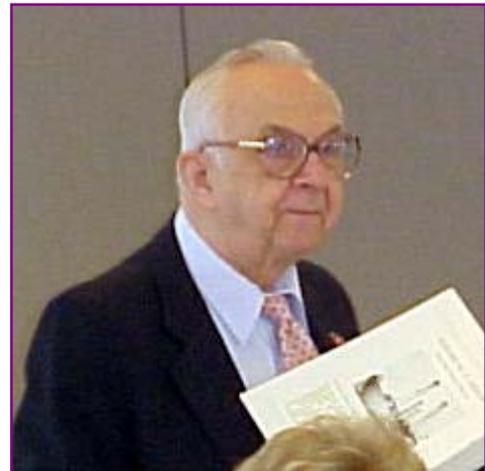


VWOA NEWSLETTER

Email Issue #73

Francis T. Cassidy Editor

2014



Wendell Benson Assistant Secretary and Membership Chairman became a SK on May 28, 2014

This is a rewrite of our first attempt to deliver timely information to the VWOA Membership. By now each one of you has been a recipient of the DUES NOTICE as sent out by our Assistant Secretary and Chairman of the Membership Committee, Wendell R. Benson. Wendell brings to our Executive Board a wealth of experience both at Sea and in the Radio and Wireless community. He brings to the VWOA membership a personal touch of a person who has been there with all the other members and done that with you both at Sea and in the Wireless World. Your elected Officers and Directors have seen the results of his efforts in the improvement in accuracy of the information in the VWOA database and the way he has combined the task of collecting the VWOA Dues with his personal touch of experiences he talks about as he exhorts you to Renew your Membership.

Wendell R. Benson SK 05-28-14
Wendell Benson describes himself as follows:

I grew up on dairy farms in SW NY state on the shores of Lake Erie. I graduated high school in 42 and in Mar 43 was drafted into the Navy. After basics and navy radio school I ended up in a division called "Naval Armed Guard". This group was made up of signalmen, radiomen, gun crews who served onboard merchant navy ships. In 44 I made 2 trips on a "Liberty" ship first to Port Said Egypt with ammo and the 2nd to Bari Italy bringing bombs for the 15th Am Airforce. I later had 3 trips on an American "T-2" wartime tanker. Last ship was a pre-war designed ship for the So African trade. It was converted to carry troops in Nr 4 and Nr 5 holds. We were in LeHavre when the Japan war ended. Prior to going to LeHavre we were

in Hull UK to load "slag" as ballast. Never even got ashore there. I loved being a "sparks". I went to school in Texas to obtain my FCC license. The day after graduation I traveled to New Orleans and boarded a wartime "Victory Ship" which was already loaded for a voyage to India. It had been unable to sail because of a shortage of radio oprs.

Most of my sailing years seemed to be to India or that part of the world. I did have one ship for 3 trips that sailed every 5 weeks on a Thursday to Antwerp, Rotterdam, Hamburg and Bremen. That was my only experience getting near the UK. When we were on India trips the ports of call were gulf & east coast USA to Halifax, Beirut, Alexandria, Jeddah, Karachi, Bombay, Colombo, Madras and Calcutta. Sometimes we went on to Penang, Singapore, Medan Jakarta Semarang Surabaya. On occasion I have been to Bangkok, Saigon, Yokohama, Philippines. I always wanted to go to South Africa and Australia but never made it.

I also went to Aden and Djibouti. When I went ashore in Djibouti it was just like the French Colonial sites you see in the movies. I did visit the 500kc station TXZ. A memorable experience here was a qso with Tuckerton/WSC on 6mc.

Another time I had several voyages from gulf & east coast to the Hawaiian Islands. These

trips took 70 days round trip and we visited 5 ports in the islands during our 2 week stay.

In 1950 I had to leave my ship for 15 months when I was recalled to active duty during the Korean War. This time I was on a real U S Navy ship--a PCEC (patrol craft built on a minesweeper hull).

I stopped sailing in June 56. I was married and these 4 mo India trips were too much. I became an "air/ground" radio opr for a comml airline. After 5 years they closed their NY station and I went to work for ARINC. They are a non-profit co owned by all the airlines. They set specs for electronic equipment t on aircraft, do the paperwork for FCC license etc. Besides domestic VHF networks we handled communications for a portion of the North Atlantic for transoceanic flights.

I always wanted to get back to "CW". In Oct 63 I had an opportunity to work at WSF New York the coastal telegraph station of Mackay Radio. I really enjoyed this. In Sept 68 WSF was remoted to Amagansett/WSL in Southampton.

I transferred to ITT World Com Technical Operations Center in the same building. I was a tech--we had many HF radio muxes, VFT cable circuits, telex, leased data lines and even the famous "Moscow-Washdc" tty "hotline". I retired in Dec 88 after 24 1/2 years at Mackay/ITT, the last 14 yrs as Supvr in the "TOC".