



# Looking Back

Tom Williamson, 166 Burris St., Hamilton, Ont. L8M 2J8

*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.*

## Pennant Fever

Pennant fever is a term usually associated with the sport of baseball. However, it may honestly be applied to an aspect of radio DXing, which has (unfortunately) almost passed into history.

I suppose the peak of this “condition” was in the 1970s when many stations responded to reception reports not only with a verification card or letter, but also sent along the station “flag” or pennant. These were usually made of some fabric material – even silk – but poorer examples were made of paper. The collection of these was a big hobby to some folk, although they do not constitute verifications in and of themselves.

I suppose it is true that the pre-eminent country for sending out pennants was Spain (mainly for it’s many mediumwave stations). Networks such as COPE (Cadena de Ondas Populares), Radio Nacional, and REM (Red de Emisoras), had a standard style of pennant, even to their colours, with just the local station name to identify the source.

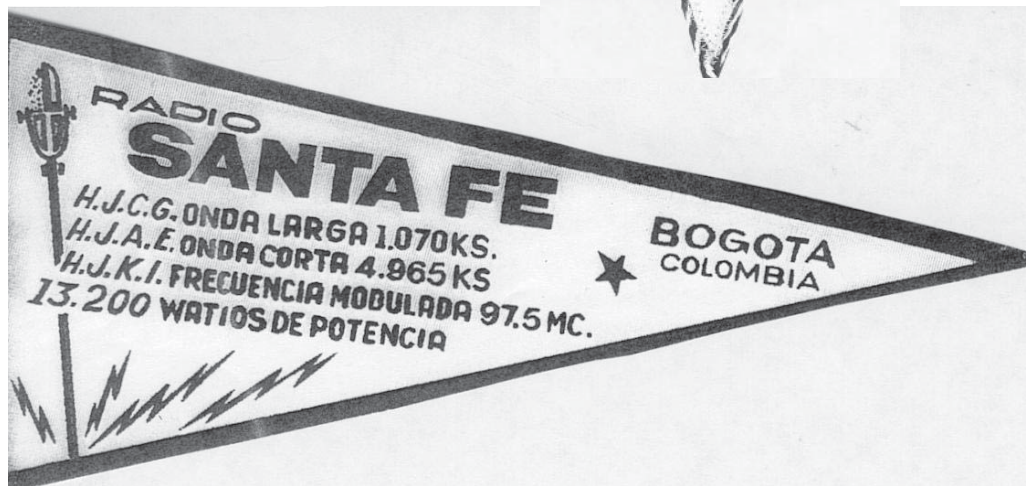
Not far behind Mother Spain were the Latin American stations, which produced some truly beautiful specimens. Pennants came in many shapes and sizes. The typical pennant was an elongated triangular “flag”.

Then there were square or oblong types. The usual Latin words for these creations is “banderín” in Spanish and “flamula” in Portuguese. As mentioned, materials



varied, probably depending on cost and availability. One of the most interesting that I have is from XEQK: made of tree bark!

Sizes have varied from three to eighteen inches! One of those monsters, which I have, is from Guadalajara, Mexico. It presents a real problem of storage!



I suppose everyone has their own favourite pennant, but most would rate Radio Quillabamba in Peru, as a sender of

an outstandingly beautiful specimen, in blue, green and gold colours.

Today – sad to say – it is unusual to receive a pennant, probably due to cost-saving policies, but yours truly did get a nice “mini-pennant” from our old friend, HCJB. It’s a 3-1/2” by 5-1/2” reminder of the “good old days”, I guess.

There is still a likelihood of a station commemorating an anniversary of its broadcasting career, or celebrating a National Day, with a pennant. Keep this in mind when sending out reports.

Good listening!

