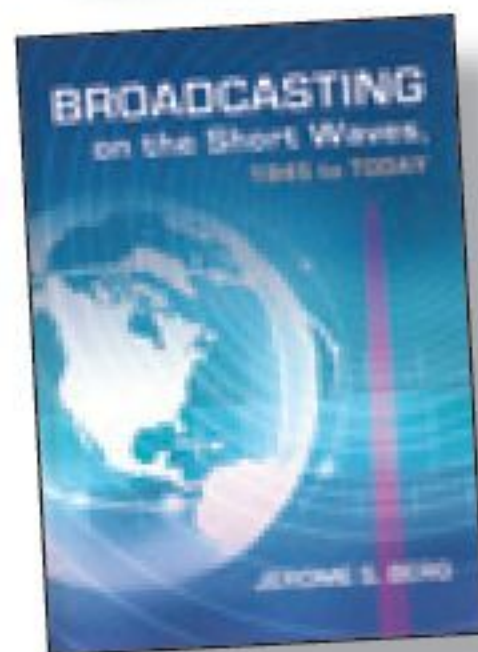
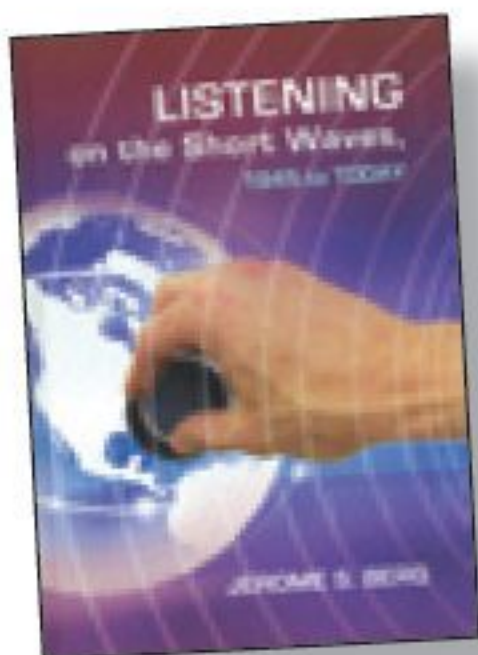


New Books

Listening on the Short Waves, 1945 to Today and *Broadcasting on the Short Waves, 1945 to Today*

◇ In *Listening on the Short Waves, 1945 to Today* and its companion *Broadcasting on the Short Waves, 1945 to Today*, author Jerome Berg has created a rich trove of information unlike any I've seen to date.

I must confess to being more than a little biased when it comes to the topic of short wave



listening. Like many veteran hams, I found my way to Amateur Radio through the fascination of monitoring short wave broadcast stations. My first radio was a decrepit Hallicrafters S-40B that I used to eavesdrop on short wave powerhouses such as Radio Moscow. (In my parents' home, listening to Radio Moscow at the height of the Cold War was something akin to sneaking out behind the garage to smoke a cigarette—fascinating, yet risky.)

As I read through *Listening on the*

Short Waves, all those memories came flooding back. Both books are written as historical references and Berg's writing style is appropriately objective. Even so, his genuine affection for the hobby is obvious. I found myself smiling and nodding at his descriptions of the short wave listener clubs long gone (remember the WPE "call signs"?), the QSLs, the stations and their programs and, of course, the receivers.

Broadcasting on the Short Waves is more of a just-the-facts-ma'am reference, but interesting nonetheless. In this book Berg provides an exhaustively researched year-by-year summary of the evolution of short wave broadcast stations, including "pirate" outlets.

His love of the medium notwithstanding, Berg is a realist. In both books he ends with a review of where short wave broadcasting stands today, and its prospects for the future. The outlook is rather grim with signals and audiences declining throughout the world. Considering the competition from the Internet and satellite radio, Berg is not optimistic for a recovery. He also sides with those who feel that digital shortwave broadcasting has arrived too late to have much of an impact.

Does that mean that short wave broadcasting is effectively dead? Not at all. As Berg points out, it is still an important source of news and information for those in developing countries who do not have reliable Internet or satellite access. And, of course, it will always appeal to those of us who still appreciate the magic of hearing voices from faraway places.

Both books are published by McFarland, Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640; www.mcfarlandpub.com; 800-253-2187. *Listening on the Short*

Waves, 1945 to Today: 423 pages, hardcover, ISBN 978-0-7864-3996-6, \$65. *Broadcasting on the Short Waves, 1945 to Today*: 496 pages, hardcover, ISBN 978-0-7864-3674-3, \$65.

— Steve Ford, WB8IMY, QST Editor