

A HISTORY OF THE ORANGE COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB - Part I

by Bob - WB6IXN, Club Historian

In a series of articles to follow, I will present our past history from 1932 through the middle 1980s. Much thanks is due to "Max", W6DEY, Shelley, W6BAM, Ken, W6HHC, Ted, K6LJA, Fried, WA6WZO, Sandy, WA6WZN, Ralph, W6WRJ/W6RE, Terry, WB6IHZ, and many other old timers who contributed bits & pieces to the OCARC history!

*** THE GOOD OLD DAYS ***

Amateur Radio was budding and beginning to flower in the late 1920s in Orange County. The Long Beach Radio Club probably organized around 1932. The first attempt to organize a radio club in Orange County centered around the Moore brothers, Earl W6IGO, and Harry, W6FUU, who started a radio store business in Santa Ana around 1933. According to Eleanor Walden, an old timer at Montgomery Ward, the firm had just opened its new store in August of 1933, at Fourth & Main in Santa Ana. One of the Club's first projects was a display of an amateur radio station in one of the store's new windows. Thus, the OCARC must have organized in the first half of 1933. Earl Moore was the first elected president. Shelley Trotter, W6BAM, Rod Engel, W6EEK, Harold Smith, W6HAA (who worked in radio repair), W6KQD, Don Randall (worked at radio wholesale stores), and Tommy Jentges, W6ALO (around since 1926), and Bob Haven, (call ?), are just a few of the first OCARC members.

But our shaky beginning didn't last! The Club disbanded around 1935, when Earl Moore moved to LA, leaving Harry to run the

business. And by 1978, Harry had moved to Arizona, getting a "7" call.

ARRL records show that OCARC has been affiliated since March 15, 1934. Then, on January 15, 1936, the Club once again reformed with Noral Evans, W6ADT/LYM/ADT (When he died), the elected president. In the early 20's, Noral went to Oregon, losing his ADT call. When he returned, he was assigned the LYM call. He later regained his original call.

During these days, 10 meter phone was the Saturday/Sunday band.

The Jan. 15th meeting was held at Noral's home on North Hughes. The second meeting was held in Orange, probably at the American Legion Hall, and the third meeting was in Weber's Bakery on N. Main. Later, the Club held regular meetings at the Santa Ana YMCA. At this time, Orange County was part of the Los Angeles Section!

In June, 1937, the OCARC hosted the first "DX ROUNDUP" in Southern California at the YMCA, later adopted as a NATIONAL FEATURE OF HAM ACTIVITIES!!! Noral Evans was president at this time. The fame of the 'Roundup' spread, and its members today are frequently mentioned in the QST "DX" column.

Since the beginning of national Field Days, we have always had two or more transmitters in operation, and, we always give leaders close competition at Field Day! The Club rendered efficient service during the 1936-37 flood, which cut southern Orange County off from the rest of the world! Operating in cooperation with the Naval Reserve, the OCARC PROVIDED THE ONLY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION DURING THE DISASTER!...

(To be continued - Next month)

