

# The Alabama Historical Radio Society Newsletter



May 2018

## NOTE FROM PRESIDENT DAVE



Greetings to All!!!

April 19, 2018 was another great Legends of Broadcast event !!!! AHRS hosted our eighth annual Legends of Broadcast, which just may have been the best one yet. That is if you can say that any one is better than any other. This year's event was well attended with special guests. On behalf of AHRS, I want to thank Don Mosley for inviting Rob Conrad and Ken Osbourn. Both are active in local broadcast and told very interesting stories of their work and backgrounds. Thanks to Don Keith for moderating the event again this year. Much work goes into preparing for and managing this event. I want to say thank you to all who had a part in making it a success. Lists of names with contact info have to be compiled, calls to everyone on the list have to be made, tables set up, food planned for, parking for guests has to be directed and then the clean up !!! The event was recorded and is available for viewing through our website or on YouTube. Thanks to all those who are doing this work.

Some of our members visited the transmitter site of WEWN in Shelby County. Thanks to Rick Curl for planning this tour. That station is probably the only one most of us will ever see that runs 500 K watts!!! The AHRS is constantly improving our radio history display, both in the formal museum and at the shop. Recently we started the process of rearranging the radios and displays to make the layout more interesting to guests. Similar items are being grouped together to help visitors understand how radio developed from early days to the present.

To expand our goal of preserving radio history, Dave Cisco and Tom Killian recently met with several representatives of the Alabama Department of History in Montgomery, regarding an Alabama radio history display in the state capital.

Work continues in the shop on Tuesday and Saturday. Joe Minor had a good number of students in class this month. At the right time, Joe will be sending students to the shop to apply what they learned in class to actual hands-on radio repair.

All areas of AHRS are functioning well at this time. Many of you probably are not aware of the work that our officers do that does not always show. Much of what they do is not done at the building. In the four months as president, I have learned how important it is to have a good staff of officers and board members I can depend on. My work would not get done without the support of our Vice President, Steven Westbrook. Steven keeps records of our assets, records donations, sends correspondence for donations, maintains membership records and helps me with the monthly newsletter. Mike Woodruff keeps all financial records in order, including dues, donations, and pays all the expenses. Tom Killian continues to contribute consistently to the content of the newsletter and getting the newsletter to Patsy Desaulniers for publishing.

In 1989 about four or five of us met in a small office on the southside of Birmingham and wondered if anyone else had an interest in old radios. None of us would have ever believed at that time that AHRS would be the society that it is today!!!! Thanks for your confidence in me to serve as your president.

Until next time ----- see you at the shop!

**President Dave**

(205) 999-7178

[johnlecco@charter.net](mailto:johnlecco@charter.net)

## EIGHTH ANNUAL LEGENDS OF BROADCAST

President Dave mentioned several events in his opening message, and I want to expand on some of those. The Eighth Annual Legends of Broadcast was one of the best we have had! Several Legends attending told their stories about starting in radio, and some in TV, and one, Rob Conrad, how he has survived over 25 years at the same radio station. Most radio personalities have worked at many stations during that period of time, if they are still in radio at all.

Gary Richardson, Mayor of Midfield, a small town contiguous with Birmingham, owns and operates four local radio stations and told some things about his radio life. One of the most interesting stories came from Ken Osbourn, a blind radio announcer, who currently does voiceovers for several major cable TV networks. He also does some impersonations of famous people. Ken's best story involved his work on high school football broadcasts as the play-by-play announcer, live at the Friday night games. He listened to three audio sources at once to determine what was happening and what play-by-play to add to the game. He had a co-announcer in one ear, the spotter in one ear and he listened to the field PA announcer, all to help him "see" what was going on. He was a success at this and he built on this ability to overcome the obstacles he faced as a blind radio announcer. He attended communications classes in college, reading textbooks and articles in Braille and was so knowledgeable that the instructor would not allow him to answer questions; he had answered so often that the other students did not get a chance to answer. These stories and more were enjoyed by everyone there. There was a good meal provided by Marilyn's Deli and Dogs next door to the Shop, great fellowship enjoyed by all, and a promise to come to the Ninth Annual Legends of Broadcast on April 18, 2019. Some pictures follow:



**Rob Conrad gives some of his career highlights while working at the same station for 25 years.**



**Gary Richardson, owner of four local radio stations, talks about his time in the radio world.**





**Ken Osbourn told some interesting stories about his radio career.**



Our own Legend, Ed Boutwell, always has a story to tell. Listening are Todd Prater and Ken Osbourn. Todd was actually on the air on two stations in Selma, AL while he was at the Legends. The miracle of electronics!



Enjoying the fellowship are Rob Conrad, Bob Barry, Don Mosley and Ed Boutwell.



The group enjoying a great meal and some fellowship.



## ALABAMA ARCHIVES TRIP

Dave Cisco and I visited the Alabama Archives, taking a self-guided tour of the Museum of Alabama, prior to a meeting we had scheduled with Sherrie Hamil, the Registrar with the Alabama Department of Archives and History. We met with Mrs. Hamil, Museum Curator Graham Neeley, and Archivist Haley Aaron in the Registrar's office. Our proposal involves the Alabama Historical Radio Society creating a "Radio History of Alabama" display, complete with physical items for display along with documents and other items to show this history. One of their questions dealt with whether items to be loaned or to be donated to the Museum, which is a question we must answer. If we can create this display and get it installed in a historically-correct location in the Museum, it will give our Society a boost in recognition, and it will fill a current void in Alabama history at the Museum. This will be a large undertaking, and if you have an interest in helping design and develop this display, please let Dave Cisco, Dave Johnson, or me know your interest. If you have not visited the Museum of Alabama in Montgomery, I would highly recommend that you schedule at least a half-day to do so. The Museum is open Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Admission is free.



Registrar Sherrie Hamil, Dave Cisco, Museum Curator Graham Neeley and Archivist Haley Aaron

## WEWN RADIO TRANSMITTER TOUR by Steven Westbrook

On April 12, a group of AHRS members visited the WEWN transmitter and antenna array atop Dunnavant Mountain in Shelby County. The tour was led by WEWN engineers, Terry Borders (Station Manager), Ed Mathis (Director of Engineering), and Yancy Davis (Control Room Operator).

[WEWN](#) is the shortwave radio outlet of the [EWTN](#), the large Catholic international broadcaster that was launched by [Mother Angelica](#) on December 28, 1992. The station studio in Irondale, Alabama, sends their signal to the transmitter facility which has four transmitters of 500kW each. The station currently transmits English programming to Africa, South East Asia, the Middle East and Europe, and Spanish programming to South America, the Caribbean, Mexico and Central America. Programming is like that of the network's television channel.

On March 30, 2008, EWTN ceased all Shortwave transmissions to North America and expanded its English-language coverage of WEWN to India, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Spanish Language coverage was also expanded to Cuba, South America, Mexico and the Caribbean. Previously WEWN only broadcast to North America, Latin America, Africa and Europe.



**Rick Curl and Skip Leslie in the control room**





**Ed Boutwell contemplates the control panel**



**The group examines the antenna array**





**More Antennas**



**AHRS Members: Robert Jackson, Rick Curl, Ed Boutwell, Steven Westbrook, Chris Johnson, Skip Leslie, Robert Williams and (not in the picture) photographer Ken Smith.**

## JEWISH WAR VETERANS POST 608

The Society was invited to speak to the Jewish War Veterans Post 608 in Birmingham about the radio history of Birmingham. Dave Cisco presented the radio history of Birmingham and radio history in general. Tom Killian presented the history of the Alabama Historical Radio Society and played a video entitled "Behind the Mike," which showed how the sound effects were done in the old days of radio theatre. Our presentation was well received and resulted in an invitation to speak to New Horizons in September.



Dave Cisco speaking to the Jewish War Veterans Post 608 on Radio History.

## MONTHLY RADIO CLASS

Joe Minor continues to teach our monthly radio class, and he has put in a lot of effort each month. He uses handouts, works problems on the white board, brings test equipment to show how to check circuits and get the students to do hands-on measurements of the circuits. The May class was two-and-one-half hours of learning about power supplies, reviewing the AA5 circuits, watching YouTube programs to better understand power supplies and radio repair in general. Hats off to Joe for a job well done.





Joe Minor drawing out a chart on the white board in the May Radio Class.

The next Radio Class will be on Saturday, June 2, beginning at 9 a.m. sharp at the Shop in Birmingham. Joe will continue to discuss circuits of the All American Five radio. If you have a radio with a problem, bring it to the June class and let the class check it out. Everybody learns when you do this.

The next Monday night meeting is scheduled for May 28, which is Memorial Day. There will be an announcement as to whether this meeting will be cancelled due to the holiday, at least a week before May 28.

Please continue to support your leadership and your Society!

**NOTE: The night meeting starts at 7:00 PM, one hour later than the meetings started this past year.**

Until next time!

**Tom Killian**  
205-936-5455  
[music.tomdj@gmail.com](mailto:music.tomdj@gmail.com)

## OLD TIME RADIO BITS

This month we are stepping away from Old Time Radio to some newer radio. OTR will return next month.

On Friday, April 13, Art Bell passed from this world. Many, if not most people, have heard of Art Bell, but just in case you haven't, let's get some information from [Wikipedia](#)

"Arthur William Bell III (June 17, 1945– April 13, 2018) was an American broadcaster and author. He was the founder and the original host of the paranormal-themed radio program *Coast to Coast AM*, which is syndicated on hundreds of radio stations in the United States and Canada. He also created and hosted its companion show *Dreamland*."

While this paragraph might not seem like a big deal, if you have ever searched the AM dial after 10:00 at night you will find several stations broadcasting *Coast to Coast AM*. If you take some time to listen, you might think that there are some really strange people who want to hear themselves on the radio. And you may be correct, but then again...

Art Bell began his broadcasting career in the early 1970's. Like many broadcasters, he started by playing music. From there he moved into talk radio dealing with conspiracy theories and gun control. As time passed his show morphed into one with topics dealing with the paranormal, UFO's, and pseudoscience. For people awake in the middle of the night, these subjects had great listener appeal. By the late 90's, his show was syndicated on hundreds of stations and his ratings were the highest of all late-night talk shows.

His show was different than the others in several ways. He presented a forum where people could present their views, no matter how fringe-related, without being ridiculed by the host. He listened and asked questions. He never seemed to get upset at the people on his show. He treated all with a great degree of respect. While other talk show hosts seemed to have a personal agenda, Art Bell went along with the callers who for the most part were serious in their views. Another aspect of his show was that he did not screen the calls. Except for the guests that he scheduled for the show, he didn't know what was coming next. All of this made for a wildly popular show that was completely entertaining.

By this time, you may have surmised that I was (am) an Art Bell fan. I enjoyed his show. His bumper music that segued from the commercials to the talk took on a life of its own. People identified and collected the music. Shows were recorded and openly shared by fans, so that people who couldn't stay up all night could still hear the show.

Since the shows were shared, it gave me an opportunity to add many of them to my collection. In fact, I have over 1,400 shows. Of course, I have not listened to all of them. In fact, I have only listened to a small percentage. However, I can always find something interesting to hear.

I have picked out a few that one might find interesting. The first is the [Leonard Nimoy interview from 1997](#). The next show from [1996 has Wayne Green as the guest](#). Green, of course, was the editor of the ham radio magazine **CQ** and never was one to shy away from controversy. He was a frequent guest of Art Bell, who himself was an Amateur Radio operator. The next show is a composite show from [1997 and 1998 featuring Area 51 Government Employees](#) (complete with a stranger than normal call and a complete failure of the transmission facilities). For an hour of your time, this show is interesting. The last show from [1994 involves the Philadelphia Experiment](#) from World War II, where an invisibility



experiment resulted in the U.S. Navy destroyer escort Eldridge traveling into the future. All of these shows are examples of Art Bell's skills as well as his showmanship.

Some think it is appropriate that Art Bell passed away on Friday the 13. Maybe it is. I do know that he leaves behind a lot of fans who will miss him.

Until we meet again in the theatre of the mind....

**Larry Lokey**

[larry@otronmp3.com](mailto:larry@otronmp3.com)

Website - [otronmp3.com](http://otronmp3.com)

## SATURDAY MEETINGS

We meet every Saturday (unless a Holiday weekend) at 9:00 a.m., at the one-story AHRs Shop at the corner of 8th Avenue North and 18<sup>th</sup> Street, (1801 8th Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203). Birmingham, AL 35203). Use the rear (Southeast) entrance.

## SHOP ON TUESDAYS

The Shop is open on Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. until around 11:30 a.m. when we go to Marilyn's Deli and Dog for lunch next door. Note that parking can be a problem on Tuesdays, so you may have to find street parking occasionally.

## REGULAR MEETINGS

We meet on the fourth Monday night of each month, too, at 6:00 p.m. Please come join us!

## FREE ELECTRONICS CLASSES

One more great benefit from becoming a member of AHRs--free Electronic classes!

Classes are taught the first Saturday of each month (except when something special is taking place, then we agree on what Saturday).

We start from the beginning Ohms Law, inductors, resistor and Capacitors color codes, as well as what each component does within the radio circuits. We also teach how to use test equipment used in the repairing of radios. We teach troubleshooting radio troubles, as well as how to read a radio diagram. There are coil winding classes, and one-on-one repair help. Come join these classes!

## DUES INFORMATION



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

**Membership dues are \$25 a year, payable beginning in January.** If you have questions about your dues, you can contact Treasurer Mike Woodruff at 205-823-7204. **Dues can be mailed to AHRs at P.O. Box 131418, Birmingham AL 35213.**

## OFFICERS

**President – Dave Johnson**

(205) 999—7178  
[johnlecco@charter.net](mailto:johnlecco@charter.net)

**Vice President – Steven Westbrook**

205-305-0679  
[spwestbro@bellsouth.net](mailto:spwestbro@bellsouth.net)

**Recording Secretary – Dee Haynes**

205-841-4360  
[k4hfx1@charter.net](mailto:k4hfx1@charter.net)

**Treasurer – Mike Woodruff**

205-823-7204  
[michael\\_woodruff@hotmail.com](mailto:michael_woodruff@hotmail.com)

**Member and Instructor – Robert Frye**

205-482-0562  
[RLF100243@aol.com](mailto:RLF100243@aol.com)

**Web site – Bob Lovell**

[mgr@dixiewebdesigns.com](mailto:mgr@dixiewebdesigns.com)

**Web Address:**

<http://alhrs.org>

**E-mail Address:**

[ahrs2000@gmail.com](mailto:ahrs2000@gmail.com)

**Newsletter – Patsy Desaulniers**

[patwrite@gmail.com](mailto:patwrite@gmail.com)



## 2018 HAMFEST AND SWAP SCHEDULE



### Editor's Note

The next few pages have the 2018 Hamfest and Swap Schedule for the Southeastern United States. I have not edited these—they are copied directly from the ARRL site.

#### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**05/26/2018 | Wormfest 2018**

**Location:** Pinellas Park, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** The Glorious Society of the Wormhole

**Website:** <http://w4orm.org/>

**Learn More**

#### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**06/02/2018 | Georgia State Convention (Atlanta Hamfest)**

**Location:** Marietta, GA

**Type:** ARRL Convention

**Sponsor:** Atlanta Radio Club (W4DOC) & Kennehoochee ARC (W4BTI)

**Learn More**

#### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**06/16/2018 | Pinecastle Hamfest**

**Location:** Pinecastle, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** Stanley Korzep, W8NNX

**Learn More**

#### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**07/21/2018 | Cullman ARC Hamfest**

**Location:** Hanceville, AL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** Cullman Amateur Radio Club

**Website:** <http://www.cullmanarc.com>

**Learn More**

## 2018 HAMFEST AND SWAP SCHEDULE (continued)

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**07/21/2018 | Florida Traders Net Tailgate**

**Location:** Orlando, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** Jack Moyer, K4KDI

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**08/18/2018 | Southeastern Division Convention (Huntsville Hamfest)**

**Location:** Huntsville, AL

**Type:** ARRL Convention

**Sponsor:** Huntsville Hamfest Association

**Website:** <http://www.hamfest.org>

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**08/18/2018 | TARCFest XLII**

**Location:** Tampa, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** Tampa Amateur Radio Club

**Website:** <http://www.hamclub.org>

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**10/06/2018 | Cy Harris Free Flea**

**Location:** Oakland Park, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** Broward ARC (W4AB)

**Website:** <http://browardarc.net/free-flea/>

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**10/12/2018 | 53rd Annual Melbourne Hamfest**

**Location:** Melbourne, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** Platinum Coast Amateur Radio Society

**Website:** <http://www.pcars.org>

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**10/27/2018 | Jacksonville FREE Hamfest**

**Location:** Jacksonville, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** North Florida Amateur Radio Society

**Website:** <http://nofars.net/home/hamfest>

**Learn More**

## 2018 HAMFEST AND SWAP SCHEDULE (continued)

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**11/03/2018 | Fall 2018 LARC Hamfest**

**Location:** Lakeland, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** Lakeland Amateur Radio Club

**Website:** <http://lakelandarc.org>

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**11/03/2018 | Georgia Section Convention (Stone Mountain Hamfest)**

**Location:** Lawrenceville, GA

**Type:** ARRL Convention

**Sponsor:** Alford Memorial Radio Club

**Website:** <http://stonemountainhamfest.com/>

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**11/09/2019 | Montgomery ARC Hamfest 2019**

**Location:** Montgomery, AL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** Montgomery Amateur Radio Club

**Website:** <http://www.w4ap.org/news/Hamfest.htm>

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**11/10/2018 | Alabama Section Convention**

**Location:** Montgomery, AL

**Type:** ARRL Convention

**Sponsor:** Montgomery Amateur Radio Club

**Website:** <http://www.w4ap.org/news/Hamfest.htm>

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**11/10/2018 | SPARC Fest**

**Location:** Pinellas Park, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** St. Petersburg Amateur Radio Club

**Website:** <http://www.sparc-club.org>

**Learn More**

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**11/17/2018 | Flamingo Net / UMAC Free Flea**

**Location:** Coral Gables, FL

**Type:** ARRL Hamfest

**Sponsor:** Flamingo Net / University of Miami ARC

**Website:** <http://FlamingoNet.8m.net>

### HAMFEST/CONVENTION

**12/07/2018 | West Central Florida Section Convention (Tampa Bay Hamfest)**

**Location:** Plant City, FL

**Type:** ARRL Convention

**Sponsor:** Florida Gulf Coast Amateur Radio Council

**Website:** <http://fgcarc.org>

**Learn More**