact that the station uses enough electric power to supply 3,000 average American homes. (Long Island Lighting Company supplies the power as the station generates power only in emergencies, and in very limited amounts.)

Services regularly handled at Rocky Point include the following: telegraph message traffic, international telex service, leased circuits, Government and Private; p[illegible] (voice and music) transmissions and radiophoto (picture) transmissions.

The Rocky Point station is connected with its companion receiving station Riverhead, and the control point, or message center, in New York City through an extensive wire and radio relay system.

Besides fulfilling its roll in regular radio traffic operations, the Rocky Point station and [illegible] who have started it, have played important part in the development of the radio art. Many of the inventions which have [illegible] communications art to its present state were conceived [illegible] at Rocky Point.

Telegraph, Wireless
2/24/96

Distant Sparks*

Volume 3, Issue 1 Winter-Spring 1999 *Distant Sparks - Translation: "Telefunken"

Friends of Long Island Wireless History

43 SAYVILLE BLVD., SAYVILLE, N. Y. 11782 (516) 589-2700

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Connie Currie

Our Trustees meeting at the WWII U.S. Coast Guard
Wireless Station at East Moriches

On January 13th, Vice President, Christopher Bacon; Treasurer, Ralph Williams and I, your President; met with Commander Heyl of the Moriches Coast Guard Station. The subject was the 1940/41 radio station on the grounds. The Commander had his Chief Engineer, Electrician and Finance Officers present. The outcome of morning talks was that Commander Heyl and his Officers are open to the Friends of Long Island Wireless making the building into a museum and working with the Coast Guard on their radio history, as long as the Friends can provide assurance that they can complete the job. This is not an unreasonable request.

Up to this point in time, most of the work of the organization has been in the hands of the Board of Trustees. It is now for you, who are reading this letter, members, future members, supporters, all, to do your part. If the Friends of Long Island Wireless History are to realize their primary goal and create a first rate radio museum on the Island, then we MUST hear from everyone of you.

We need the following: Promissory notes from businesses (big and little) for support with funds or supplies for the restoration of the radio building. We also need you to promise to give at least an hour of your time, painting, building, using your electrical, plumbing, carpentry, etc. abilities. There are "Sweat Equity" grants available, which will match the cost of every hour labored at the facility.

Have you ever been to a barn-raising or heard about them? Well this is it. There will be fun and food, as well as work. Please call one of our Trustees and come on board.

THANKS-DANKE-MERCI BEAUCOUP

Many thanks to member, George Flanagan of Smithtown for copies of postcards of stations at Sagaponack, Montauk, Amagansett and Easthampton along with information about Mackay Radio and Mackay's Brentwood Station. Re-prints from the Historical outline of Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company appear in this issue of *Distant Sparks*. George states" *I never visited the Mackay's Station when it was in operation, although I did visit the VOA station that shared the site with Mackay during the fifties (Quite a thrill for an impressionable kid!) Only after the station shut down did I find out that an old acquaintance of mine, Lee Hoffman, had been the Station Manager. He was there from I think the mid-fifties until 1986 when it went silent."*

Thanks to member, Samuel M. Tuthill of Ferguson, Missouri for photograph of the Marconi Station at Sagaponack, Long Island. The photo was sent to him by his cousins who live there.

Thanks to Professor Velimir Abramovic for his E Mail to Natalie. He is a Professor of Philosphy of Art and Mass Communication at the University of Belgrade, Yugoslavia. He states: *"I have a very interesting photograph of the undoubtedly Tesla like power station, or electromagnetic laboratory, government built in-Canada. It is of the inside of the laboratory near Montreal which I got from two Canadian video artists (Gesele and Stephanie) who made a video here in Belgrade in July of '98. What is even more strange is that I have in the same time a photograph from Krasnoyarsk in Siberia which represents the copy of the Tesla Wardenclyffe Tower and looks almost the same as that beside Montreal. Photograph by Prof. Ignatyev, who is a member of the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Science. He does research in properties of Tesla's currents, its influence on earth, human mind and weather conditions - it is all obviously heavly sponsored. You will be amazed."*

POSTCARDS

We have postcards available of four Long Island Wireless sites:

The U.S. Coast Guard WW 11 Radio station at East Moriches; ; The 1902 Marconi Building (originally at Babylon-now at Rocky Point); the RCA Radio Central Bldg. #1 Transmitting Station at Rocky Point and the Telefunken Wireless Station at Sayville.

Cost: 75 cents each - $3.00 set of 4

Mail orders may be sent to: FLIWH, 43 Sayville Blvd, Sayville, NY 11782. Plus $1.00 shipping

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The following Committees are looking for members who can devote some time. We need you! You have a talent, an interest and we can use it. Let us know about you.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

Volunteer carpenters, plumbers, roofers, electricians. painters, spacklers, masons are needed.

FUND RAISING COMMITTEE;

People are needed to contact businesses (big and small) for funds and supplies. Contributions are tax-deductible as we are a 501 (c) (3) Non-profit organization.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE;

Getting the Friends' message to the public.

"DISTANT SPARKS" NEWSLETTER

Send in those articles regarding Long Island Wireless for our quarterly Newsletter. We welcome articles, as well as any photographs you may wish to share with our readers.

Send to :

Connie Currie, Pres., 43 Sayville Bv, Sayville NY 11782 Tel: (516) 589-2700
E Mail: Comstance@aol.com or
Natalie Stiefel, Editor,405 Sayvile Bv. Sayville NY 11782 (516) 589-6692
E Mail: Nataliast@aol.com

Publication	Deadline
March	early February
June	early May
September	early August
December	early November

WIRELESS IN THE NEWS

Newspaper clippings from Microfilm archives of The New York Times

The following appeared in the
New York Times issue of February 9, 1917

Reason For Seizing Wireless

Unfriendly operators could have interfered with messages to warships. Although the thirty German employees of the German-owned wireless station at Sayville, L.I. were suddenly forced to leave the plant without operators or mechanics when the United States broke with Germany on Saturdays, officers and enlisted men of the American Navy have already filled their places, so that the transatlantic communication has been interrupted only for a few hours. Only because of poor static conditions has the station not been able to handle, with its new staff of workers, a normal amount of business. It sends to Berlin now about 3,000 words a day, mostly press dispatches, and receives about 4,000 words.

Because it had been demonstrated earlier in the war, when the German squadron under Admiral von Spee defeated Sir Christopher Cradock off Coronel, Chili, that wireless stations in neutral territory could furnish valuable information upon the movements of enemy ships, it was decided to seize the Sayville wireless. Nor was the desire to prevent the sending of information to the ships of any belligerent the only reason for putting American officers in charge of the station. If the American Navy is forced to patrol the coast or to convoy vessels across the Atlantic, the wireless may be used to communicate with warships.

If German operators had remained at the Sayville keys, they might have prevented American vessels on the seas from communication with one another. Wireless operators are able to tell by the "note" of a call whether a warship of the British Navy is sending. By altering their spark frequencies and pounding on the keys, they might be able to prevent communication, just as von Spee's operators had prevented the British ships from giving their positions to one another.

No code messages are accepted by the censors at the Sayville station now, and the station is not used at all for diplomatic business. Most of the matter sent and received is for newspapers and press associations. The officers there believe most of the Germany Embassy messages are sent to Hamburg through the transatlantic station at Tuckerton, N.J.

Extra guards have not been put around the seventy-five acre station, and it is not difficult to approach the wireless masts, the dynamos and sending apparatus without challenge by a sentry.

Most of the thirty Germans who worked for the Atlantic Communication Company, have left Sayville after being thrust from their quarters at the station with no time to gather their belongings.

SPOTLIGHT ON Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company

The following are excerpts from the Mackay publication: ***"A Brief Historical Outline and Description of the Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company"****, submitted by member, George Flanagan.*

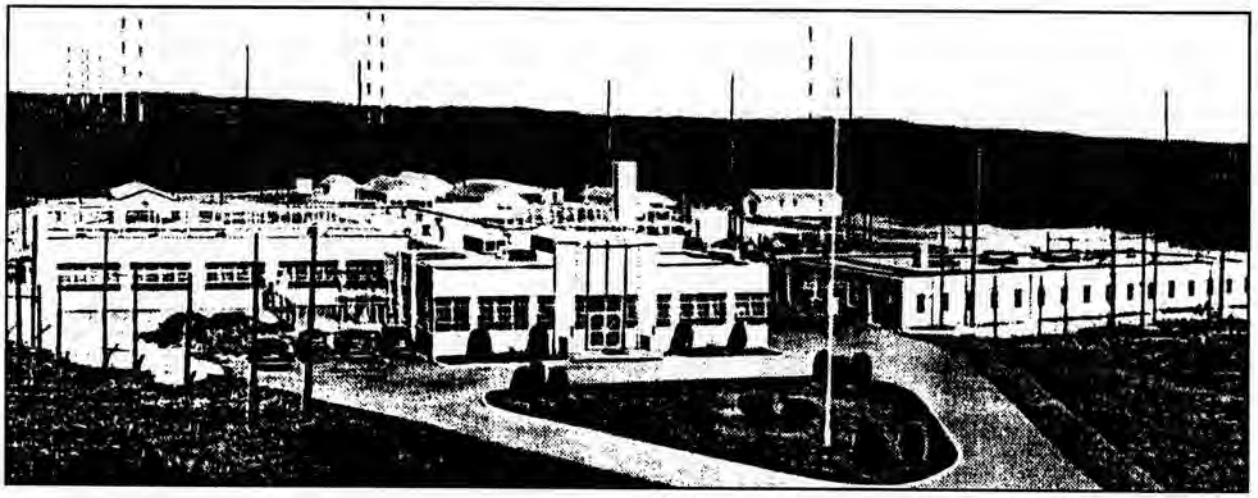
The Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company is the successor of the radio communication business of the Federal Telegraph Company. Federal Telegraph Company commenced activities in California about 1909, having been organized by a group of Stanford University men who had secured the U.S. rights to the patents of Pulsen and Pedersen of Copenhagen, Denmark. At the time, the only practical method of radio communication was by the use of damped waves generated by the spark type of equipment. Practical application was confined largely to radio communication with ships at sea, and the use of radio for point to point communications was very limited, largely because of the inability to reliably cover long distances, particularly in the daytime.

Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company acquired the communication service of the Federal Telegraph Company in August, 1927, and immediately instituted a program of expansion using as a nucleus for its services out of New York, the old Sayville, Long Island, radio station which was operated by the Navy during the World War, and which was acquired under a lease arrangement. In 1934, the Sayville property became too small to accommodate the plant required, which led to the establishment of a new central station near Brentwood, Long Island. where in 1936 all of the plant for point to point services was installed, the Sayville station being discontinued. At the same time, all marine services formerly operated from Sayville were established at a separate station located near Amagansett, Long Island.

During the years 1928-1937, Makay Radio and Telegraph Company inaugurated point to point radio telegraph services, with its own radio transmitting and receiving stations near New York, Washington, D. C., New Orleans, Chicago, Seattle, Portland (Oregon), San Francisco, Los Angeles, Honolulu and Manila. It operates to the points shown in Europe through traffic agreements with Foreign Government Telegraph Administrations and private companies. The stations with which it communicates in South America and Cuba are owned by subsidiary companies of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation. In the Orient, it has traffic agreements with the Chinese and Japanese Telegraph Administrations.

For its ship to shore services, it operates coastal transmitting and receiving stations at Thomaston (Maine), Long Island , New York Harbor, Jupiter (Florida), Portland (Oregon), San Francisco and Los Angeles. It controls the operation of radio equipment on over 300 American ships and renders service to many others. The large transmitting station at Palo Alto (California) communicates directly with New York, Chicago, Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles, Honolulu, Manila, Tokyo and Shanghai. The Central receiving station at Southampton (Long Island), the coastal station at Amagansett (Long Island), the main traffic point to point Operation Department at 67 Broad Street, New York City, which controls the Brentwood transmitting and Southampton receiving stations, the main building of the Brentwood station and the 23,000 volt transformer station which supplies power to the Brentwood station.

The Brentwood transmitting station contains twenty high frequency radio telegraph transmitters, ranging in size from 2 to 50 Kw power output. Through the medium of highly directive antenna systems, radio telegraph messages are transmitted to distant points by automatic control from the Central Operating Department in New York City, where messages are perforated on tape and transmitted by means of a machine which directly controls the Brentwood transmitters. These control impulses are carried from New York to Brentwood by two methods, one being via leased wires and the other via a six-channel ultra high frequency radio system using a wavelength of about 3 1/2 meters.



The Transmitter building at Brentwood in the center of a "farm" of about 80 separate antennas. Wire lines, carry signals from the building to each antenna. The antennas point in almost every direction, each being "aimed" at the appropriate ovrseas receiving station. Various sizes of antennas are required to accommodate the wide range of frequencies used, the highest frequency antennas being the smallest, in general. Radio proagation conditions for a given frequency change hour-by-hour, during the day, over the seasons of the year, and over a cycle of years. Changes often occur with minutes. To prevent interruption of service, provisions are made to change the transmitter frequencies and antennas to operate on optimum frequencies.

Signals received from distant points at the main receiving station at Southampton are automatically conveyed to the New York Operating Department over leased wires where a machine writes them in telegraph characters on a moving tape, from which radio telegraph operators copy directly on typewriters.

At the Southampton receiving station is also a Central Operating Department for the ship to shore radio telegraph services. Here a group of operators receive messages from ships and transmit to ships through a direct control of transmitters located twenty-four miles away at the Amagansett coastal transmitting station. This service, in addition to high frequencies, include the usual medium and low frequency bands allocated for mobile services by the International Telegraph Communications Convention. Ship traffic is conveyed between the New York City Marine Bureau of the Company and the Southampton station over leased telegraph wires. To supplement this ship to shore service a small radio station is located in the building at 67 Broad Street, New York City for communication with ships in or near the Harbor.

The Brentwood transmitting station comprises an area of approximately 1100 acres and is supplied with power over dual three phase, 23,000 volt transmission lines from the system of the Long Island Lighting Company. A transformer and switching station, at the edge of the property, connects the high tension system with two underground feeders which carry the power to the main building at 2300 volts, at which point addition step down transformer banks exist for supplying such load as requires 100, 220 or 440 volts. An underground communication cable from the edge of the property provides facilities for the leased control and communication wires. A small receiving station on the property, one mile from the main building, serves to bring into the main building, via underground cables, those control circuits from New York which are operate by ultra high frequency radio.

MARCONI STATION

SAGAPONACK, L. I., N. Y.

Member, Samuel Tuthill states:

"Here is another picture of the Marconi Station at Sagaponack which was sent to me by my cousin who lives there. This appears to be a later pictue than the one I sent you in the Summer 1997 "Distant Sparks". The "tower" looks like 3 long telephone poles bolted together, and appears to have a cross-arm at the top. Such a tower would have had to have guy wires, and if you look very carefully (with a magnifying glass) you can see what looks like little insulators that probably are on guy wires.

Naval Radio Station, Amagansett, Long Island, N. Y.
(Courtesy George Flanagan postcard collection)

Member,Dick Dillman of California,recreated the look of a gone-by commercial coastal station. Dick used a Boehme tape reader powered by a 120 -Vdc motor to send CQ's during the event.

DITS AND DAHS

Member, Dick Dillman(W6AWO) is restoring a RCA Radoiomarine 4U Console from a WWII Victory ship that has been placed in the restoration room of the San Francisco Maritime Museum. It will be the centerpiece of a permanent display on Maritime radio.

Dillman was featured in the February QST in his recreation of a commercial coast station from years gone by. The Collins 51J-4 receiver was lovingly restored and used with a remote-controle Collins 30K-5 transmitter during the 1998 Classic Radio exchange. Dillman states: We (the Maritime Radiio Historical Society) have obtained the call K6KPH in honor of the "wireless giant of the Pacific, KPH, the RCA station at Bolinas, CA. The tape loop I send on the Boehme keying head even duplicates the VVV QSX marker of the original KPH."

International Marconi Day: Look for the Annual International Marconi Day to be held by the Radio Central Amateur Radio Club at the Marconi 1902 Wireless Building in front of the Frank J. Carasiti School in Rocky Point on the weekend of April 24-25, celebrating Marconi's 125th birthday.

The world was saddened by the death of King Hussein of Jordan on Feruary 7th. The King was an avid Ham radio Operator.

People are realizing that the history of radio must be saved or it will disappear from public knowledge. We were told by Elliot N. Sivowitch of the Smithsonian Institutue that there is a collection of radio equipment that had served with the U.S. Parks and Forestry Department. How many of you knew that radio played a major part in the U.S. Forestry Service? They are looking for a permanent home for this collection.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to new members:
Robert Brady, P. Bulic, Dick Dillman, Chris Harbach, Howard Lehman, W. Wagner and Ronald Young.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Our thanks to some of our new and former members who have signed up in our new membership category as Life Members:
Constance Currie, Dick Dillman, Leah Lacara and Ronald Young.
Note: Life Memberships are available at $150.00

FLIWH IS ON THE INTERNET
Check Our Home Page at:

WWW:asb.com/usr/w2g3zfj/

Kindly send membership and renewals to:
"FRIENDS OF LONG ISLAND WIRELESS HISTORY"
c/o Alan Klein, Membership Chairman
89 Pequot Lane, East Slip, NY 11730

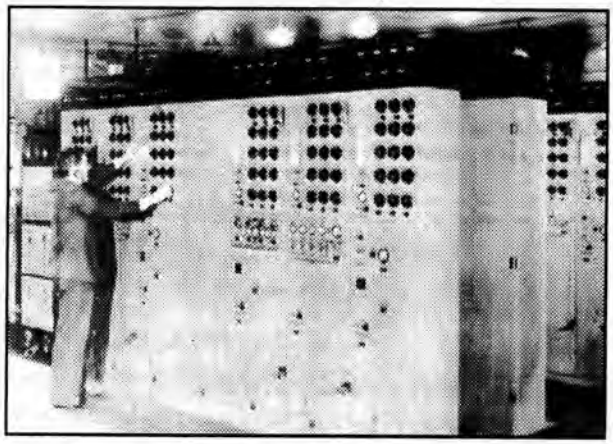
MEMBERSHIP FEE:

___ Student/Senior Citizen: $10.00
___ Individual: $20.00
___ Family: $35.00
___ Life Membership: $150.00

ARC (Amateur Radio Club $50.00
(Entitles one Affiliate Member in Club & Individual discount rates)
YOUR MEMBERSHIP WILL HELP PRESERVE LONG ISLAND'S WIRELESS HISTORY
___Building Fund Contribuion: $_____
We are a 501 (c) 301 Non-Profict Organization- Contributions are dedutible

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The time has come to vote on the Board of Trustees. All the present Board members have agreed to serve for another term: Constance A. Currie, Pres.; Christopher Bacon, Vice Pres.; Ralph Williams, Treas.; Natalie Stiefel, Corres. Sec.; J. Marshall Etter, Alan Klein, Van R. Field, Leah Lacara, Chris Leippert, Robert Lundquist and Ed Taylor. However, if anyone has a suggestion as to another Trustee, please send it in. If not, the vote will take place at the April 14th General Meeting, which will be held in Sayville at the Middle School located on Johnson Avenue at 8 PM.



Diversity Receivers at RCA Riverhead facility

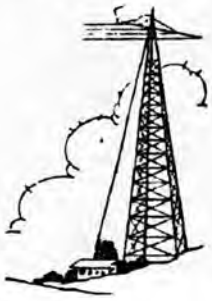
J. Marshall Etter presenting RCA Riverhead lecture

RCA's RIVERHEAD RECEIVING STATION

Members enjoyed a slide lecture at our November 10th General Meeting of RCA's Riverhead Receiving Station, which was presented by a member of our Board of Trustees, J. Marshall Etter. He served as the last Chief Engineer In Charge of both the Radio Central Transmitting Station at Rocky Point and the Receiving facility in Riverhead for 42 1/2 years.

*Distant Sparks**

FRIENDS OF LONG ISLAND WIRELESS HISTORY
43 SAYVILLE BLVD., SAYVILLE, N. Y. 11782



To:

Telegraph, Wireless
Autumn 2000

Distant Sparks*

Volume 5, Issue 2 Autumn 2000 *Distant Sparks - Translation: "Telefunken"

Friends of Long Island Wireless History
43 SAYVILLE BLVD., SAYVILLE, N. Y. 11782 (516) 589-2700

OUR WIRELESS HISTORY DISPLAY AT FIRE ISLAND

Above photo shows the rectangle original Telefunken Compass Building in foreground, and Barracks Building in background, now known as "Checkpoint" at Fire Island

Constance Currie and Natalie Stiefel met with Constantine Dillon, Superintendent; Barry Sullivan, Deputy Superintendent; Maria Wagenbrenner, Chief of Interpretation of the Fire Island National Seashore and Bob La Rosa, Vice President of the Fire Island Lighthouse Preservation Society; to review our exhibit of the history of the Fire Island Wireless Station. The archival photos and text are on exhibit at the Fire Island Lighthouse. Plan to visit the lighthouse and encourage others to see our display. This is an excellent educational tool to keep Long Island's wireless history alive and it is a vital part of our mission.

THANKS-DANKE-MERCI BEAUCOUP

Thanks to Louise Grieshammer of the Bayport Heritage Association for the gift on June 2, 2000 of the book: ***Die Deutschen Funkpeilund-Horch-Verfahren bis*** 1945 by Fritz Trenkle. Published AEG-Telefunken.

J. Marshall Etter with an etched crystal presented to him by the Swedish Alexanderson Alernator Station "SAQ". During our General Meeting on April 4th, Etter presented a video program of the station which was started in 1923 and inaugurated in 1925 by King Gustav. The Swedish government is keeping the station in running condition and preserving it as an historic monument. J. Marshall Etter is a member of our Board of Trustees and served as Chief Engineer-In-Charge of both the RCA Radio Central Transmitting Station at Rocky Point and its sister Receiving Station at Riverhead.

Membership Chairman, Alan Klein, greeting visitor at our display on Museum Day held at the Middle Country Library in Centereach on May 17th

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Volunteers to work on the design, layout and assembling of exhibits.

"DISTANT SPARKS" NEWSLETTER

Send in those articles and photographs regarding Long Island Wireless for our Newsletter. Send to:

Connie Currie, President
43 Sayville Bv, Sayville NY 11782
Tel: (516) 589-2700
E Mail: Constancec@aol.com or
Natalie Stiefel, Editor,
405 Sayville Blvd., Sayville, NY 11782
Tel: (516) 589-6692
E Mail: Nataliast@aol.com

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Dino Costas,
Emil Walder (Zurich Switzerland)
We now have members from Canada, Yugoslavia, Germany and Switzerland, as well as California and Colorado. WOW!

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Chris Bacon, Constance Currie,
Dick Dillman, J. Marshall Etter,
Harding & Marjorie Jones,
Leah Lacara, Natalie Naylor,
Louis Stevens, Ralph Williams,
Dr. Ronald Young

MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Student/Sr. Citizen $10.00
Individual $20.00 Family $35.00
Life Membership $150.00
ARC (Amateur Radio Club) $50.00
(entitles 1 Affiliate Member in club & Individual discount rates)
Send memberships & renewals to:
Friends of L. I. Wireless History
c/o Alan Klein Membership Chairman
89 Pequot Lane, E. Islip, NY 11730

FLIWH IS ON THE INTERNET

Check Our Home Page at:

WWW:asb.com/usr/w2g3zfj/

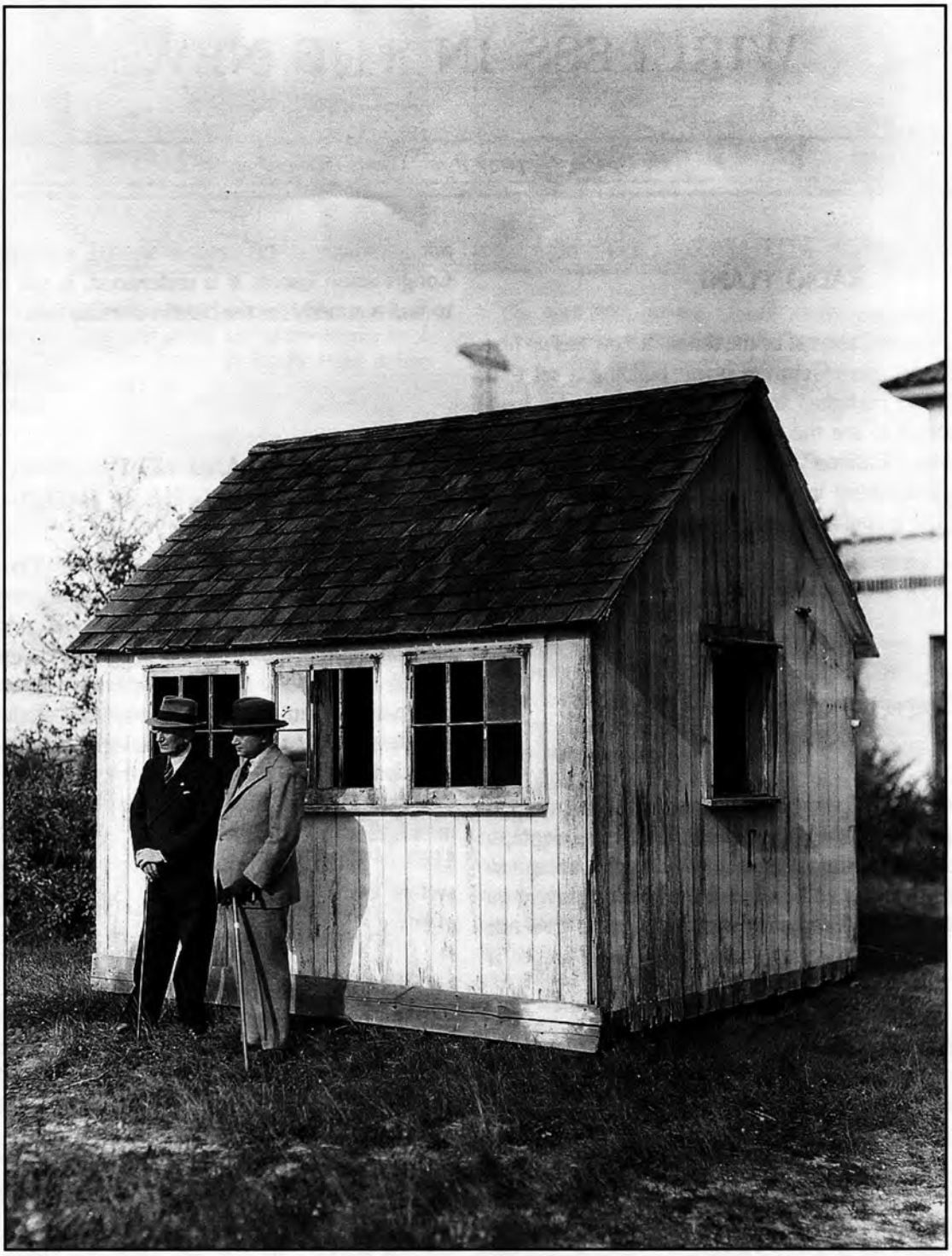
Marconi's Wireless Building

The following photographs and text have been graciously sent to us by Alexander B. Magoun, Ph.D., Director of the David Sarnoff Library in Princeton, New Jersey. This is a rare opportunity for us to look at early photographs of this building which originally stood at Fire Island Avenue in Babylon and now stands in front of the Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School in Rocky Point. Edwin H. Armstrong purchased the little building and presented it to David Sarnoff at RCA Radio Central as an historic wireless artifact. Mr. Magoun stated in his recent letter: "This is an exciting time to look back at a century dominated by RCA's contributions to electronic communications. I look forward to working further with you and in publicizing the work of the men and women at RCA. Needless to say, you are welcome to visit Mr. Sarnoff's library should you be in the neighborhood."

1930 - Loading the Marconi wireless station building to transport it from Babylon to the RCA Radio Central facilities in Rocky Point
Photo by Thomas Coke Knight for Radio Corporation of America
Courtesy David Sarnoff Library

The historic Marconi wireless building stood beside Bldg. #1
at RCA Radio Central in Rocky Point
(photo courtesy David Sarnoff Library)

1933 - Guglielmo Marconi's visit at RCA Radio Central in Rocky Point
David Sarnoff standing at left, Marconi standing in middle
(photo courtesy David Sarnoff Library)



1933 - Guglielmo Marconi and David Sarnoff
at Marconi's historic wireless building
near RCA Radio Central's Bldg #1
(photo courtesy David Sarnoff Library)

WIRELESS IN THE NEWS

Newspaper clippings from Microfilm archives

WHILDIN AND WITTENBERG OPERATE RADIO PLANT

Long Island is keeping abreast of the times. It now has its first radio receiving set manufacturing plant, building a set that was designed and perfected by two young men who have been keen enough to see the future of the radio. The name of this set is the "*Radiotel*", and it is being built by Messrs Whildin and Wittenberg in their own plant in Bay Shore, Long Island. The manufacture of the set is well under way.

Suffolk County Citizen
November 20, , 1924

RADIO SENDER WITHIN LAW; EASTHAMPTON

The Department of Commerce has notified Congressman Robert L. Bacon that the Independent Wireless Telegraph Company is operating its wireless station in this village in compliance with the law and that all the efforts to prevent its spark transmitter from interfering with home radio fans has proved futile so far as a change to a higher wave length is concerned.

Congressman Bacon had complained that the use of a spark transmitter by this company makes it impossible for radio users to get anything but buzzes and other ear splitting noises when they sat down to listen to *Roxie* or other entertainment.

The tests recently made under the supervision of the New York radio supervisor on the lighthouse tender, Tulip, in whic' the Independent Wireless Telegraph Company officials coope' 'ed, showed that a change of the company's station to the 880 meter would seriously interfere with the Government lighthouse beacon service operating on a slightly higher meter. The suggestion made by Congressman Bacon to Secretary, Hoover, that a tube transmitter might solve the problem, has been confirmed by the radio supervison who admits such a transmitter would end the annoyance. Congressman Bacon, it is understood, is still seeking actively to find a remedy for the benefit of radio fans.

Suffolk County News
February 26, 1925

LONG ISLAND NOW CONNECTED WITH PERU BY RADIO

Long Island is now directly connected with Peru by means of a commercial radio telegraph service. Outgoing messages are sent from the wireless station at Sayville and the receiving plant at Southampton. Radio telegraph communication from Sayville already had been made countrywide with the opening of service to San Francisco through the station at Palo Alto and thence with point to point service along the Pacific Coast. In extending the service over the seas on December 11, President Herbert Hoover at Washington, D.C., exchanged messages with President August B. Leguia, at Lima, Peru. The Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company of the internationall system owns and operates the Sayville and Southampton plants.

Sayville station was established in 1912 and operated as a subsidiary of the German Telefunken Company. When Germany entered the World War, she lost the use of her radio which were operated from the Commercial Cable Company's station at Far Rockaway and depended upon the Sayville wireless for international communication to countries not immediate adjacent. In 1917, the the United States entered the war, the Navy Department took control of the station.

Sayville station operated on meter and wave lengths which enable it, with specifically designed high power equipment for long range to communicate with far distant ships at sea. It is connected by direct wire with the main office at 20 Broad St., New York, where another station, WST, establishes radiotelgraph communication with ships in New York Harbor.

Port Jefferson Echo
Dec. 26, 1929

Members of the Radio Central ARC at the American Radio Relay League's Field Day held at the site of the former RCA Radio Central Transmitting Station in Rocky Point during the weekend of June 24-25th.

On April 29th, at the historic Marconi building, which now stands at the Frank J. Carasiti School in Rocky Point, the Radio Central ARC joined 40 International Marconi Day Special Event Stations commemorating Guglielmo Marconi's birthday on April 25, 1874.

RADIO CENTRAL CALLING

By Natalie Aurucci Stiefel

The site of the former home of *RCA Radio Central*, at the DEC Pine Barrens in Rocky Point, was buzzing with activity once again during the weekend of June 24-25th. The *Radio Central Amateur Radio Club W2RC,* used the site of its 'namesake' for the annual American Radio Relay League's Field Day. At the end of the wooded Jonah's Road where once stood the Administration Building #1 of the RCA Radio Central, the Amateur Radio club can be found each year sending and receiving messages around the world.

RCA Radio Central opened its facilities in Rocky Point on November 5, 1921 and was considered the world's largest transmitting station and also developed many radio and television innovations at its Research Laboratory.

The *Radio Central Amateur Radio Club* set up a generator and tents to accommodate the 24 hour event, "simulating emergency-like communications in the middle of nowhere". The tall short-wave antenna was installed using a sling shot with monofilm fishing line and a fishing reel. Transmissions were made by CW Morse code and audio phone communication.

Driving along the wooded road, there is some small evidence remaining of the landscaped cedars which line the driveway. This road once hosted some of the world's greatest radio pioneers, such as Guglielmo Marconi, Edward H. Armstrong, Charles Proteus Steinmetz and many others. In 1927 over 400 world famous radio men, representing nearly every country in the world, toured the RCA facilities at Rocky Point.

The magnificent Spanish styled Building #1 no longer stands. All that remains are remnants of the circular driveway and the dedication of these Radio enthusiasts who keep the legend alive.

Member, Frank Moorhus, demonstrated the latest development in communications technology known as the *"Virtual Communicator"*. This hand-held device, which resembles two cell phones, can capture a photograph with its tiny digital camera, and send the photo via radio waves, to any other hand-held similar device anywhere one earth as well as in outer space. This device came in to existence a year and a half ago with the MIR Space Station. At that time MIR was sending photos of earth and the space station to Ham operators and school students around the world via this new technology. I could not help remember that the great inventor, Nikola Tesla, while building his laboratory in Shoreham in 1901, stated he had the technology to send photos and audio through radiowaves around the globe.

In 1997 Governor E. Pataki, a former amateur radio operator, declared the month of June *Amateur Radio Month in the Empire State,* in appreciation for their volunteer services in local emergency situations and their international goodwill contacts.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Connie Currie

Distant Sparks, most probably will become a bi-annual newsletter, unless we hear more from you, the readers. We have many projects underway to report on, however, they move slowly. Our goal with the newsletter is to report events and accomplishments as they happen, to present articles concerning Long Island Wireless History and to keep you all informed with what can happen and how you, our members, can make them happen.

Three of our ongoing projects are the Tesla property in Shoreham-Wading River, the Riverhead Science Museum and Grumman Park in Riverhead. The Tesla property is moving along. We hope to exchange programs with President, Jane Alcorn. We have yet to hear more from the Science Museum as to when they are ready to move ahead as far as a radio exhibit is concerned. Grumman Park is installing the F-14 airplane on its pedestal and our time in the time-line should come along.

Natalie Stiefel and I have had several satisfactory meetings with the Fire Island National Seashore and Fire Island Lighthouse Preservation Society. We hope to have one more before we mount the exhibit. Fire Island Lighthouse Preservation Society, Vice President, Bob La Rosa, joined with Natalie and I in the joy of realizing that the original Telefunken Compass building is indeed a part of what they now call "Checkpoint".

Our Sayville Library exhibit has been moved to April 2001, due to the fact that we will be doing a full month of not only exhibits, but also programs. We hope to have this package ready to move after that. It is very important to let us know what information and photos you have of the different facilities. We are particularly interested in contacting people who worked at these facilities.

We are also working on the video presentation of Long Island Wireless History. Please, if you have any information on that subject, contact us. You'll get your name, maybe even your picture, on video.

Till next time.

Connie Currie, President

*Distant Sparks**

FRIENDS OF LONG ISLAND WIRELESS HISTORY
43 SAYVILLE BLVD., SAYVILLE, N. Y. 11782

To:

Telegraph Wireless
Winter 2000

Distant Sparks*

Volume 5, Issue 1 Winter 2000 *Distant Sparks - Translation: "Telefunken"

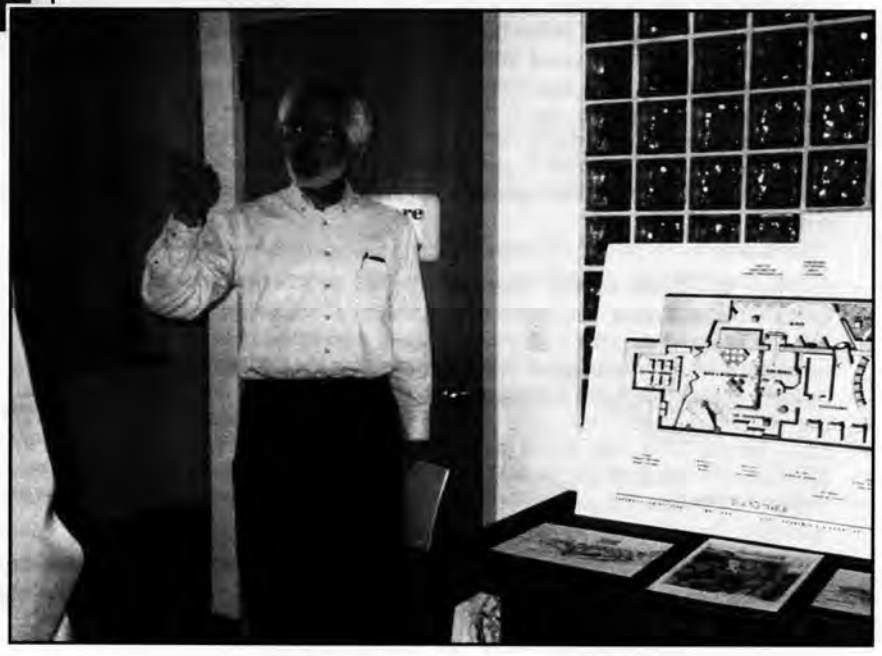
Friends of Long Island Wireless History

43 SAYVILLE BLVD., SAYVILLE, N. Y. 11782 (516) 589-2700

RIVERHEAD SCIENCE MUSEUM

By Connie Currie

This is the old bank building located on Main Street in Riverhead, which is being renovated and made into the Long Island Science Museum. It stands across the street from the Radio Station. We will have a very generous area for our displays.



Dr. Peter Z. Takacs, Ph.d. of the Brookhaven National Laboratory and a Trustee of the Long Island Science Museum, starts our tour of the building by showing us the projected floor plan of the Museum.

THANKS-DANKE-MERCI BEAUCOUP

At our Annual Picnic, Treasurer, Ralph Williams, accepted Building Fund and Life Membership check totaling $500.00 from Marjorie Jones on behalf of herself and her husband, Harding Jones.

Our thanks to State Senator, Kenneth P. La Valle, for his assistance in obtaining the permit from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for our access to the former RCA Radio Central property at Rocky Point in connection with the German television video documentary.

Also our thanks to the Rocky Point School Board of Education and Acting Superintendent, James J. Gerardi, for access to the historic Guglielmo Marconi Wireless Building located at the Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School in Rocky Point.

Activities

By Connie Currie

The Friends of L.I. Wireless History are members of the Association of Suffolk County Historical Societies, which makes our members eligible to attend their quarterly meetings. These meetings include a morning of programs (a tour, speakers, workshop) and then a luncheon which is always held in a nice restaurant in the host historical society's area. There is a fee of $15 to $20. This is a great time to meet other people and see what other historical societies and museums are like. The meetings include January 29th, 2000 in Riverhead; April 29th, 2000 in Farmingville; July 29th, 2000 in Southhampton; and October 28th, 2000 at Moriches Bay. Call Natalie or Connie in the second week of the meeting month to hear about the program, the restaurant, suggested dinners and make reservations to represent our group.

***E Mail** to Natalie Stiefel:* Hello, my name is John Luk. I am from Hong Kong. I found your Email from the Amazon reviews of videotapes about Niklola Tesla. It is great that your group is interested in promoting history of wireless. I am very interested that you have met the people who saw Mr. Tesla before. What did these people say about Mr. Tesla? I am so glad that you are also a fan of Mr. Tesla and you are fortunate to live near his laboratory on Long Island. Do you know that I also have a dream to form a group to promote Mr. Tesla to the world. I do have an idea to write a book about Mr. Tesla in Chinese.

CONDOLENCES: Our sincere condolences to member, Milton Nohowec, on the loss of his wife.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Volunteers to work on the design, layout and assembling of exhibits.

"DISTANT SPARKS" NEWSLETTER

Send in those articles and photographs regarding Long Island Wireless for our quarterly Newsletter. Send to:

Connie Currie, Pres., 43 Sayville Bv, Sayville NY 11782 Tel: (516) 589-2700
E Mail: Constancec@aol.com or
Natalie Stiefel, Editor,405 Sayvile Bv. Sayville NY 11782 (516) 589-6692
E Mail: Nataliast@aol.com

BUILDING FUND

We extend our sincere gratitude to the following members who have made special contributions to our Building Fund:
Walter Depken, Carroll Hamlet, F. Parker Heinemann, Harding & Marjorie Jones, Michael Mangino, Gary Resta and Samuel Tuthill.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Arthur Altrarac, Charles F. Fiore, F. Parker Heinemann, Bruce Kardan, Michzel W. Mangino, Ray Minichiello, Charles F. Murray, Gary Resta and Lester D. Rider.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Note Life Memberships are available at $150.00

FLIWH IS ON THE INTERNET
Check Our Home Page at:

WWW:asb.com/usr/w2g3zfj/

WIRELESS IN THE NEWS

Long Island Radio History

By Constance A. Currie

We have been printing the history of commercial and military wireless, the earliest variety. This issue we decided to tell you about WPOE as printed in *The Airways of New York* - Illustrated Histories of 156 AM Station In The Metropolitan Area, 1921-1996 by Bill Jaker, Frank Sulek and Peter Kanze with a foreword by Joe Franklin. Published by McFarland & Company, Jefferson, North Carolina and London. Copyright 1998 and as reported in the Patchogue Advance and Suffolk County News newspapers.

WPOE (15 April 1928 - 1932)

1928	1290 Kc	30W.
1928	1420 Kc	30W.

According to the *"Airways of New York"* WPOE was originally Joseph Lombardi's WLBH, based in Farmingdale, Long Island. Sometimes it was operated as a portable station and, as such, was probably not difficult to bring to Patchogue, Long Island.

It was, however, a major change as the station became permanent in the Patchogue location and it was given a new identify. In April 1928 the Nassau Broadcasting Corporation changed the call letter to WPOE and it became the station of the Patchogue Order of Elks.

It was installed in a bungalow behind the Elks Club, and a pair of 75 foot towers became the antenna. The Patchogue Advanced stated, *"The lease between the Elks and the broadcasting company is a reciprocal one, the Elks securing considerable time on the air and the call letter in return for the use of the property."*

The book continues by stating that some programs were continued on WPOE that had been on WLBH, including a series on animal care from the Black Cat Club of Long Island. The station left the air in the early 1930's.

"The Patchogue Story, 250 years of Suffolk County's most enterprising village. 1939-1987 by Frank J. Mooney, has the following to say: "Patchogue pioneered in the early days of crystal radio sets. A radio station with the call letters, WPOE, operated for a short time from a small building on the north portion of the site presently occupied by the Garden Apartments at E. Main Street and Maple Avenue. WPOE stands in sharp contrast to the radio stations presently serving Suffolk from Patchogue.

Between the Patchogue Advance and the Suffolk County News, nearby Sayville's newspaper, we get a fairly good idea of the programming. St. Anns Episcopal Church Choir performed, and because of the choir master,a New York City musician, were noted for their excellence. There were a number of individual local singers who appeared as guests. Two children in particular, May and Edward West, sang every Saturday morning at 11 A.M.

We have two program schedules as run in the Patchogue Advance, one on November 26, of 1929 the other December 24 of the same year. Both cover Tuesday through Friday. {Programs begin between 6 AM and 9 AM and the day ends from 8 PM to midnight. The time slots from half an hour to as brief as ten minutes. Scheduling must have been fun!

In November there are programs sponsored by local Patchogue businesses such as the Beehive Department Store, the Patchogue Advance, Schordine Brothers, Lucas' Pharmacy, Better Ole Restaurant, Kaller's Korrect Time and so on, It would be fun to find out what fare these business sponsored. Music was very popular. There were singers, organists, pianists and instrumentalists. There was 15 minutes of vaudeville, plus a variety show from the Patchogue Theater. A Fishday program (whatever that was?) and "Care of your Furs". Friday morning, at 10 AM the Reverend Shepherd held services. In December Three Wise Men Musical Program joined the usual fare. It was a sad day when this little, but hardworking, station closed its doors.

SPOTLIGHT ON FILM HAUS - BERLIN

GERMAN FILMMAKER'S VISIT

By Natalie Aurucci Stiefel

In October of 1999, The Friends of Long Island Wireless History hosted a team of documentary filmmakers from Berlin, Germany. The team consisted of Film directors Gerhard Schiesser and Jochen Trauptmann of FILM HAUS, Berlin,Germany who visited the United States with the particular purpose to film a few of the previous wireless radio sites on Long Island. Their main aim was to film and obtain verbal interviews with members of the Friends of Long Island Wireless History regarding the German Telefunken site which was lcoated in West Sayville prior to World War I. The FAA graciously allowed the team to visit the site at West Sayville. Unfortunately, the buildings and tower are no longer standing. However, Constance Currie, President of the FLIWH has completed detailed historical research of the facility and was able to document what occurred at that station as well as share photo archives. Vice President, Chris Bacon, offered the technical data. The 45 minute Television film covers the early wireless story between the Telefunken station in Nauen, Germany and their West Sayville, sister Station, and is entitled " *Big Bang of Nauen*". It was aired on German television on December 28th, 1999.

President Constance Currie identified the former Telefunken Wireless Station at West Sayville to German filmmakers , Jochen Trauptmann and Gerhard Schiesser.

The German filmmaker crew also visited Rocky Point, where they viewed the small 1902 Guglielmo Marconi wireless bulding, which is located at the Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School. With the cooperation of the Rocky Point School Acting Superintendant, Mr. James J. Gerardi and the Rocky Point Board of Education, access was made possible to the Marconi Building. Our Board Members, Mr. Marshall Etter, last Chief Engineer in Charge; Mr. Robert Lundquist, Manager of the RCA Radio Central transmiting Station in Rocky Point and Natalie Stiefel, Secretary of FLIWH, met with Mr. Trauptmann and Mr. Schlesser to document the historic facts of this early wireless building. Mr. Etter explained the details regarding the moving of the historic Marconi building from Babylon to Rocky Point. Major Edwin Armstrong was aided by Captain Round in identifying the building in Babylon as a true Marconi wireless station. Armstrong purchased the building from the farmer, who was using it as a tool shed, and presented it as an artifact to David Sarnoff for RCA Radio Central at Rocky Point

Film Director, Gerhard Schiesser interviewed Marshall Etter and Robert Lundquist, former RCA Executives and Board Members of FLIWH, at the historic Marconi Building in Rocky Point, for German television documentary. (photos by Natalie Stiefel)

The team also tracked through the N.Y. State DEC forest at Rocky Point, which was previously owned by RCA. Access permits were obtained from the New York State DEC, through the office of Senator Kenneth LaValle. Mr. Marshall Etter identified the two 165' iron towers lying on the forest ground. He explained that they were painted orange and white for aviation identification.

The German Filmmakers have completed many documentaries for German Public Television. One of their recent pieces of work entailed researching archives to prove that the Russian Revolution was financed by Germany. This docmentation developed into a book which they co-authored and is entitled *"Russian Roulette"*.

FILM HAUS
Film - und Fernsehproduktion

Filmhaus Berlin 22 November, 1999

Dear Mrs. President Constane Gibson Currie; Mrs. Natalie Aurucci Stiefel;
and Mr. Vice-President Chris Bacon:

We like to express our thanks after having been together with you. To talk about our very busy TV business, there is rare opportunity to combine serious work with private pleasure. But this has happened to us in Sayville. Our Long Island Sayville weekend experience was full of sound information given by you and your friends from FLIWH we had the chance to talk with. Please, convey our thanks and greetings to Mr. Marshall Etter and Mr. Robert Lundquist, former RCA Executives, we met at the historic Marconi Bulding in Rocky Point.

We enjoyed very much the article and photos by Natalie printed in your local paper. We already took the liberty to reprint your contribution in a monthly *"Kalenderblatter"* memorising on historic events published privately by Gurdrun.

Yesterday we finished the first version of all movie material, including our Long Island Sayville film and photo pieces dealing with the early Telefunken Sayville Station. Thanks to your excellent co-operation and management on the spot and the detailed information given with the interview partners Constance Currie and Chris Bacon. Furthermore, it was very useful to read Constance's article *"The Telefunken Radio Station in Sayville"* printed in the *"Long Island forum"*. All in all, the German TV viewers will find some extraordinary historic details in our *"Big Bang of Nauen"* (*"Der Urknall von Nauen"*) on Nauen's Sister Station Sayville. The 45 minute TV feature will be transmitted on 28th of December 1999 with concern to the end of this century of technical inventions.

A lot of thanks for sending the information of *"The German Connection"* and *"Fifth Colunmn"* from the Nikola Tesla book *"Wizard"*. We could learn many details on the Marconi-Telefunken competition we had not known before.

The Telefunken Map photo from Rocky Point is funny to look at, because in the Nauen Station is a big-sized Telefunken Map called *"Nauen and the World"* showing the similar idea how to see the world from the point of wireless conquering the globe.

We are happy to tell you that the now retired former Chief Engineer of the Nauen Station, Mr. Klaus Kramer, is very much interested to get in contact with you because he is going to build up a Historical Society of Nauen. Mr. Kramer is impressed by all the information we were able to give him about your important work to keep wireless history alive. He will send a letter to you asking for possibilities of exchanging information.

Last, but not least, our big hello and friendly regards to Bruce Stiefel, who did much that we felt like being at home in his house.

Thanks for all your useful cooperation and your hearty hospitality,

Jochen & Dagmar Trauptmann ***Gerhard and Gudrun Schiesser***

THE TELEFUNKEN MAP

By Natalie Aurucci Stiefel

A map, representing international wireless history, is displayed at the Rocky Point Jr.-Sr. High School. It is mounted on a wall facing the second floor staircase where the students pass on their way to classes. In 1922 the map was presented as a gift from the Berlin, Germany based Telefunken Company to RCA Radio Central, of Rocky Point. The Azimuthal Roundmap shows Rocky Point, New York as the center of the world, with correct distances to other points. The Telefunken Company indicated this due to RCA's contribution as the world's largest transmitting and receiving stations. In 1904 the German Telefunken Company owned and operated one of the most powerful wireless stations at that time in West Sayville.

Retired biology teacher, Henry Bookout, explained how the map came to be displayed in the school. At the closing of RCA Radio Central in Rocky Pont, the Telefunken map was stored at their Community House, located at the RCA Radio Circle housing. When the Community House was demolished, the map was brought to the Joseph A. Edgar School to be stored in the basement. Mr. Joe Spina called it to the attention of the Principal, Frank J.Carasiti. Mr. Carasiti thought it would be beneficial to all to have the map displayed at the new High School.

The Telefunken map reads: *"The World Around New York". Azimuthal Roundmap, giving all true directions and true distances from centre of map at the scale of 1:20 000 000. It was prepared and drawn by P. Pellehn, Charltenberg. "To the Directors of the RCA Corporation of America. In appreciation of the splendid cooperation dedicated by the Directors of Berlin Telefunken and Tranradio 1922."*

It is of interest to learn from FILM HAUS Berlin that there is a similar Telefunken map on display at the Nauen Station in Germany called *"Nauen and the World"* showing the similar idea how to see the world from the point of wireless conquering the globe.

Constance Currie, President; Ed Taylor, Executive Trustee; and Alan Klein, Membership Chairman; at the Radio Central Hamfest held on November 14

Kindly send membership and renewals to:
"FRIENDS OF LONG ISLAND WIRELESS HISTORY"

c/o Alan Klein, Membership Chairman
89 Pequot Lane, East Slip, NY 11730

MEMBERSHIP FEE:

Student/Sr.Citizen $10 Family: $35
Individual $20 Life Membership: $150

ARC (Amateur Radio Club $50
(Entitles one Affiliate Member in Club
& Individual discount rates)

____Building Fund Contribution

We are a 501 (c) 301 Non-Profit Organization
Contributions are deductible

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Connie Currie

Happy New Year and Millennium to you all.

The Friends of L.I. Wireless History are starting the year and century well. The Board of Trustees has indeed visited the Long Island Science Museum in Riverhead and voted to take part in the museum. It is now for our Building Committee, Vice President, Chris Bacon and Treasurer, Ralph Williams, to study the facility and make recommendations. We will then form groups to work on exhibits. This is finally the fun stuff.

The ground for the Grumman Park has been broken for construction and we can look forward to this project at the end of the year. I have spoken with Pat Masterson, Friends member and President of the Grumman Radio Club, in the hope that the group will join in this wonderful work. Any other clubs or individuals interested - give us a call.

We had a great time working with a German film team that shot the television video this past summer. We hope that this will open up more doors.

Upon request, I sent a letter of support to the Friends of Science East, who are negotiating for the Tesla Wardenclyffe property in Shoreham. We understand that the Town of Brookhaven is behind their efforts. Good luck..

County legislator, Steve Levy, is keeping an eye out for a place for us. Please check your local phone books for the addresses and phone numbers of your local Legislators, on all levels, and let them know who you are and that we want a home.

Keep an eye out for the flyer announcing the Spring General Meeting. There will be a speaker, raffles and lots more information.

Remember, we are only as strong as you, our members make us.

*Distant Sparks**

FRIENDS OF LONG ISLAND WIRELESS HISTORY
43 SAYVILLE BLVD., SAYVILLE, N. Y. 11782

To:

Telegraph Wireless

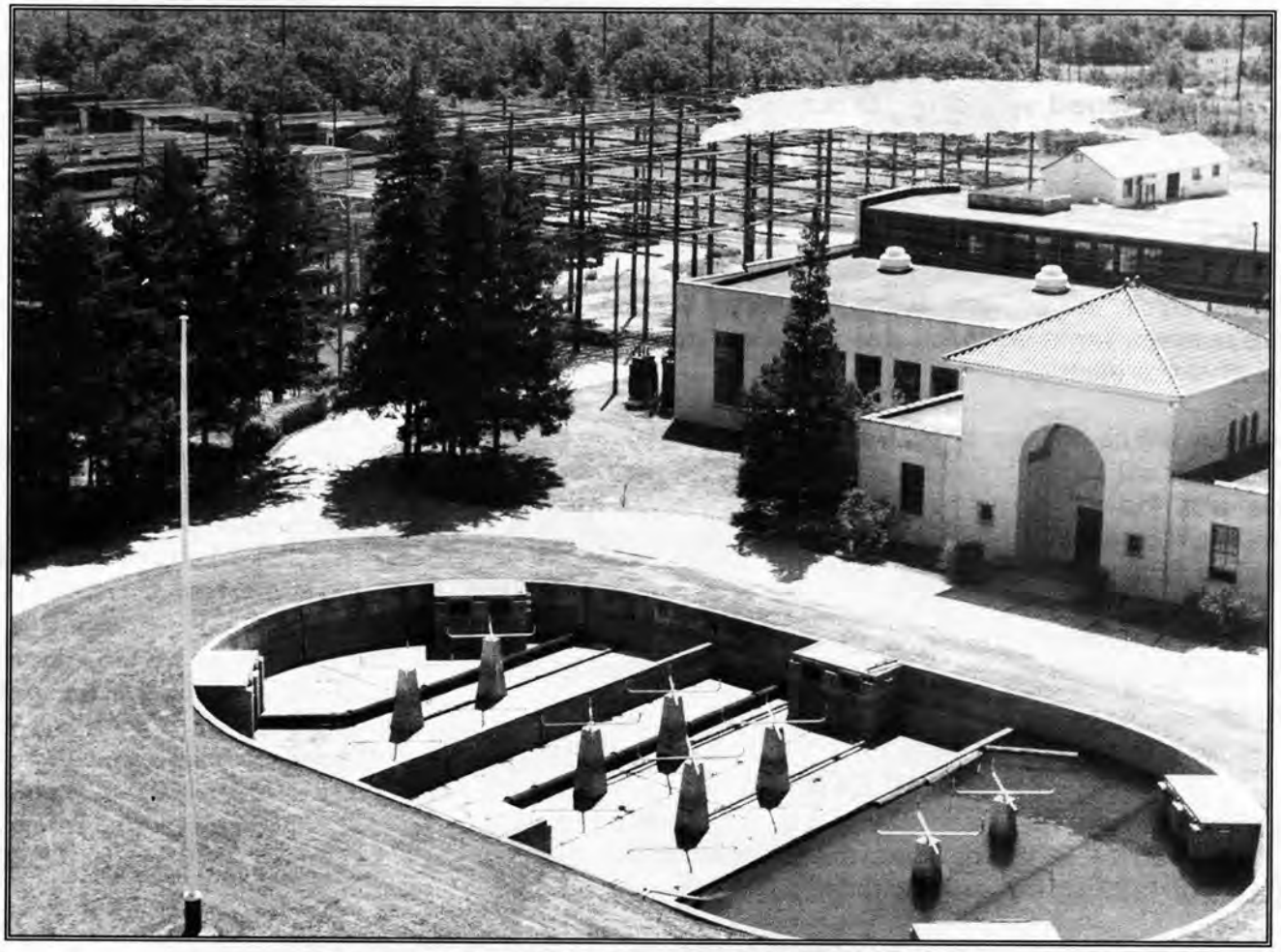
Distant Sparks*

SPRING 2001

*DISTANT SPARKS - TRANSLATION; 'TELEFUNKEN'

Friends of Long Island Wireless History

43 SAYVILLE BLVD., SAYVILLE, N. Y. 11782 (516) 589-2700



RCA RADIO CENTRAL AT ROCKY POINT

Building #1 showing main cooling pond, transmission line structures and northeastern section of antenna farm. Over 135 Directional Rhombic Antennas.

Photo and text courtesy of Robert Lundquist
Station Engineer, RCA Radio Central
& Trustee of Friends of Long Island Wireless History

THANKS-DANKE-MERCI BEAUCOUP

We received the following gifts for our archives:

Microfilm from Bureau of Yards and Docks, National Archives & Records Administration, 1985, Blueprints around late 1930's of Fire Island Radio Building and other Long Island and New Jersey Coast Guard sites. Connie Currie - Donor

Filmhaus Berlin video "The Big Bang at Nauen". Some footage taken here at West Sayville and Rocky Point. Filmhaus - Donor

The Atwater Kent Radios by Ralph O. Willliams. Published by The Antique Wireless Association. Ralph Williams - Donor

DITS & DAHS

We extend deepest sympathy to our Trustee, Alan Klein, on the passing of his wife, Doris.

Our best wishes go to Trustee, Ralph Williams, for a speedy recovery.

Our display is still on view at the Fire Island Lighthouse. We have received some feedback on it. Let us know if you visit it and what you think.

A display will be on view at the Sayville Library all of the month of April. It will have photographs of many of the original radio sites plus the people involved in that history. Connie and Natalie will be doing a presentation at the library of the Sayville Wireless Station on April 12th at 7 PM.

Ed Taylor and Alan Klein held down our table in Lindenhurst at the Suffolk County Ham Fest there. Thank you Suffolk County friends.

THE 1930 CENSUS

Researchers and genealogists are anxiously looking forward to April 1st, 2002, the date when the United States Federal Census of 1930 will be released to the public.

There are thirty two questions listed on the 1930 census, some of which were never asked by the previous census enumerators. Some of the questions relate to whether the person attended college since September of 1929; if worked the day previous or on unemployment schedule and veteran of which war or expedition. However one question stands out as an indication of the technology progress of the times. Question number 9 asks if the resident owns a *"radio set"*.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

EXHIBITS COMMITTEE

Volunteers to work on the design, layout and assembling of exhibits.

"DISTANT SPARKS" NEWSLETTER

Send in those articles and photographs regarding Long Island Wireless for our Newsletter. Send to:

Connie Currie, President
43 Sayville Bv, Sayville NY 11782
Tel: (516) 589-2700
E Mail: Constancec@aol.com or
Natalie Stiefel, Editor,
405 Sayville Blvd., Sayville, NY 11782
Tel: (516) 589-6692
E Mail: Nataliast@aol.com

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Chris Bacon, Constance Currie, Dick Dillman, J. Marshall Etter, Harding & Marjorie Jones, Leah Lacara, Natalie Naylor, Louis Stevens, Ralph Williams, Dr. Ronald Young

MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Student/Sr. Citizen $10.00
Individual $20.00 Family $35.00
Life Membership $150.00
ARC (Amateur Radio Club) $50.00
(entitles 1 Affiliate Member in club & Individual discount rates)

Note contributions are tax deductible
We are a 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit organization

Send memberships & renewals to:
Friends of L. I. Wireless History
c/o Alan Klein Membership Chairman
89 Pequot Lane, E. Islip, NY 11730

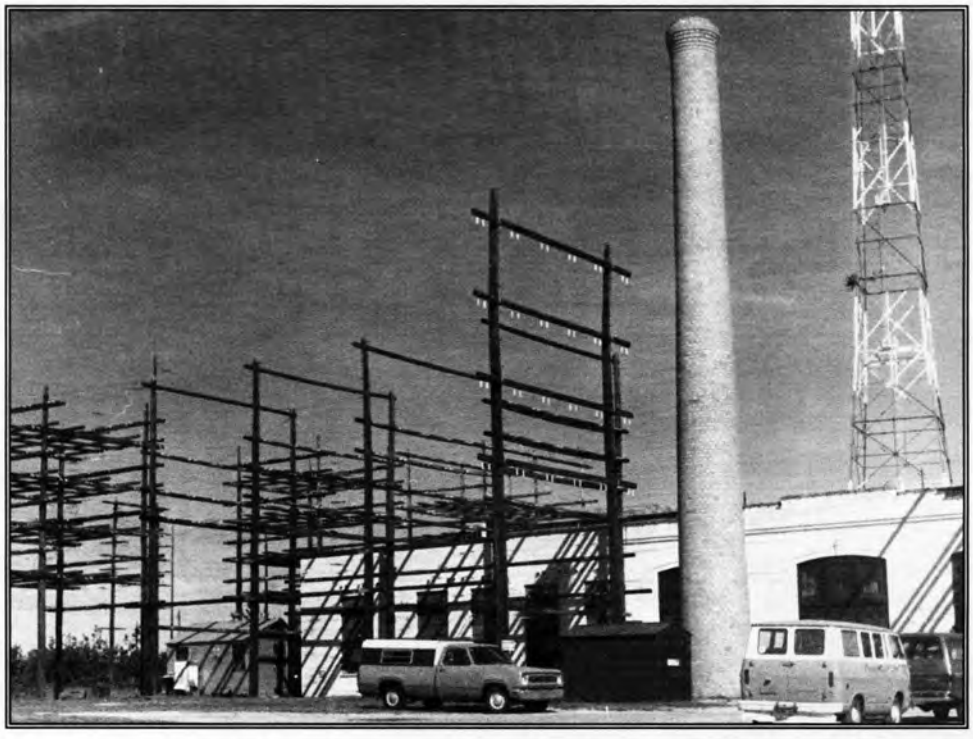
FLIWH IS ON THE INTERNET

Check our Home Page at:

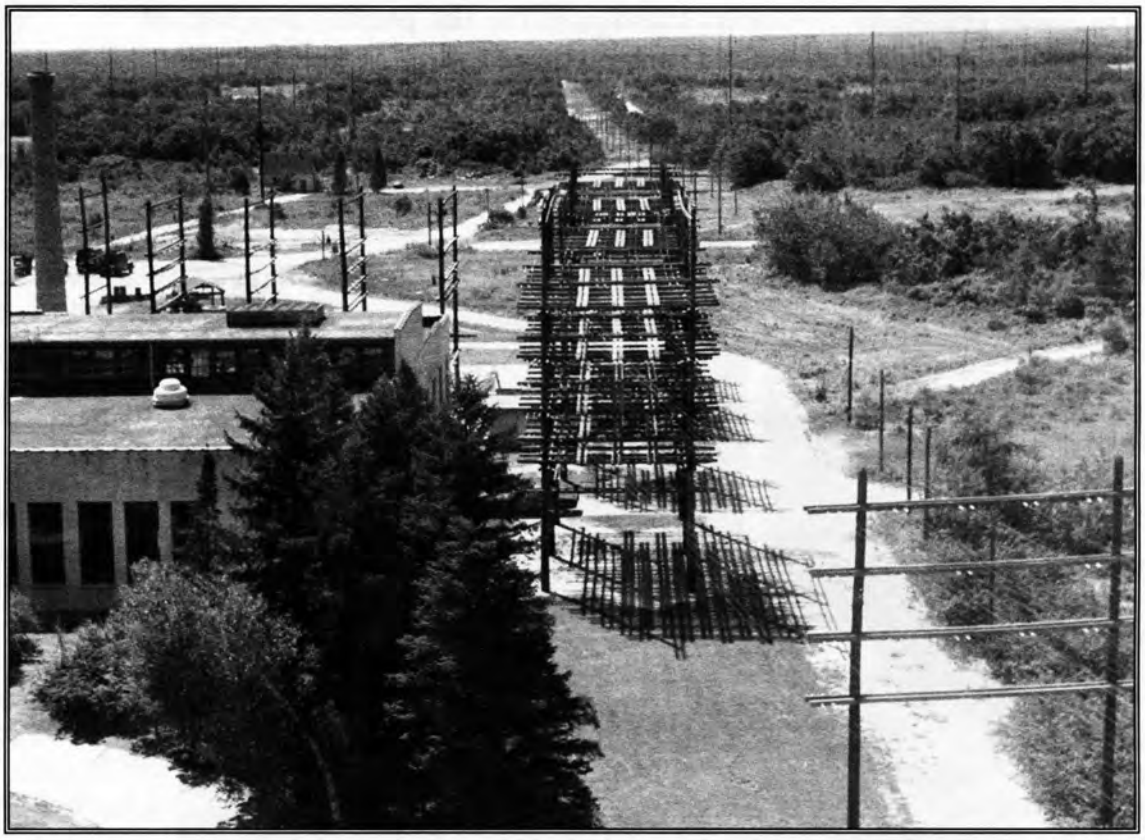
www:geocityies.com/g3zfj/

Our gratitude to Robert Lundquist for the photos and text of
RCA Radio Central's Transmitting Station at Rocky Point

RCA developed and built SSB-T3, Type H Transmitter,
Single Sideband, 20 kw P.E. 17 at Rocky Point.



Rear of Bldg. #1 showing transmission trunk line structures and a portion of the 410' tower. (There were twelve towers at one time)



View of Bldg. #1 showing transmission trunk lines and southeastern section of antenna farm

Interior view of Bldg. #1 looking southwest

Friends of Long Island Wireless History

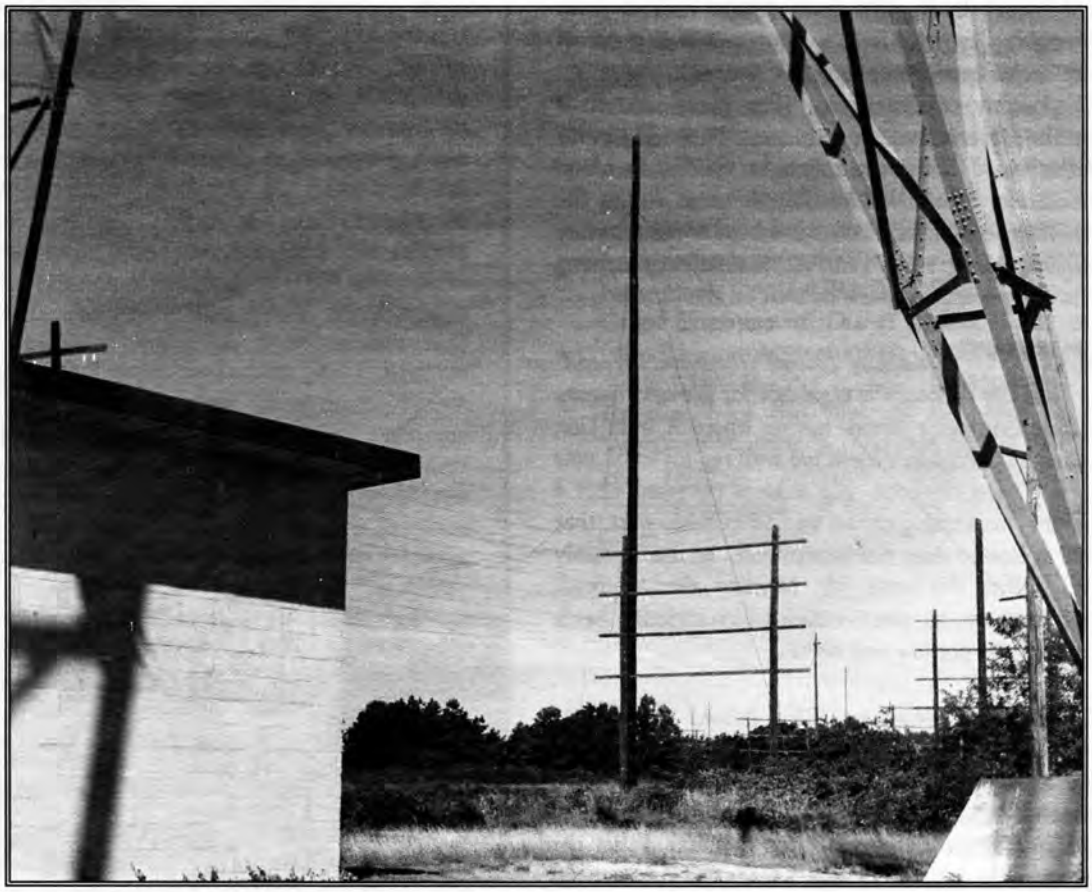
PLAN TO ATTEND OUR

GENERAL MEETING

Monday, April 23rd, 2001 - 7 PM
at the Sayville Middle School, Sayville, NY

*Video documentary *"The Big Bang at Nauen"*
(The Telefunken Company) by Filmhaus, Berlin will be shown
*Report of our activities and future plans
*Raffle & 50-50 to benefit our traveling displays

Directions: Sunrise Highway to Sayville, exit Johnson Avenue
(at "Old Navy" and "The Wiz" Shopping Center)
Turn south on Johnson Avenue for 1/2 block to Sayville Middle School



Base pedestal and one leg of the last remaining 410' tower at RCA Radio Central in Rocky Point. This 150 ton tower came down on Dec. 13, 1977.
(photo and text courtesy of Robert Lundquist)

CLARENCE MACKAY IN THE NEWS

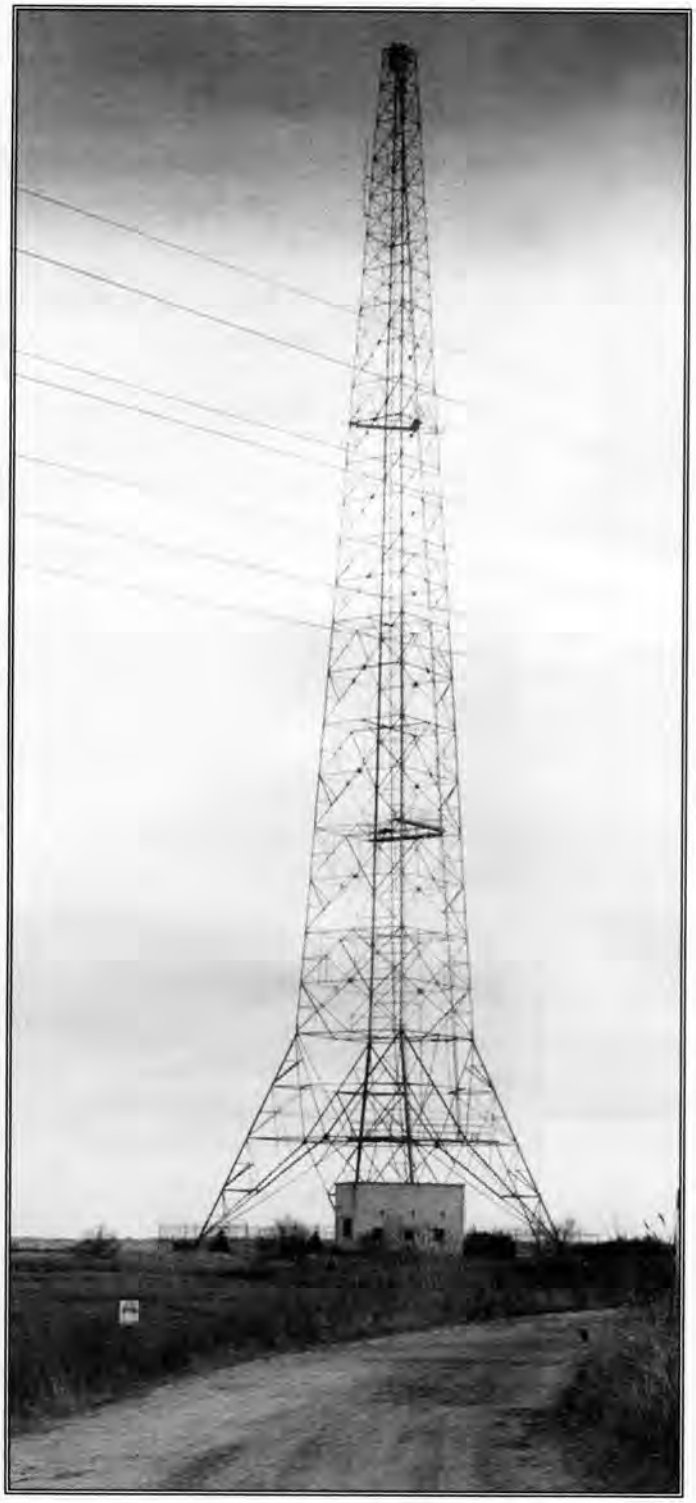
Newspaper Clippings from Microfilm Archives

Clarence H. Mackay made an historic mark in wireless communication with his stations on Long Island. He established Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company at the site of the former Telefunken and the U. S. Naval Wireless Station in West Sayville and later moved his operation to Brentwood. Mackay brought Station WSL of the Mackay Radio Station to Napeague and opened a radio school in East Hampton. He leased Gardiner's Island for hunting. Due to his love for music, he was responsible for the development of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and established the Maestro, Arturo Toscanini, as its Director. Mackay was known to half-sing, half-hum arias from his favorite classical music scores during his country walks on Long Island. He was also an avid art collector. The following news clippings from *"The East Hampton Star"* reveal another insight into the life of this gifted man.

November 28, 1919 - Roosevelt Guest of Mackay:
Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., the newly elected Assemblyman of the Third Assembly District, Queens County was a guest of Clarence Mackay at his game preserve on Gardiner's Island on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week. The party enjoyed a pheasant hunt on the preserve and bagged several birds. The party motored down the Island and were taken to Gardiner's Island aboard the Maidstone, which Mr. Mackay charters during the gunning season. Many local families were indebted to Mr. Mackay for their Thanksgiving dinners this year, as he distributed among them many ducks and pheasants which he shot on the Island.

March 19, 1920 - Mackay Leases Gardiner's Island:
Clarence Mackay has just become the possessor for the next twenty years of the historic Gardiner's Island, having leased it from Lion Gardiner. Just what Mr. Mackay's ideas are with regard to his new possession have not been divulged, but if he is obsessed with a desire to escape the maddening crowd into an exclusiveness, that even Harbour Hill at Roslyn does not furnish him, he has certainly achieved his end. With the lease, Mr. Mackay also acquired, through outright purchase, all the livestock which includes herds of prize sheep and cattle, poultry and horses.

December 17, 1936 - Mackay Wins Island Tax Cut:
Supervisor Perry B. Duryea last night informed the East Hampton Town Board that a judgment had been entered against the town yesterday afternoon by Clarence H. Mackay for over-assessment of Gardiner's Island. In Mackay's earlier petition it is stated that the full value of the Island in June 1937 was $400,000 but that the Island should only be assessed at $200,000 on the basis of other assessments in the Township. East Hampton Town was ordered to refund $23,302.68 to Mackay. On motion of Justice William H. Strong the board voted unanimously to borrow funds to satisfy the judgment.



Mackay Radio Station, WSL, at Napeague, Long Island
photo by Robert Shacklady

(We welcome any facts regarding this station)

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR TRUSTEES

RALPH O. WILLIAMS
N3VT

Born in November 1920, coincident with KDKA's first broadcast, Ralph attended high school in NJ, followed by Cooper Union College. When WWII intervened, he studied radar and after serving as a radar officer in China, he completed college at Northeastern University in Boston. After graduating in 1947, he joined General Electric and worked in various aspects of radio engineering. He developed an interest in the history of the radio art, and after a 1965 move to Philadelphia, he concentrated his efforts on the historical material of RCA and Atwater Kent. He joined the AWA, and through association and with the encouragement of other collectors he rapidly built a collection of Atwater Kent radio artifacts. Ralph obtained his Master's Degree in Engineering Science; his thesis was on the information processing efficiency of the Morse telegraph code. Over the years he has been a steady contributor to the various programs and other activities of the AWA. His series of landmark articles on Atwater Kent radio receivers in the first three volumes of the AWA REVIEW, unfortunately now out of print, are considered prime information sources for collectors. After retiring from GE, Ralph moved to Orient, NY on the northeastern end of Long Island, where he and Elinor and his excellent collection of Atwater Kent material reside in an historic house more than 300 years old. The Antique Wireless Association has recently published Ralph Williams' book *"The Atwater Kent Radios"*.

CHRISTOPHER BACON
KA21QB

Some years ago, popular singer, Paul Simon, had a hit song called *"Late In the Evening"*, in which he credits a radio left playing near his crib by his mother for his lifelong career in music. Christopher Bacon might have done likewise, except he took the radio apart to see how it worked and wound up in electronics instead! Bacon's interest in RCA Communication was sparked in 1971, when he was tutored by William Kimmich, a retired mechanical engineer who developed teleprinter apparatus in the organization's New York Central Radio Office. Previous Chief Engineer of DuArt Video, a film and television postproduction facility in New York City, Bacon is also Executive Vice President of the Friends of Long Island Wireless History, a member of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, and a member of the Radio Club of America.

Photos and text from
Antique Wireless Association
"Review" - Volume 10, 1996

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Connie Currie

This is our first newsletter of 2001 and, again, we welcome you to visit our exhibit at the Fire Island Lighthouse.

A second exhibit, featuring the people and places that made wireless radio history on Long Island, will open in April 2001 at the *Sayville Library* and remain there for a month. On Tuesday evening, April 12th, we will present our slide show featuring the *Sayville Radio Station (Telefunken)*. Please visit the *Sayville Library* and let them know what you think of the presentation. We have already received requests to put the exhibit on the road.

Our April 23rd General Meeting will be at the Sayville Middle School at 7 PM. Plan to be with us. We will be showing the *Filmhaus* documentary video, some of which was taken here on Long Island at West Sayville and Rocky Point. *"The Big Bang at Nauen"*, primarily about the *Telefunken* Company, still a presence in Germany, tells the story of the *"Sayville"* facility during World War I.

The goals of the *Friends of Long Island Wireless History* remain unchanged. We are looking for a place in which to house our library, artifacts, as well as a radio station, classroom and meeting room. In the meantime, we hope to reach as many people as possible with *"Distant Sparks"*, exhibits and by appearing at History and Radio events.

Membership renewals are coming in rapidly. A healthy sign!

Connie Currie, President

*Distant Sparks**

FRIENDS OF LONG ISLAND WIRELESS HISTORY
43 SAYVILLE BLVD., SAYVILLE, N. Y. 11782

To:

ere Wireless Had Early Start

Commercial radio in the United States had its beginning in a little shack off Fire Island ave., near the corner of Virginia ave., the former Chew property, Babylon, now the site of a trim little housing development. While many residents of the village knew of tiny little radio station near the banks of the Sumpwams River, few suspected that it played such an important part in the world of wireless telegraphy. About 1929 it was identified by officials of the Radio Corporation of America who had it moved to corporation's reservation at Rocky Point, L.I.

Major Edwin H. Armstrong, radio engineer and inventor, at that time said the shack would be preserved as a historic relic and would later house a radio exhibit. The small building had been in use in Babylon for about ten years. Wider range of newer stations finally made its abandonment necessary.

According to the best information available, Guglielmo Marconi erected the station in the late autumn of 1900, or early winter of 1901. This gives it a date in wireless history while Marconi was experimenting with in Transoceanic radio communications and about the time he amazed the world by flashing the letter "S" through the ether across the Atlantic Ocean.

After Major Armstrong established that the shack actually was the starting place of the present-day American system of wireless communications, he purchased it and offered it to the Radio Corporation of America. He then came to Babylon, loaded it on a truck and removed it to Rocky Point, where it was placed beneath the great transmitting and receiving towers.

Discovery of the existence of the station and verification of the part it played in early American radio came about partly by coincidence. Capt. H. J. Round, one of the leading engineers of the British Marconi Wireless Company, and an associate with Marconi in the latter's early work of extending the use of his discoveries and inventions happened to mention to Major Armstrong the existence of the building. The two were at Bayport at the time.

The shed is about the shape of the conventional doghouse. It could have been mistaken for a toolhouse, or a garage. It measures 12 by 14 feet, and in the days of its use merely provided room for two operators, one of whom lived in a house nearby, and which is no longer standing. It stood less than one-half mile from the Great South Bay, and from it on clear days, a view of Fire Island could be had.

A high mast which had been erected was no longer on the property when Major Armstrong made his discovery. Very probably it was used for finding by some of the neighbors. It was a well-known and accepted scientific fact in the early days of radio that an iron pole could not be employed as a support for antennae (iron or steel masts are used exclusively today) and as a height of 170 feet was desired, the pole was spliced. The antenna was a single wire of the vertical type reaching at only a slight angle to the ground. About the mast was laid the large zinc ring, buried in the earth. It was approximately 40 feet in diameter, and provided the ground connection.

Because of the fact that Marconi's early inventions had aroused universal scientific interest and had set individuals to work in laboratories all over the world, Marconi's equipment at Babylon was carefully guarded. Visitors were not permitted at the station. This may explain why so little data was available locally on the work conducted there.

Quite recently the Village of Babylon through its historian, Miss Beulah Muncy, placed a stone marker at the curb, corner of Fire Island and Virginia aves., so that the historic nature of the site may be recalled for all time.

The story of the Rocky Point transmitting station is the important follow-up of the Marconi invention, and of the great role played by this locality in world-wide communication.

Officially opened Nov. 5, 1921, by President Harding, the Rocky Point station was built shortly after the organization of the Radio Corporation of America, and the end of World War I when the radio facilities of its predecessor, the American Marconi Company, were returned by the U. S. Government to private control. At that time the demands for world-wide communications were increasing rapidly and all major foreign governments were pressing for direct high speed radio communications with the United States. The Rocky Point station, known as Radio Central, was planned to be the main transmitting station in the RCA system which at that time also included Marion, Mass.; New Brunswick, and Tuckerton, N. J.

The state of the art at that time made it necessary to use long-waves for dependable long distance communications, which in turn dictated the use of high steel towers to support massive antenna structures. Although developments over the years have practically eliminated the longwave system in favor of shortwaves, six of the original twelve 400 ft. towers can still be seen at the station. As a matter of fact, they are a well known landmark and serve navigators in Long Island Sound for obtaining a "fix."

With the inauguration of shortwave transmission, two transmitters were installed in a so-called tin shack located some distance from the main building which became known as Building No. 1. The original experimental work was done at this location. Later, two additional wings were added to the main building and numerous shortwave transmitters installed together with suitable transmitting antennas. During the year 1930 an additional building, known as Building No. 9, was erected approximately one and one-half miles from Building No. 1 to house additional shortwave transmitters.

Building No. 1 is a single story structure with all equipment on one floor. Building No. 9 is a two-story structure with the power equipment located on the first floor and the transmitters on the second floor. The necessity for the second building was primarily due to the fact that the area surrounding Building No. 1 had been utilized nearly as far as possible for shortwave antennas without making the transmission lines excessively long and thus incurring too much radio frequency energy loss.

Presently the operating facilities at the Rocky Point station consist of 54 short wave transmitters and 100 shortwave antennas. Two long-wave transmitters and the original two long-wave antennas are still available.

On the approximately 5,000 acres which the station occupied, there are now 140 shortwave antennas constructed on lower steel towers and wooden masts. Eighty transmitters working on 200 different frequencies now regularly transmit to 51 foreign countries. A staff of 85 engineers, technicians, riggers, mechanics, and supporting office force under the direction of Mr. H. A. Taylor, Engineer-in-Charge, keep the plant maintained and operating. Some idea of the magnitude of the operation may be gained from the fact that the station uses enough electric power to supply 3,600 average American homes. (Long Island Lighting Company supplies the power as the station generates power only in emergencies, and in very limited amounts.)

Services regularly handled at Rocky Point include the following: telegraph message traffic, international telex service, leased channels-Government and Private; program (voice and music) transmissions, and radiophoto (picture) transmissions.

The Rocky Point station is connected with its companion receiving station Riverhead, and the central control point, or message center, at New York City through an extensive wire and radio relay system.

Besides fulfilling its roll in regular radio traffic operations, the Rocky Point station and the men who have staffed it, have played an important part in the development of the radio art. Many of the inventions which have brought the communications art to its present state were conceived and developed at Rocky Point.

Birth Of The Wireless In Babylon

by Debbie Hyman

Not many residents of Babylon Village are aware of the important role their community played in history on an early winter day in 1901. It was from this community that an Italian immigrant by the name of Guglielmo Marconi sent the first wireless radio transmission across the Atlantic Ocean.

Commercial radio had its origins in a small shack on Fire Island Avenue and Virginia Beach Road in Babylon Village. According to various sources, Marconi used the shack to experiment with trasoceanic radio communications. He astonished the world by flashing the letter "S" across the Atlantic Ocean. The shed, which stood less than half a mile from the Great South Bay measured only 12 ft. by 14 ft., and resembled the shape of a doghouse. It provided ample room for two radio operators.

Major E. H. Armstrong, a radio engineer, wanted the shack to be preserved as a historic relic. He subsequently purchased it and sold it to the Radio Corporation of America (R.C.A.) In the year 1929, officials of R.C.A. removed the shack from its site in Babylon and moved it to Rocky Point, L.I., as an historical artifact. Rocky Point was the locality of a large transmitting center for R.C.A. To this date, there is not sufficient data available locally concerning the exact nature of Marconi's experiments in the small Babylon shed. During that time period Marconi's inventions aroused universal scientific interest and as a result, his equipment was kept well guarded.

Marconi's prescence on L.I. can still be felt today. A man by the name of John Campagnoli, a colleague of Marconi since their days together in Italy, bought land on L.I. and named it in honor of his dear friend. "Marconiville" still survives, on a square mile area in Copaigue, lined with shady trees and historic names.

Unfortunately, the plaque that once marked the spot where Marconi's small wooden shed stood, was stolen years ago. The shed has been restored and stands in the schoolyard of the Joseph Edgar Elementary School on Route 25A in Rocky Point.

Appreciation is expressed once again to the cooperative people who helped compile the information needed for this article at the "Babylon Village Historical and Reservations Society." The museum is open to the public on Saturday afternoons from 2 P.M. to 4 P.M. A visit to the museum will prove quite worthwhile if you would care to learn more about the history of Babylon Village and see artifacts and exhibits concerning your historic area.

Beacon Tales Aguil 1981