

2.

About wireless operators on the windjammers, I don't personally recall too many wireless equipped sailing vessels in my time at sea, starting in '21, outside of the Alaska Packers fleet which went to Bristol Bay each year---I almost took one of these jobs. Outside of this group of ships I can only recall the schooners COMMODORE and VIGILANT: when I was R/O in Standard of New York's YANKEE ARROW running to Far East in kerosene trade (oil for the lamps of China!) I frequently relayed the TR (position) reports of these ships to KPH. I believe they were bound for Australia at the time. Later I met a fellow who had been R/O on the VIGILANT, altho not at the time I relayed traffic for the schooner, and he lives in Imperial Beach, not far from you, at this time. U.S. Steel, or Isthmian Line, had the full rigged TUSITALA/KFSQ, which I worked a few times when she was between the Canal and Hawaii. When I was going to sea I was in San Francisco when RCA was putting wireless equipment on the French schooner ANEITURA, which took a cargo, largely lumber, to the South Seas. She was fitted with an RCA P-8 2-kilowatt spark set, same as I had on YANKEE ARROW. The call letters FAGA were assigned to ANEITURA, and a good friend of mine went in her as R/O: I had been aboard her with him half a dozen times when the equipment was being installed. This fellow is living in Seattle, retired from phone company. So out of four windjammers I knew carried wireless gear, I know fellows who sailed in two of them.

I have maintained an active interest in amateur radio ever since first licensed in 1921. In the past year or so most of my activity has been maintaining schedules with a couple of R/O friends sailing in tankers, Union Oil's Hendy operated SANTA PAULA ex HANS ISBRANDTSEN (700' or so) and Chevron's HILLYER BROWN, altho this latter schedule has now become with the CHEVRON HAWAII, 810' x 105' as my friend recently went back to Sparrows Point to join this latest addition to the Chevron fleet.

In addition to these two ships, I've tried to make a specialty of working "maritime mobiles," amateur stations operating from ships, and have had many interesting contacts with such vessels as BOWDOIN, MANHATTAN (in Northwest Passage); IDEMITSU MARU in Persian Gulf, and at the time her 206,000 dwt made her largest tanker afloat; hospital ships REPOSE and SANCTUARY when they were on Yankee Station, off DaNang; plus many other ships, and a couple of the Russian "drift stations" on floating ice islands near North Pole, UPOL12 and UPOL15. Very interesting signals on the ham bands.

That Novice amateur operator in Massachusetts who has all the negatives sent me a beautiful 5x7 photo of KANAWHA AO-1, grand dame of the Navy's oiler fleet. When a ham in high school I was aboard KANAWHA quite a few times, as I knew an RM1c aboard her who was a bootlegger on ham bands. Most Navy ships of that day had the CW-936 radiotelephone transmitter, with VT-2s powered by motor generator. This RM1c, McKee, contrived to key this transmitter (pure d-c note from motor generator, a rarity on bands in those days) and on c.w. he signed the bootleg call 6PT. At the time most amateur magazines carried "Calls Heard" lists prominently in every issue, and very few did not include 6PT. On the legal side, I may say that the call 6JI, Milt Jackson, up on 18th, between E and F Streets, also appeared in most lists.....I believe he's still around S.D.

Our local chapter of Society of Wireless Pioneers is the Jack Binns chapter---years ago I cut out a magazine picture of Binns, and when chapter took his name I got a Boeing photo man to lift a negative off it, and I gave every member a print: sample enclosed. Binns is of course almost a legend among ship operators, and we're happy to bear his name.

Well, Jerry, that's the story from here. I'd like to sell the house, get a good camper, and work mobile on ham bands from all over the western states, and as the wife is quite agreeable, we may just do it.

73

Hugh Compton