



# Looking Back

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*Looking Back is a nostalgic reflection on the shortwave scene of yesteryears, written from the personal experience of the author, who has been DXing the shortwave bands for over seven decades.*

## Days of the Radio Clubs

The history of shortwave broadcasting inevitably shows strong connections with amateur (ham) radio, at least in the early days. This is to be expected since many of the pioneers in the transmitting hobby were naturally given to the idea of putting out speech and music over the air, when the needed technology arrived.

So, for example, one became aware of personalities such as Frank Conrad<sup>1</sup>, the Westinghouse engineer with the famous amateur callsign 8XK (this was before the use of a W prefix). His career led to the formation of broadcast station KDKA. The call W8XK became known to the world as the Westinghouse shortwave station in Pittsburgh.

Less well-known to many listeners was the story of G2NM, Gerald Marcuse<sup>2</sup>, who had a special Post Office license to conduct experimental broadcasts to the British Empire in late 1927, before successful introduction of Empire broadcasting by the BBC.

to confirm this, but I think it is correct.)

This introduces the idea of a Radio Club - perhaps a vountary group of fans who may have contributed in various ways to forming a local shortwave station in remote parts of the earth.

For whatever reason, the Club idea became very popular in the Portuguese-speaking world (though not exclusive to them) and even today there exists remnants of this early idea, such as Radio Clube Portuguese in Parede, Portugal, now off shortwave, but still transmitting on FM channels.



There are many other examples of amateur roles in broadcasting, I'm sure, and in some parts of the globe, early voice and music transmissions were from stations using their amateur callsigns. Cook Island Broadcasting Service ZK1ZA did this<sup>3</sup>, and if my memory serves me correctly, Tahiti was on the air under the call FO8AA and the slogan "Radio Club Oceanie". (I do not have any material at hand

For the shortwave fan, stations of this type were good DX targets, before, during and after WWII in the African continent, such as Mozambique, Angola, Sao Tome, Cape Verde, and others. The idea of Radio Clube (with an "e" at the end of the word) became very popular in Brasil, and indeed a few still exist. The best known is Radio Clube do Para on 4885 kHz.

In countries which have experienced the rule of



strong, left-wing political groups, such as Mozambique and Angola, some stations' QSL cards show the "nationalistic" tide from Radio Clube to Radio Nacional, or from callsign to country name.

For yours truly, there will never be any negative feeling about the good old programming of CR7BE, with its happy, lively music and slogan "Radio Clube of Mozambique for Happy Listening".

Till next time - happy memories!

Credits:

- 1 - "On the Shortwaves", by Jerry Berg
- 2 - "World at Their Fingertips", R.S.G.B.
- 3 - "World in My Ears", by Arthur Cushen



Illustrations:

CR6RB - Angolan "Clubes"

Radio Clube do Huambo, Angola

CR7BE - Radio Clube Mozambique

Radio Clube Portugues, Portugal



# Listening In

A monthly publication of the Ontario DX Association

*Radio Fun for Everyone*



ISSN 1493-7824

*Above: Vintage QSLs from "Radio Clubs"  
See this month's Looking Back*

*Inside: Double Target Listening*

