



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.

Listener Friendly Radio

It's an interesting observation, but it seems that stations that were more friendly to their audience have usually been on the BCB AM band, rather than shortwave!

Of course, it depends on the criteria one uses to make the judgment, but certain ideas surface quickly. These include test broadcasts, replying to listener correspondence, musical dedications, and reception of visitors to the station, to name a few.

Even to this day, special test broadcasts, although less common, are much more likely to be encountered on the AM band (originating in the CPC tests, arranged by a Courtesy Program Committee, such as were popularized by the National Radio Club over many years). But on shortwave? You could count the events of this type on your fingers (over a long DXing career)!

For yours truly, the year 1965 stands out, as I developed a good relationship with the COPE station at Seville in Spain. At that time I was learning Spanish at the local adult education college, and formed a

"Spanish Circle" for students to meet in our homes with any native speakers from Spanish countries (mainly teachers who came to England to improve their language capabilities). This was before I emigrated to Canada.

The contact with Seville was facilitated through José Manuel de Castillo, a lawyer who also worked as a DJ for a pop music program, in addition to compering a weekly music/chat program for Spanish emigrants. This aired every Sunday at midnight (Saturday), and they accepted tapes of our group. It was a great success until frequency changes put Warsaw on the same channel with 200 kW versus the humble 10 kW of Seville. I later had the pleasure of visiting Seville and meeting José. (On my travels in Latin America I have visited many stations and have had fabulous reception at all of them.)

Another station which built up a great DX reputation amongst listeners for its regular "greetings over the air" style of programming, was the Pyrgos Broadcasting Station in Western Peloponnesus, Greece. Heard and QSLed by myself in 1965, they issued a beautiful blue-white pennant.

continued

THE PYRGOS BROADCASTING STATION

Western Peloponnesus Greece
Tel. 2 5-50 M. W. 208 or 1.446 Kc/s

VERIFICATION CARD

NAME T. B. WILLIAMSON Date: 15/2/65

We herewith thank you and appreciate your reception report dated the: 30th Jan. 1965

Hoping that you will continue listening to our After Midnight Broadcasts,

We are,
cordially yours,
The P. B. S.

Excellent
+ Very good
Good
Fair
Satisfactory
Unsatisfactory

Good Listening!

A unique station with a style all its own, was Radio Monumental in San José, Costa Rica. They operated on both medium and short waves in those days, and verified by letter and pennant. But the special feature was their broadcasting of the news to the local folk over a loudspeaker system in the square below. They also had their own staff of reporters to cover important events. The whole operation was managed and supervised by a lady, who I met on a visit to the station. The slogan of the station was "Radio Monumental – La Palabra de Costa Rica" (Radio Monumental – The Word of Costa Rica), which seemed very appropriate, considering their way of conducting a radio station. They are still listed in WRTH on 670 kHz AM – no longer on SW, sadly – but also in the 2007 WRTH noted as inactive.

Happy memories, dear readers!

