

● For some time it has been evident to many observers that the members of the DX fraternity were not receiving all the benefits which their hobby had to offer. True, they were supplied with tips and station news by their radio clubs and magazines, and most of them were getting their share of stations, but something was definitely lacking.

Of course, a large percentage of DXers in this country and Canada belong to one or more of the radio clubs, and most of them subscribe to RADEX, but even there the *personal contact* is missing in all but a few cases. While the columns of RADEX and the club bulletins provided a means for reporting catches and swapping tips, there was still no real personal contact between the majority of the midnight marauders.

Occasionally, a few DXers are able to travel around a bit and meet some of their fellow listeners. They drop in at club headquarters and get acquainted with the officials who were

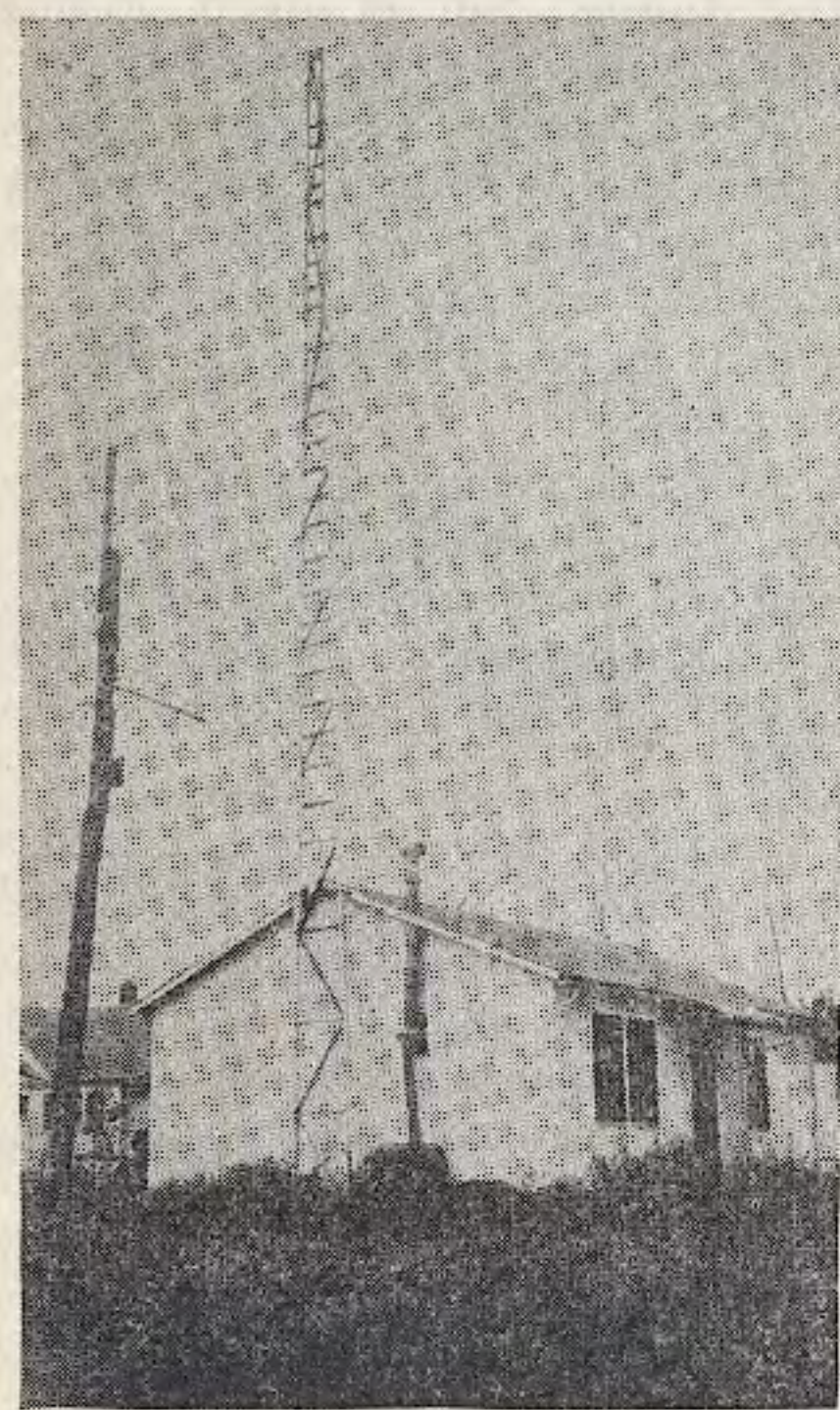
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formerly only names to them. They stop in at the RADEX offices and pass the time of day with the editors discussing radio matters. They visit the homes of DX correspondents and spend hours checking logs and swapping tips. They get a real thrill out of these personal contacts and DXing suddenly has become a far more interesting hobby to them, but pretty soon their trip is over and they go home to "solo" their pastime once more.

When the Newark News Radio Club was formed nearly twelve years ago, they got off on the right foot. Fifty-five enthusiastic listeners came to the first organization meeting, and a constantly-growing group of members have been attending the monthly meetings ever since. Perhaps without being aware of it, the members in and around Newark were getting a real break. Regularly they were able to get together for an evening to discuss mutual problems, compare their records and get to know each other. And the result was the solid foundation upon which the present great organization has been built.

But it was still the same old story for DXers out in the hinterlands. They got their news and tips by mail, but they had little or no personal contact with other DXers. When a problem peculiar to their own location



The Toledo Radio Club shack.

arose, they were obliged to solve it themselves. They had no means of learning what other DXers in their own locality were hearing, and the personal swapping of tips and kinks was quite impossible. But worst of all, there was no way to sit down for a few hours and discuss their hobby with sympathetic listeners.

The obvious answer to this problem was the formation of local groups of DXers throughout the country, making possible regular meetings for the sole purpose of adding to the pleasures of participating in the DX hobby, and yet it is surprising that so little attention has been paid to this angle of the pastime.

It is not just certain when the first



A group of Minnesota DXers. Top row, from left to right: H. V. Gribble, Richard Brian, Ray Carlson, Ken Skoog and Roy Schuckhart. Bottom row: Larry Lundberg, Irene Brian, Ann and Carl Eder.

local group came into being. For years, NNRC members in some of the larger cities have more or less come together on various occasions to discuss DX matters. Probably the first official establishment of a local NNRC chapter took place in Baltimore in 1933, and since then NNRCers in Indianapolis, Chicago, Brooklyn, Hartford, Toronto and Montreal have further enhanced their DXing pleasure through mutual contacts.

Early in 1933 a small group of Toledo, Ohio, radio enthusiasts began meeting informally in each other's homes to discuss DXing and radio in general. This was the foundation of the now-famous Toledo Radio Club, a purely local organization whose membership is limited to 25 charter and 25 associate members. Since then, the club has taken tremendous strides, both in doing for themselves and doing for others, and is today an ideal example of what a local group can become.

Since its inception in 1933, the International DXer's Alliance has probably been the most active of all clubs in sponsoring local chapters in this country—where there are prominent

groups in Brooklyn, Detroit, Lansing, Philadelphia, Minneapolis, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Regina and Calgary—as well as abroad.

While there are a few other groups largely local in nature, a once-over of the activities of a few of the chapters mentioned will serve to illustrate what a local organization can do for its members.

A classic example is furnished by the Toledo Radio Club, and its president and founder, S. Raymond Lewis, 1733 Kensington Rd., Toledo, Ohio, is well qualified to discuss its operations.

"After a few informal meetings back in 1933," he writes, "we decided to form a regular club and hold meetings at stated intervals. With nearly all of our members being affiliated with some national radio organization, it was an easy matter to keep everyone informed of radio happenings. It wasn't long before new members were attracted into our group, and soon we had an active gang which included broadcast band DXers, short wave fans, radio servicemen and amateur operators. Such a well rounded organization had its advantages, for each member was able to instruct the others in the field in which he specialized and there was no phase of radio in which we could not obtain information.

"The turning point in the history of our organization came with the Ohio River flood in 1937. One of our members, amateur operator W8ESN, had been appointed as the local official Red Cross station to handle traffic. Most of us were in service in ESN's basement for the better part of a week—monitoring his contacts with other amateurs, handling incoming and outgoing messages, and seeing that flood relief work went

RADEX

without a hitch. (A more complete account of this emergency work is told by Mr. Lewis in an article which appeared in the April 1937 RADEX—Ed.) Naturally, the club got reams of publicity for its assistance during the crisis.

"It was during that week, however, that we got the idea of having our own building where we could spread out a bit, instead of being cramped in someone's basement.

"We have since built our clubhouse, completely furnished it and accomplished our purpose 100 per cent. Our shack, which is situated at the rear of W8ESN's home, is about 22x27 feet and has a seating capacity of nearly fifty. Our equipment includes uniform chairs, a custom-built receiver, heating plant, public address system, and emergency mobile transmitters and receivers. We also have the use of W8ESN's large transmitter which operates on all bands with phone and CW.

"Our meetings are held regularly and we function, not as a listener's club nor an amateur club, but as an organization dedicated to the development of radio and those mutually interested in it. We have sponsored several important local radio events, such as amateur meeting and 5-meter field tests, and at present we are conducting classes in code and theory for those who desire to become hams."

The Baltimore Chapter of the NNRC has long been famous among DXers for the extent of its activities. Comprising some of the most rabid enthusiasts in the DX games, it has been particularly active in sponsoring special DX programs of quality which are highlights of any morning's listening. But let its guiding light,

Lloyd Hahn, 2810 Ellicott Driveway, Baltimore, Md., tell us more!

"The motivating influence behind the formation of the chapter," he confesses, "was the desire to exchange views, swap yarns and compare notes and veries with other DX enthusiasts in our locality. From the original group of six, the chapter has grown until its membership is now close to 40.

"Our meetings are held at the home of a member on the third Friday evening for about ten months of the year, and I am convinced that these meetings are the real reason why we have remained such a well-organized chapter. Once each month we are able to discuss the various phases of DXing take cognizance of the changes which are rapidly taking place, and suggest ways and means of increasing interest in the hobby. It is really surprising what a vast amount of constructive criticism can be spilled when a group meets to air its views on a subject so close to its heart.

"A more concrete reason for our existence was a mutual desire to meet upon a common ground, with the resultant life-long friendships which were the natural and ultimate results of our friendly get-togethers. I know that I have created friendships which will continue to exist even though the parent club might fold up tomorrow. From our association, we are reaping the benefit of our own local meetings, the DX programs which we have arranged, our visits to club entertainments and conventions, trips to see friends in nearby as well as distant states, and friendships made with DX correspondents and with the personnel of different stations. All these have meant, and will continue

to mean, so much more than mere individual achievements of getting a lot of DX catches."

The Detroit *Auto City Chapter* of the International DXers' Alliance came into existence when local IDA members realized that, although the city was large, it contained no organization which catered to the radio enthusiast. Having no way to meet others with similar tastes and to compare equipment and the results obtained, they were obliged to indulge in their hobby by themselves. And so the formation of a radio listeners club seemed to be the practical thing. Thus was the *Auto City Chapter* organized in November 1936 with an initial membership of four.

When the chapter was first founded, the monthly meetings were held at the homes of members. However, with a gradual increase in membership, it became evident that there was some inconvenience in running across town to strange neighborhoods, and it was decided to obtain a central meeting place. The Detroit News offered the use of its conference room for the meetings, where they are now held at 8 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month.

One of the most important activities of the chapter can best be described by its Secretary-Treasurer, Richard Verbrugghe, Jr., 10904 E. Warren Ave., Detroit, and it may well be a lesson to other radio groups.

"During the latter part of 1937," he writes, "the chapter became interested in the question of man-made interference. The city had an ordinance for the suppression of such noise, but it was not being enforced. We had interviews with those responsible for the ordinance, as well as those in

charge of its enforcement, and it was brought out that the ordinance itself was too broad in character and too indefinite when it came to specific details. Thus, it was completely useless and could not be enforced. All these facts were brought out at a public hearing brought about by the *Auto City Chapter*. At this hearing, we brought radio station engineers, radio interference engineers, representatives of the Servicemen's organization, the Federal Radio Inspector, and so on. A committee with a representative of each of these interested bodies, plus technical advisers from the power, telephone and street railway companies was formed. This committee then went to work and re-built the old ordinance, putting it into a form which was more or less workable, and at the same time being fair to all, without creating undue hardships on anyone coming under its scope or creating conditions impossible to meet. Thus, the *Auto City Chapter* of the IDA was principally responsible for the creation of a new ordinance which could and is being enforced.

"Among its other activities, the chapter participated for more than a year in a DX program over Detroit's ultra high frequency station W8XWJ. When a hobby show was scheduled for Convention Hall, to acquaint Detroiters with various hobbies and to enable those without a hobby to select one which appealed to them, the chapter had a booth with a vast display of colorful and, in many cases, rare verification cards."

A typical meeting of the Chicago *Windy City Chapter* of the IDA, held at the Central YMCA at 8 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month except July and August, is de-

scribed by Secretary Gail T. Beyer, 3226 Sunnyside Ave., Chicago: "The first part of these meetings, of course, is taken up by the formalities of reading the minutes, discussing official business and so on. Then the members have a chance to tell about new aeri-als or receivers which they have tried. Questions of a semi-technical nature are answered by members who are able to supply the information sought. Next there is a discussion of the latest IDA *Globe Circler* by Director Charles Trezise, and the various special programs are gone over in detail. Next comes what is termed a reception discussion, conducted by Thomas G. Gray, in which each member reports what stations he has heard during the past month, the time of each catch and the frequency on which it was heard.

"We also hold a special meeting each month at the home of the various members, and in this way the members are acquainted with the various types of receivers used by fellow-members. These receivers, by the way, run from the smallest "blooper" to the mighty Scott Philharmonic 30."

The *Southern California Chapter* of the IDA was formed by August Balbi in February 1938 and stresses continued activity on the part of its members, who are subject to dismissal in the event they miss two consecutive meetings without good cause.

A typical meeting is described by Secretary Harold Clein, 1821 Santa Ynez St., Los Angeles, Calif.: "At 8 p.m. on the last Saturday of each month, most of the members have assembled and there is a general discussion of all the things of greatest interest to the dyed-in-the-wool DX

fan, while the latest cherished QSL cards are passed around for inspection. The meeting is usually called to order around nine o'clock and the business of the chapter settled for the month. Suggestions for improvement are made, latest contest standings are given, and the latest developments in suppressing man-made interference are talked over. Right after the formal meeting is adjourned, refreshments are served, and right here is where DXers prove that they are adept at matters other than radio. Following the eats, members usually form into little groups and half a dozen gab-fests will be in full swing at the same time. By the time we start home around midnight, we each agree that 'this time was better than the last.'"

Several other IDA chapters have forwarded details of their organization and activities, and it is evident that these groups are really getting a lot out of their hobby. Up in Lansing, Mich., Chairman Chas. J. Williams, 1109 Hapeman St., of the *Delta Chapter* emphasizes regular discussions of the best DX catches, verifications, antenna installations, receivers, interference elimination and other everyday problems, and points with pride to the chapter's two outstanding DXers, John DeMeyer and Howard Eck. President Lemuel Cavileer, 1223 Keswick Ave., Haddon Heights, N. J., of the *South Jersey Chapter* likes to tell about the visits which chapter members have made to the *Brooklyn Beta Chapter* and to the NNRC conventions at Lansdale, Pa., not forgetting the first Eastern IDA convention at Haddon Heights last September, and feels that these personal contacts add much to the pleasure of DXing. According to

Secretary-Treasurer G. L. Young, 815 21st Ave. S. E., Calgary, Alta., of the *Calgary Foothills Chapter*, the chapter was established "to bring together DXers and all radio fans, to exchange tips and information on radio, to clear up man-made QRM, and to improve radio reception in general." Our old friend Paul Sampson, 1820 College Ave., Regina, Sask., Secretary-Treasurer of the *Regina Jubilee Chapter*, reports that his group "has been successful in eliminating street car interference in most places and sharply reducing the interference in the remaining places on Regina's trolley car system" and points with pride to the chapter's recent DX program from CHWC, during which a recording of the station announcement in several foreign languages was played every 15 minutes. Larry Lundberg, 1020 Lowry Ave. No., Minneapolis, Minn. is particularly proud of the stellar DXers who make up the *Land of 10,000 Lakes Chapter* in Minneapolis, pointing to Carl and Anne Eder, Irene and Richard Brian, H. V. Gribble, Gerald Anderson, Roy Schuckhart and Ray Carlson as evidence of what can happen when a gang of enthusiastic midnight marauders decide to group together and exchange tips.

Space would hardly permit a complete account of all the activities and benefits of the local groups which today are banded together for the mutual improvement of their DX pleasure, and yet these observations provide definite testimony of how scores of listeners are getting added enjoyment from their hobby.

DXers who want to get a little extra pleasure from their pastime, would do well to consider the possibility of joining one of the local

groups already in existence. Those who reside near one of the chapters or clubs mentioned in this article, can obtain full details by writing the officials mentioned.

Or if there is no club within easy commuting distance, it only takes a couple of DXers with similar tastes to start a club of their own. Whether they operate as a strictly local group or become affiliated with RADEX or some other national organization, they will find that their mutual interests

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(Continued from page 11)

will benefit from an association of this nature.

No discussion of this nature could be complete without mention of the national conventions which some of the clubs have sponsored. The annual NNRC conventions at Lansdale, Pa., have attracted members from California, Indiana, Connecticut, Maryland and nearby states, and "correspondence friendships" have been sealed by personal meeting. Lemuel Cavileer has referred to the Eastern convention of the IDA, and it is understood that the NRC is planning two get-togethers for this summer, one at Hershey, Pa., and the other at Erie. Other organizations probably have similar plans.

By supplementing local activities with attendance at one or more of the national conventions, listeners cannot help but get the maximum enjoyment which their hobby has to offer.