

VWOA NEWSLETTER

Email Issue #52

Francis T. Cassidy Editor

2009



In Email Issue #48 we announced that Eugene B. Kauder W4PRS was given a Marconi Memorial Medal of Achievement at the **2009 VWOA AWARDS LUNCHEON**.

Engraved on the reverse side of the Medal was the following Award Description

Marconi Memorial Medal of Achievement
presented to:

Eugene B. Kauder

For his 56 years as an Radio Officer
and operating all modes of wireless
from CW to Satellite as an RO

by the
Veteran Wireless Operators
Association

June 7, 2009

Your Editor had previously asked Eugene to provide a biography of his wireless experiences, but time was short and it never got to press.



Eugene B. Kauder W4PRS is given his Medal Award by VWOA President Alan Ehrlich



Better late than never, here is what Eugene provided as a biography. He then surprised me by providing two short stories with details of his life at sea. These stories will be presented after the biography.

Frank-Here is a bio trying to make it short as possible. Too many events to cover.

I was born in NYC (Bronx), but lived most of my youth in Brooklyn. I was an avid Dodger fan, of course. I was just starting High School when Pearl Harbor occurred. I had learned the Morse code by memory and in High School learned by sound from records. The only radio I was involved with was a xtal set that I built to listen to broadcast radio. I was involved with electricity and auto mechanics.

After graduation from HS, I enlisted in the USMS and was sent to Sheepshead Bay boot camp. The year was Dec. 1944. After basic training in seamanship, lifeboat training, I was kept on another month brushing up on math and other tech subjects I was sent to Gallops Island, Boston, MA., Radio School., located outside the Boston Harbor, Graduated July;1945, platoon R-106. I took and passed my FCC 2nd class Radiotelegraph license at FCC Boston.

I had a very enjoyable time in Boston when on leave and Merchant Mariners were always given a welcome by the citizens of Boston.

After a brief vacation I was given orders to go by train from NYC to Seattle, WA.

I was assigned to the Skagway Victory. We sailed with an Armed Guard Navy crew with 5 inch gun tubs. Went to the Pacific War Zone. The war ended but we kept going from island to island and returned via Panama Canal in late March. Almost an 8 months voyage and we still had the same Military cargo aboard. Nothing was discharged and we were in the same situation as dozens of other vessels.

I later qualified for DD214 USCG discharge for WW2 service.

When the WW2 ended new rules went into effect. In order to sail as solo Radio Officer, you had to have six months sea time. By the way the Skagway Victory had 3 r/o's in order to cover 24 hr. watch. I then returned to Sheepshead Bay for Radar training and got my radar endorsement from FCC. As I had the qualifications to sail I started shipping out.

I was on many oil tankers. among them, was two Liberty tankers. I spent a year on Oscar Strauss and a year on Carabule, Molasses tankers (Cuban ports to USA)

Sailed on several other victory ships. Virginia City Victory, Greeley Victory, Longview Victory. It was at Haifa, Israel where we were offloading lumber when the Korean War began. The Longview Victory was sent to Seattle to load Military cargo for Korea for the next 4 years.

The other Victory Ships I was on carried Military cargoes for Korea and once to Haiphong, French Indo china, now known as North Vietnam.

More tankers. Then went on to well know liner companies, such as US Line and Farrell Line to Africa.

Our communication work was mainly CW. We had to be on watch 8 hrs a day or 1/3 of a day. If less than a day, we had to maintain a log and observe silence, periods. 15-18 and 45-48 past hr. Copy wx reports, amvers, obs and msg traffic via US and foreign coast stations.

Propagation was important to work traffic while far out to sea. It was trying and lots of patience was required.

I was married in 1969. My honeymoon was on the SS United States. We disembarked at Le Havre and toured several countries. When the Big U as she was known returned from that voyage in October 1969, it was laid up for good. By coincidence, I was on many ships later that made its last voyage while I was aboard.

On the SS Pioneer Contractor, was at Vung Tau, entrance to Saigon River. The end of April 1975 we participated with other US Merchant Marine and MSC ships in the

evacuation of over 275,000 Vietnamese refugees during the fall of Saigon.

I was then the Radio Officer on Panama registered passenger ship Bermuda Star, east coast to Bermuda. Also Bahamas flag Scandinavian Sky Pt Canaveral, FL to Freeport, Bahamas.

Went to Diego Garcia on Maritime Overseas tanker for few months as part of repositioning of the fleet. Wonderful recreation place.

Sailed on Liberty Maritime bulk ships to Romania, Egypt and Jordan with grain and corn.

Attended schools at T.I.M.E. (Tech. Inst. of Maritime Electronics) Madison Ave., NYC and was introduced to VWOA by instructor Paulo Anselmo. Went to school at Calhoun and m.e.b.a east. Michaels, MD, also at ARA Scottsdale, Arizona. I studied Business and Real Estate at Daytona Beach Community College.

Was licensed as a ham in 1950 as W2EZV until 1978 when moved to Florida and became W4PRS. Extra Class with 2nd and 1st class r/telephone licenses.

Presently have 1st class r/telegraph license. gmdss maintainer lic gen r/t. USCG radio officer lic issue 10

I was on Mormac Star for few years when gmdss was installed and FCC no longer

required radio watch standing and radio officers were no longer required. That was a day that will live in infamy for me.

Managed to spend 5 more years aboard American President Line container ships as Radio Electronic Officer, but the job was never the same. No radio shack and working in the engine room and pursers work. Interesting trips to China, HK, Japan, Korea and Taiwan, but container ships don't stay long in port.

I am still hamming, 20 meter CW icom718, dipole ant. in the trees and cq100/echolink via voip computer.

Had a good life, good food, privacy and comfort. Some bad storms and weird captains. Did lots of sightseeing, met many great hams by eyeball. Made a good living and raised a family, in one place.

I am in reasonably good health, except for very weak eyes.

It was the golden era of the ships Radioman and will never be forgotten.

Best regards.

Eugene B. Kauder W4PRS

KOREAN MEMORIES by Author EUGENE B. KAUDER W4PRS

1952-1953 I was aboard the Greeley Victory chartered to the US Military to bring cargo to Korea during those days of hostilities.

After discharge at Pusan, during mid 1952 heading south we ran aground against some unchartered rocks and had to be towed to Japan for repairs. I understand that 52 plates were damaged.

We went to a Hitachi shipyard in a small town on the Inland Sea, Onimichi. It is east of Hiroshima. There were no other Americans in the area.

We stayed at the shipyard lodge. None spoke English at the lodge. We slept on tatami mats. We ate with chopsticks. tofu, Seaweed, Fish, eggs tasting like fish, (as that is what the chickens were fed). It was cold and our pillows had large metal cylinders filled with very hot water, wrapped in towels. We learned to speak some Japanese words necessary for to get by and to this day I can still speak much of the language. The town itself was across the water by small ferry. There was nothing to buy or much to sightsee. But the people were polite, friendly and curious. We were there for several weeks. It was on a local train stop on the line to Hiroshima but I didn't go there in those early days.

After leaving the shipyard amid a very nice farewell party, we then went to Okinawa and several shuttles to Pusan, Masan and Chinha, Korea.

One of our voyages took us to HAIPHONG which later was in North Vietnam but at the time the whole Vietnam as we know it now, was French Indo-China.

We brought in military supplies to aid the French. I made friends with several of the French Army and enjoyed their hospitality over many good wines. I was in touch by mail with some of them. I was saddened when I received a letter from a Lt. who was in the same area that became Dien ben Phu describing deteriorating circumstances and I never heard from him again.

A lot of events were happening in those days and only much later did we understand it.

I was on that ship for one year. Had a great Capt. a southern gentleman from Beaufort, SC who crossed the bar several years ago.

--THE END--

Eugene Kauder W4PRS

SHIPBOARD IN 2003 by Author EUGENE B. KAUDER W4PRS

At beginning of 2003 I was assigned to the APL China to be reflagged to the U.S. I left Florida temperate climate to fly to Seattle. The company had booked me a hotel room for the night. I arrived in the evening and the hotel turned out to be a drive in motel. It was cold and damp . The patel's who ran the place had no heat in the room. Next morn I came to the container terminal and we had to wait half a day, in a warehouse for the Asian crew to leave the vessel. The rooms were yellow from smoking crewmen.

Our next port of call was Dutch Harbor, Unalaska (Aleutian Islands). We didn't have much heat on the way. I developed a cough that was persistent. The ships medicine chest only had over the counter type pills. At the Dutch Harbor clinic I was seen by a Doctor and given some antibiotic pills. Then we were informed about the SARS epidemic in the Far East. I was not told that I had the symptoms. But nevertheless this became a big thing. I was told that if I needed more pills see a Doctor in another port.

As we ported in Japan, Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong and by coincidence no one was permitted to go ashore or anyone to come aboard the ship.

This was done to all ships by health authorities in each country. Meanwhile my cough didn't go away. Otherwise I felt fine, no fever, but it wasn't possible to ask to see a Doctor and get more antibiotics. Otherwise the ship would be quarantined and we would lose our cargo schedule. After leaving Hong Kong, going further south to another Chinese port it became very hot and sunny. I was able to lie in the sun and my cough went away. The SARS pandemic went away, only to be replaced by bird flu, swine flu. This is not the end of my story.

Returning home from the voyage to LA, I was awaiting my relief. I was requested by the Capt. to aid in the cleanup of the rooms. The soogie gang from shore came to clean the ceilings and walls of all crew cabins. As most of the rooms were locked as crew were home or work. I would have to be called in my room phone to open the doors, later be called to come back and lock the room had to go up and down the stairs as the elevator was constantly in use by the engine room.

After all this was done, then came the Carpet Shampoo contractor. This guy came with his own machines. He became friendly with me when I told him that I spent many days in Constanza, Romania where he was from, on another ship. He was always telling jokes and was the kind of guy who would hold your hand until you laughed. He also complained that

everything hurt physically. He went room to room. I didn't oversee him as his machine was very noisy and he used strong chemicals. He worked up to 5pm and came back the next day.

I had done a lot of going up and down decks unlocking and locking doors.

The next day, he resumed and said he would be finished an hour or so after lunch the officers would eat first and then the contractors and shoe people would eat secondly.

Before lunch the Romanian was seen by me to be cleaning the Capt.'s office carpet. I informed him that I was going to lunch, and to call me there for me to unlock the Capt. stateroom for which I had a special key. The Capt. was anxious to have his room cleaned for his relief.

After lunch and back in my room I was awaiting the call which didn't come. I walked up the two decks to the Capt.'s office, which was open. Then I realized that there was no machine or hoses. I went down to the main deck and spoke with the gangway watchman. The Romanian had left the ship without telling anyone the most important carpet on the ship was undone. I called the guys cell phone and he said he felt tired and everything was hurting him.

He wasn't coming back and he had another job to go to. When my Capt. returned to the ship and found out, of course, I bore the brunt of full blame.

When I left the ship I could still feel the daggers.

These are the things that we get into NOW that Radio Officers never encountered in the OLD DAYS when we were FIRST ASHORE and LAST TO RETURN.

--END OF STORY--

Author Eugene Kauder W4PRS

Editors Note:

Upon request from Editor, Author Eugene Kauder advised:

"The patel's"

Patel's is name for Indian owners of motels, gas station stores. Almost every one of them has that name, whether it is a family, sect or what I am not sure but it is recognizable by most people.

By the way, the APL China has 7 decks, also the carpets are wall to wall in each room, crewmembers and officers rooms, lounges.

These ships are over 900 feet and crew of only 21. They are a far cry from the ships we knew from the old days. Gym and sauna for

each, officers and unlicensed. No port holes, rather, picture windows, elevator and VCR/DVD player and small refrigerator in each stateroom. Bigger and bigger container ships are now afloat.

The engine room is closed at 6pm. one engineer is on call if any alarm sounds.

"Soogie gang"

soogie is name for soaping down and washing, scrubbing down bulkheads and overheads

WENDELL'S NEWS CORNER

----- Original Message -----

From: "Wendell R Benson"

<wenben@nyc.rr.com>

To: "Francis T. Cassidy"

<ftcassidy@optonline.net>

Sent: Monday, July 13, 2009 4:45 PM

Subject: Arctic voyage to Murmansk

> <http://www.maritime-memories.co.uk/pages/voyage10.html>.

> I received a letter today from VWOA member Frank Kelley

> who informed me he will be on this trip departing UK this Sunday 19th.

> They expect to have 3 TV crews filming their departure from Harwich

> Wendell

----- Original Message -----

From: "William Devoe"
To: "Wendell R Benson"
<wenben@nyc.rr.com>
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2009 8:58 AM
Subject: Re: Arctic voyage to Murmansk

Wendell:

Thanks for telling me about the Arctic Voyage to Murmansk. The British are really great at this sort of thing. Thanks again.

Keep well - Bill Devoe

----- Original Message -----

From: "Wendell R Benson"
<wenben@nyc.rr.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2009 11:06 AM
Subject: Governors Island
>I have noticed ads on bus stops for the following which appear to be interesting.
> This is available now thru Sept 20 on Fri, Sat and Sun.
> go to: <http://www.creativetime.org/plot09>
> scroll to the bottom of the page where you click to enter to obtain details. The first link to visitors info has details on what is free.
> Wendell

August 9, 2009

Greetings:

On July 28, the FCC approved a modification that expands the ARRL's 500-kHz experimental license WD2XSH.

The expansion includes:

Frequencies from 495 to 510 kHz (previously 505 - 510 kHz);

Increases the number of stations from 23 to 42; and

Allows portable operation within 50 km of the designated QTHs.

THE LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER IS A
DISPLAY OF THE STATIONS NOW AUTHORIZED

The new stations (blue triangles) expand geographic coverage, especially in the western US, Alaska, and Hawaii. Some stations have reduced operating bands to ensure that they do not interfere with nearby NDBs. We will not be using 500 kHz itself to ensure there is no conflict with the heritage stations on that frequency.

One of our new stations is VWOA member Mike Shaw, K2LRE. He could probably communicate with several New England stations by day and much of the northeast at night.

73, Fritz, W1FR

Coordinator, ARRL 500-kHz experiment
Frederick H. (Fritz) Raab, Ph.D.

SK 08/13/2009

Clifford A. Bruce W7ER

Active in VWOA matters till November 9, 2005

----- Original Message -----

To: Clifford A. Bruce
From: Francis T. Cassidy Jr
Sent: Wednesday, November 09, 2005 5:10 AM

The Reservation response for the November 19, 2005 Business Luncheon is very poor. Metropolitan Area VWOA Members at least, should try harder to support their VWOA. The Board of Directors are trying hard to stimulate your interest in VWOA and what VWOA is trying to accomplish in celebrating the past and enjoying the future of Wireless.

If you feel we are deficient in our efforts, let us know.

To: Francis T. Cassidy Jr
Sent: Wednesday, November 09, 2005 12:17 PM
Subject: Re: Ninth Edition of the VWOA Email Newsletter
Gentlemen:

To answer your three lead-in questions "today we are getting older by the day" !

All of the clubs and groups I belong to are experiencing this problem. It is nothing that the organization is doing, or not doing, at

this time. We are just going to that big Key in the Sky faster than we are renewing the flock. And, there are so many other things to do these days that you and I only dreamed of as we read the Comic Books of the day (70 years ago).

I know this won't help you much but all of us Old Old Timers are doing our best, but the pace is much slower these days. Our Best Wishes to you all.

73, Cliff Bruce-W7ER, et al.

First Licensed W6G0I June 1932, Hemet, CA then SU1US Cairo, 1947 W2EVT 1949, Hicksville, NY K7HA0 Phoenix, AZ 1959 W7ER Scottsdale, AZ 1976` Now W7ER back in Hemet, CA. 2004 72 years of active Ham Radio Operating. Now reduced to a 2mtr/440 Yaesu FT-60R.



Who says you can't have fun at 90. Cliff, W7ER

