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Hi Alan,

Hope the enclosed is of interest. Those were great days at W2AEE. Some of the names are mentioned, various folks at CU and elsewhere, some I've kept track of, others lost...

W2AIP - Art Kay - died a few years ago. Caused by microwave radiation suffered as a USN radar tech in the late 40's. Never got his EE from CU but studied there "forever" and did get a very prestigious job at Bell Labs' Whippany facility. He did most of the antenna work on the famous wire antennas emanating from the old building roof!

W8GFZ - Nate Marple. An engineer at the CU Electronics Labs. Eventually left ham radio and moved to NJ in the late 60's. An incredible CW operator. He kept his National HRO60 and Johnson Viking Ranger at W2AEE for all to use and enjoy.

W2JXM - Tom Puckett. Another EE wizard; he practically invented full CW break-in. The prototype rig for his thesis was our "CXB" transmitter - 400W CW out, a 6' rack all bands, homebrew, with thyatron circuitry, full receive muting, sidetones, full receive signal strength between dots, etc.etc. all in the early 50's!!!! He went back to OK in the mid-late 50's as I recall.

K2DVT - Dave Efron (see picture) - a regular visitor from CCNY (W2HJ). A mathematician, theoretical physicist and jazz clarinetist who eventually gave up ham radio...

K2EOF - Steve Aug, President of W2DSC (at NYU's Bronx campus back when they had one) later became a US Coast Guard officer, then attended CU's J school, was active in CUARC, and went on to become ABC - TV's business editor. He's on "Good Morning America" every morning with the "Morning Economic Report" and is still active as W3DEF, from Chevy Chase Maryland.

W2BMF - Jim Douglas was a combined physics/music major at Yale (class of 56). Also a frequent visitor to Columbia. He left ham radio eventually and is now Chairperson of the Astronomy Department at UTexas/Austin. Most brilliant person I ever met!!!

W1WXR - Priscilla "Tippi" Rounds - from Westport, CT - art student at Uconn and later at Boston's MFA - one of the most popular girls on the College Net. Very attractive and the center of much attention, as would attest the creation of the "Royal Order of Brick Pagoda Watchers" on the College Net, membership open to those who had glimpsed Tippi in a bikini!!! Tippi married one of her boyfriends on the CN and now lives in Pittsburgh....

W1YCU - Judy Gage, a high school student from Worcester, MA - who was featured in a big photo spread in "Saturday Evening Post" in 1954, showing her at home, with ham radio, etc. Etc. Most everyone on CN was madly in love with Judy, and Roger W1UDF from RPI was her official "boyfriend" which was why all the grumpy old college guys even allowed her to associate with them, in their lofty elder status!

Judy was (and is) an absolute doll, she lives in Carlisle, MA and is still an aficionado of the old days on the College Net. She may also have various mementos of those days I think. She's married to Dave Willard W1EO who just retired from MITRE and we're in touch regularly.

W1UDF - Roger Salaman, student at RPI in Troy, NY, good friend of Art's and mine. He did a rather amazing thesis studying propagation effects on HF over varying distances for his EE bachelor's requirement at RPI, and enlisted the aid of all stations in the College Net. We used to run weekend shifts for 36 hours, one operator after another, at W2AEE during this several month long project, going from one operating position to another in order to send out "beacon" transmissions on all the various bands. Each station had to send and receive the beacons from all other stations on the "net" - from 160 through 10 - (those that had enough equipment to operate all bands simultaneously - like W2AEE, which Roger called "that Electronic Palace in NY with 10,000,000,000 kilowatts on the air")

We would fill out the forms with reports quantified from O-10 and with comments for signal quality - fade, flutter fade, selective fading, etc.etc. and then Roger would compile everything. Eventually he submitted the thesis and of course passed, and it all left quite an impression on those of us who participated.

I used to do the early morning shift Saturday - arriving at W2AEE at about 3AM and "working" till 9AM! Transmitting the bulletins (phone and CW), copying down the other bulletins that I could copy, and downing gallons of coffee, raspberry cookies, and (yechhhh) cigarettes!!! Often an exhausted operator from a prior shift could be found in Art's old Navy surplus canvas hammock, slung between roof girders in the back of the attic above the piles and boxes of the old Armstrong papers!!!!

The College Net was really active every Friday afternoon up and down the East Coast, with dates and sleepovers being arranged... W1AF/Harvard, W1YU/Yale, K1NAK/Brown, as well as the Annapolis and W.Point and US Coast Guard Academy stations always being present. We all spent a lot of time on each others' turf and thoroughly enjoyed the whole thing.

In my case so much so that I was put on probation twice for neglecting my college studies in favor of my activities at W2AEE, but - years later, after graduating and mucking around with various things to do in my life, I must confess that W2AEE **was** my basic education at Columbia!!

There are a zillion reminiscences about the grand old place, from the thousands of broadcast band images caused by the copper flashing rectifying solder joints on hot summer days - causing our EE's to scurry about devising wavetrapped filters for our receivers - to the RFI which W2AEE's big transmitters would cause to the experimental analog computer lab on the 6th floor!! All the sleepovers in the shack (to the dismay of our faculty "counselor") the cozy back areas of the attic (great for making out among all the old Armstrong stuff!!!) -

and helping to string and tune all the antennas - home brew tuners of course, big patch panels to patch various receivers to various transmitters all over the place, and patch the outputs from the 6-7 operating positions to all the different antennas.

A great exercise in network topology if you will, lots of lessons to be learned - Nate and Art and Tom Pucket were the elder "teachers" so to speak, the rest of us were the li'l "grunts" who came in and learned the ropes.... as a freshman wearing a beanie in 1954, believe me, it was grand being at AEE!

All ham members had to be checked out on each operating position. To tune up the CXB 400 watt CW rig, or the Temco 1,000 watt AM rig (which lit up the skies every afternoon on the College Net on 75), one had to be thoroughly checked out.

Not quite the same as firing up a Kenwood TS50, believe me!!!

Incidentally all the W2AEE experiences are directly responsible for my interest in collecting and repairing "historic" old radio gear - as you can see from the GSL card!!!!

I'd better stop here. More people to identify and more stories to tell, you know how us old folks like to ramble on and on about the old days.....!!!!!! But some of us are still around and active in ham radio.

I exchanged letters with Tippi last year, and keep in touch with Judy and Dave; Steve W3DEF is just about my oldest friend at this point; even heard from Dale Cockle last year (he was an operator at W2KGY at West Point '54-'58).

I'll try to dig up more names and histories if possible, and if you're interested!! Many of the other names directly associated with W2AEE in those days - K2IKI, W2OLA, and others - had all given up ham radio and faded into the swirling dusts of history long long ago.

Hope I didn't bore you with all this!!!

73 (or as we used to say, incurring the wrath of the elder ops at AEE,) VERY 73!!

Yves



encl.

Current e-mail is Yves1@Delphi.com. I'm also on Cserve and Prodigy but may soon dump everything for a dedicated Internet provider like PCNet or Netcom.... will let you know if I do.