



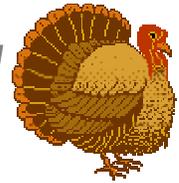
Squelch Tales



Newsletter from the Merrymeeting Amateur Radio Association for November 2009



Happy Thanksgiving



The Wouff Hong



Every amateur should know and tremble at the history and origins of this fearsome instrument for the punishment of amateurs who cultivate bad operating habits and who nourish and culture their meaner instincts on the air.

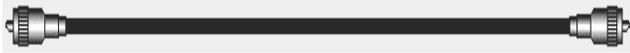
It was invented--or at any rate, discovered-by "The Old Man" himself, just as amateurs were getting back on the air after World War One. "The Old Man," (who later turned out to be Hiram Percy Maxim, WIAW, co-founder and first president of ARRL) first heard the Wouff Hong described amid the howls and garble of QRM as he tuned across a band filled with signals which exemplified all the rotten operating practices then available to amateurs, considering the state of the art as they knew it. As amateur technology and ingenuity have advanced, we have discovered many new and improved techniques of rotten operating, but we're ahead of our story.

As The Old Man heard it, the Wouff Hong was being used on some hapless offender so effectively that he investigated. After further effort, "T.O.M." was able to locate and identify a Wouff Hong. He wrote a number of QST articles about contemporary rotten operating practices and the use of the Wouff Hong to discipline the offenders.

Early in 1919, The Old Man wrote in QST "I am sending you a specimen of a real live Wouff Hong which came to light out here . . . Keep it in the editorial sanctum where you can lay hands on it quickly in an emergency." The "specimen of a real live Wouff Hong" was presented to a meeting of the ARRL Board and QST reported later that "each face noticeably blanched when the awful Wouff Hong was . . . laid upon the table." The Board voted that the Wouff Hong be framed and hung in the office of the Secretary of the League. On display today, it's still a sobering influence on every visitor to League Headquarters who has ever swooshed a carrier across a crowded band.

The Old Man never prescribed the exact manner in which the Wouff Hong was to be used, but amateurs need only a little imagination to surmise how painful

punishments were inflicted on those who stoop to liddish behavior on the air.



Three People Killed While Erecting Antenna

ARRL News Release from October 17th

At approximately 8:40 PM on Monday, October 12, a man, woman and their 15 year old son were killed while trying to erect a 50 foot vertical antenna at the home of the man's mother, Barbara Tenn, KJ4KFF, in Palm Bay, Florida. The deceased were not licensed amateurs.

"It happened in an instant," Palm Bay Fire Marshal Mike Couture said in a statement. "It is an unfortunate set of circumstances that led to the most tragic result."

According to police reports, Melville Braham, 55, Anna Braham, 49, and their 15 year old son Anthony were putting up an antenna -- Tenn's second -- at night when they lost control of the antenna and it crashed into nearby overhead power lines. The impact sent 13,000 volts of electricity through the pole the three were holding. A family friend, a 17 year old boy, was on the roof at the time of the accident. He and the couple's daughter, who was in the house at the time, were not injured.

The mother was pronounced dead at the scene. When paramedics arrived, the father and son were not breathing; rescue crews immediately tried to resuscitate them. They were transported to a hospital where they later died.

Neighbor Jim Vallindingham told television station WFTV that he called 911 when he saw the fire in the back yard and then he ran over: "I had no idea it was

electrical until we got over there and saw the three people laying on the ground. So I called 911 a second time to tell them there were casualties. You know, there were people on the ground. So [the 911 operator] told me that's electric, you back away don't touch anything."

Couture said that night was not the best time to be attempting to put up an antenna. "It wasn't the best time, meaning it was night time. Obviously, in darkness, and trying to do something like this and not being keenly aware of where the power line is in the backyard, [was not a good idea]," he said.

Neighbors said that Tenn, an ARRL member, used Amateur Radio to talk with her family in Jamaica. -- *Thanks to WFTV and Central Florida News 13 for the information*



Three standout MARA members QSY to 5-Land

The closing of Brunswick Naval Air Station is going to have a significant impact the mid coast community and the MARA. Several of the folks working at BNAS are support contractors personnel. Two are technical support personnel employed by Raytheon and members of MARA. These good folks are packing up and moving to the company facility in Dallas, Texas.

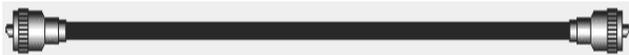
Paul Cecil, KA5FPT of Bath is one and the other is John Briggs, KC6TVF of Topsham. Paul, John and John's XYL Michele, W7LIF have been outstanding members and supporters of the MARA, Mid Coast ARES and CERT Team-2 for the past several years and their departure

will leave a big hole in all three organizations.

All three have very busy lives and they still manage to provide many volunteer hours to ham radio activities in the area. John and Michele are also volunteers to the American Red Cross and members of the Mid Coast Haz-Mat team plus John is a member of the Sagadahoc County LEPC. Paul Cecil has been a very consistent volunteer and always willing to share his acquired knowledge with his fellow hams.

All of us in the MARA, ARES and Mid Coast CERT want to wish them good luck in their new assignment in Texas. We are sure the ham radio community in Texas will gain three outstanding ham radio operators and volunteers.

We will miss y'all...73 & 88s



A Cheap-n-easy 2-Meter vertical collinear

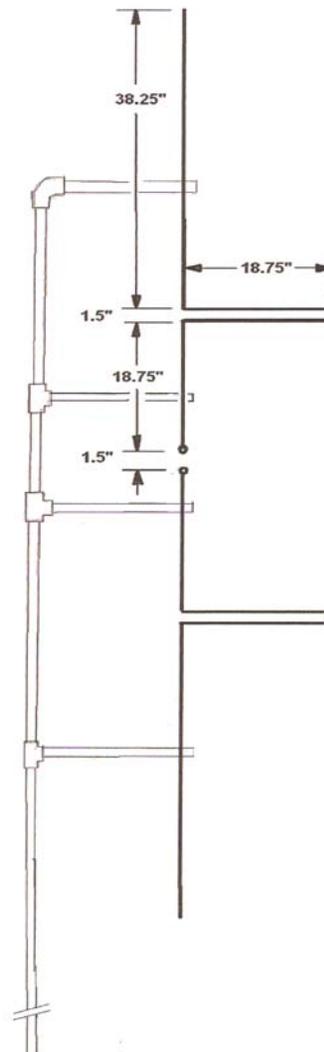
By W1ZE

Back in the sixties and early seventies I had the VHF bug. I used an old Heathkit two-meter lunchbox and then a Gonset Communicator to communicate all around southern California. I used $\frac{1}{4}$ -wave ground planes and J-poles with pretty good success considering the Lunchbox may have given me 4 to 5 watts of AM and the Gonset about 10-watts or so. An experienced ham in our neighborhood, W6MLA showed me how to build what they called a "Collinear" vertical. The antenna was made from No.12 solid copper wire (or aluminum clothesline wire) a few insulators and a bamboo pole (or other vertical rod). The feedpoint employed a 4:1 coax loop balun to match

50-ohm coax to the antenna that had a higher input impedance.

As I learned later, the antenna is actually a three half-waves in phase collinear. When I built my first "Collinear" I was impressed. Signal that I could just make out during the 145.8 MHz Channel Cities Net became very Q5 after I put the vertical on roof clamped to a vent pipe.

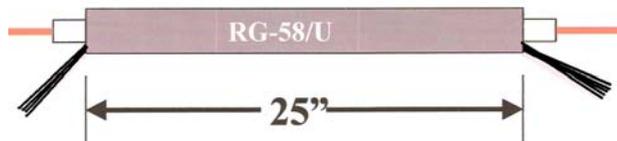
Even though I built my first collinear in the early 60s it is still a good design today. For a few bucks at your local hardware emporium you can build a vertical two-meter antenna that works very well.



Bamboo poles are a little difficult to find these days but PVC pipe is readily available and makes a good framework to support the wire array. The distance between the support structure and the wire elements only needs to be a few inches, so the previous diagram is not an accurate depiction. A wooden pole treated with spar varnish would also work but be a bit heavier.

In the early days of ham radio before coax cable was readily available, twin-lead (ladder-line) was used for transmission line and transmitters employed balanced outputs. Today we use coax to feed most antenna systems, so to feed the collinear a 4:1 coax loop balun is used to get a good match to 50-ohm coax.

Building a loop balun for two-meters is pretty easy. All that is needed is coax, solder and weather seal.



- First, cut a length of RG-58/U coax 27-inches long.
- Next, strip the outer jacket back 1-inch from each end and separate the shield from the center conductor
- At the antenna end of your 50-ohm coax transmission line, strip back the outer jacket one inch and separate the shield and center conductor as done previously.
- Form the 25-inch length of coax into a U shaped loop.
- Twist and solder the center conductor at one end of the loop to the center conductor of the antenna end of the 50-ohm transmission line.

- Twist and solder together the three shield pigtails.
- Tape the loop and transmission line together.

This completes the balun.

Now you need to build two collinear wire elements:



- Cut two lengths of No.12 solid copper wire or aluminum clothesline wire 98-inches in length.
- At the end of each wire make a connection point loop where the balun will be connected.
- Form one length of wire to the dimensions shown in the original drawing starting from the connection loop end so that any excess wire (approx. 1") can be removed from the far end.
- Using the previously formed wire element as a template, form the second (bottom) element.

Now you can attach the antenna array to your PVC or wood pole as shown in the original drawing. Feel free to experiment with how you want to build a support frame. Just remember that the antenna will be about 120-inches long. If you can find a fiberglass rod about that length, they make a good support structure.

Attach the balun to the antenna feed point and you are ready to communicate. It will out perform a J-Pole.

73, Bruce, W1ZE



October NEAR-Fest, a lot of fun

On Saturday, October 17th Bruce, W1ZE, Steve, AA4AK and Harry, N1TTT jumped into the W1ZE-mobile and headed to Deerfield, New Hampshire for the fall 2009 edition of NEAR-Fest.

Upon arrival the weather was a bit crisp but the sun was peeking through the clouds and warmer weather was in the offing. After paying the fellow in the Fez his dues the three headed directly to the men's room to relieve the pressure caused by three large cups of coffee. With a feeling of relief the three started in on some serious window shopping until they spotted the café where they were serving breakfast to the gathering throng. A quick decision was made and the cooks cracked a few more eggs on the grill for the trio.

After the hunger pangs had been squelched, off they went with shopping lists in hand. Within an hour or so Bruce reported that he had filled his shopping list. Steve had a chance to chat with a few suppliers he wanted to talk to and he had a smile on his face because his chats met with success. The three made a quick run to the W1ZE-mobile to off-load their stash and start in on a second round.

Throughout the morning the three ran into old friends and other MARA members. As the three strolled by the tables a familiar voice was heard saying, "hi fellows, how's it going?" It was Allan Kwong, WA1SCS who had come to the hamfest to get the coax and antennas he needed to get his HF station on the air down in the Boxborough, MA area. It was good to have the chance to chat

with him. He asked about everyone. He said he is counting the years until he can return to mid coast Maine on a full-time basis.

Bill (on the hill) Messier, K1MNW was seen off and on moving quickly from table to table clutching heavy metal microwave equipment. Talk about a kid in the candy store with daddy's credit card.

Good News: Bruce had the chance to chat with Bob Stone, President of Newfield Design, Inc. about the D-Star clone. Bob assured Bruce that as soon as the prototype have been tested the first manufacturing run would include one unit for the KS1R/R 447.575 MHz repeater.

It was almost dinner (lunch) time and the traditional sweet Italian sausage started to print heavily on their minds. After a good feed the three decided they had done all the damage they could do there that day so home they went.

REAL GOOD NEWS: MARA member and past Sagadahoc County EC DR. Allan Kwong, WA1SCS was the winner of the Grand Door Prize, a FLEX transceiver to go along with his newly acquired antenna parts. *AT-A-BOY Doc!*



*Invite a Ham Friend or
Ham Wanna'bee
To an*



Meeting or club event