

AMA-TOURING

with Roger Legge



LISTENING to amateur radio stations in all parts of the world is fun, and it isn't difficult if you know where and when to tune. Amateurs in countries on all the continents can be heard contacting other amateur stations.

All that is needed to hear them is some sort of short-wave receiver, either a simple, home-built set or a more elaborate communications receiver, also an antenna, preferably an outside one set as high and as clear of obstructions as possible.

Next comes the problem of where and when to listen. Certain frequency bands are allowed for amateur station operations, as follows:

- 1.80 to 2.00 mc. (160 meter band)
- 3.50 to 4.00 mc. (75 or 80 meter band)
- 7.00 to 7.30 mc. (40 meter band)
- 14.00 to 14.35 mc. (20 meter band)
- 21.00 to 21.45 mc. (15 meter band)
- 28.00 to 29.70 mc. (10 meter band)

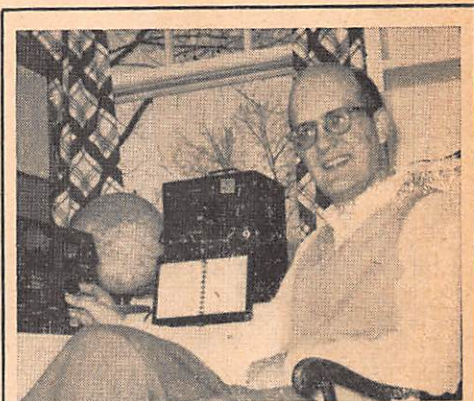
The 14 mc. band is the best one for hearing foreign stations. On this band, most of the foreign phone stations operate in the 14.10 to 14.20 and 14.30 to 14.33 mc. sections, on either side of the U. S. phone band, which is 14.20 to 14.30 mc. Most of the c.w. (code) stations, both U. S. and foreign, operate at the low end of the band, 14.00 to 14.10 mc.

During May, foreign stations should be audible in the 14 mc. band throughout the day and evening. Stations from the West Indies, Central America, and South America may be heard throughout this period, but normally should be best at 0700 to 0900 and 1600 to 2000 EST in the Eastern and Central states, also about the same hours PST in the Western U. S.

European amateurs may be heard from as early as 0600 until late afternoon in the Eastern and Central areas, but should be best at 0600 to 0800 and 1300 to 1700 EST. Listeners on the West Coast will find the Europeans much more difficult to hear, but should try around 0700 to 0900 and 1300 to 1500. Stations from Africa are more

likely to be heard during the afternoon period, approximately the same hours as the Europeans.

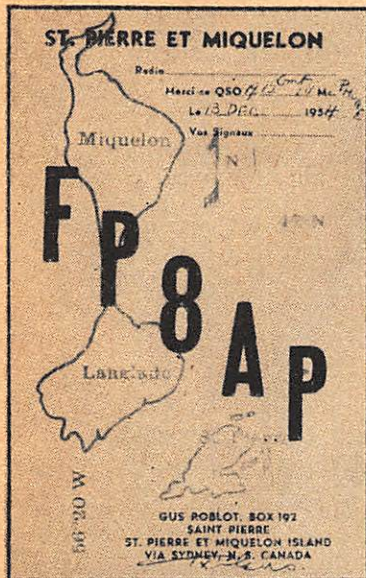
Stations from across the Pacific are more difficult to hear in the East than stations from Latin America and across the Atlantic. However, signals from Australia and New Zealand should be heard at times around 0600 to 0900 during May, and from the Far East occasionally at the same hours. West Coast listeners will find better reception from the Pacific area during the period from 1400 to 2200 PST.



POPULAR ELECTRONICS is pleased to appoint Roger Legge as Contributing Editor in charge of our ham band SWL column. Rog has been actively tuning the ham bands, as well as the short-wave broadcast bands, for nearly 22 years. During this period he has heard and received confirmation cards from radio amateur phone stations in 170 countries. Before World War II, Rog was ham band DX editor of the International DX'ers Alliance. He has also contributed many articles and reception reports to various radio and electronic publications. Presently working for the Government, Rog is residing outside of Washington, D. C. Reports for this column may be sent to Rog by addressing them to his attention; % POPULAR ELECTRONICS, 366 Madison Ave., New York 17, New York.

Reception of distant stations on bands other than the 14 mc. is best during the winter months at night on the 1.8, 3.5, and 7 mc. bands. Further details about reception on these bands will be included in future issues, when the prospects for good reception of foreign amateur stations on these bands are better.

The amateurs in each country can be identified by the prefix of their call letters. A prefix is assigned to each country by international agreement and normally consists of one or two letters followed by a



number. The most frequently heard countries and the prefixes are as follows: *Europe*; England (G), France (F), Germany (DL), Italy (I), Portugal (CT1), Switzerland (HB9). *Africa*; Morocco (CN8), South Africa (ZS). *South America*; Colombia (HK), Brazil (PY), Argentina (LU), Venezuela (YV). *Asia and Oceania*; Australia (VK), New Zealand (ZL), Japan (JA).

Reception of amateur stations varies greatly from day to day and at different hours. Best results can be obtained by checking the band conditions and concentrated listening when reception is good. It is advisable to keep a log of reception, including call letters of stations heard, time, frequency, signal strength, and interference, and also the call letters of the other stations being called or contacted by the station heard.

Hearing stations is only part of this interesting hobby of short-wave listening. Most amateurs have attractive cards printed for sending to other amateur stations to confirm contact with them. Many

amateurs will send a card to confirm an SWL report, particularly if return postage is included. Collecting verifications from amateurs who have been received is another interesting feature. Details about how to send for these cards will be presented next month.

Now, here are some of the stations in unusual places that can be heard on the 14 mc. band:

San Andres Island—This is a small island in the Caribbean, north of Panama and belonging to Colombia. Last summer a shipload of Colombian amateurs journeyed to San Andres and several weeks of considerable radio activity followed. Now HKØAI is the only amateur station operating there. He is heard around 1800 EST on about 14.18 mc.

St. Pierre—This small island off Newfoundland belongs to France. During the summer months American and Canadian amateurs operate there with an FP8 call letter, but FP8AP is the only amateur to be heard all year round. He was most recently on 14.19 mc. at 1500.

Cocos Island—TI9MHB on 14.13 mc. was a station operated by W6MHB, who was with a treasure hunting expedition there on Cocos Island in the Pacific, West of Costa Rica. For those who heard this station, reception reports may be sent to John R. Beck, P. O. Box 75, Oakland, California.

Ships—Amateurs on ships at sea are heard occasionally. One heard recently was EL1FI, on 14.18 mc. at 1500, operating from a Liberian ship in the Atlantic.

These are a few of the numerous amateurs operating on the 14 mc. band. Next month, more details on these and verifications. **END**

Editor's Note: The policy in this, as well as future issues of POPULAR ELECTRONICS will be to divide short-wave listening activities into two separate and distinct sections. Rog Legge, as we have seen above, will write on SWLing in the radio amateur ham bands. Hank Bennett (page 70) will confine his activities to reporting on the short-wave broadcast stations. Both editors will be anxious to receive reports and these may be addressed to them through our office at 366 Madison Ave., New York 17, New York.

Plans are also being drawn to incorporate more material in POPULAR ELECTRONICS on the subjects of antennas, receivers, and the radio amateur novice license. Reader suggestions will be appreciated.

Both short-wave editors will publish photographs of SWL stations. We urge our readers to submit theirs at the earliest opportunity.