

# VWOA NEWSLETTER

Email Issue #64

Francis T. Cassidy Editor

2011



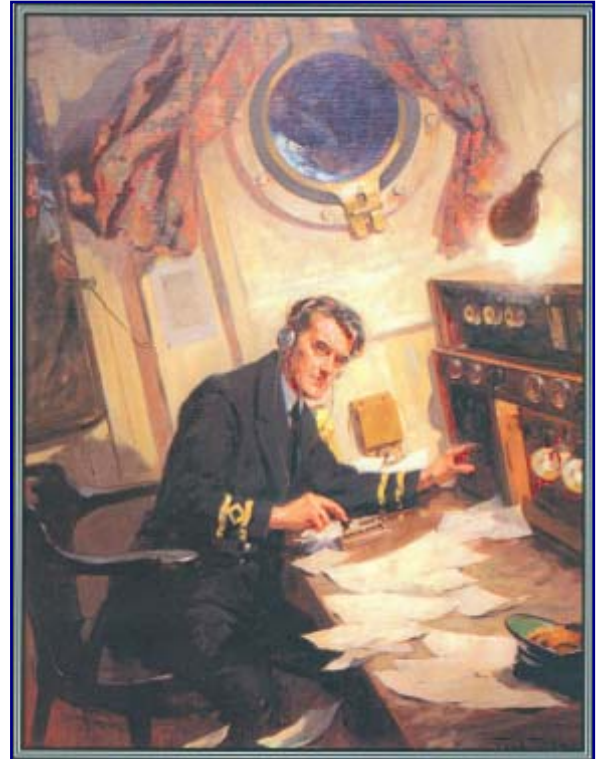
The results of the VWOA OFFICIAL ELECTION:  
In which the Nomination Committee had recommended a listing of Officers and/or Directors for the years 2012 - 2013.

The voting VWOA Membership elected all of those recommended by the Nomination Committee to the VWOA Membership.

We thank the Membership for their participation and assure you that we will continue our efforts and devotion towards achieving the goals of VWOA in our new term of office.

## VWOA 2012 - 2013

PRESIDENT	Alan M. Ehrlich
1st VICE PRESIDENT	Richard T. Kenney
2nd VICE PRESIDENT	Douglas S. Stivison
SECRETARY	Francis T. Cassidy
ASSISTANT SECRETARY	Wendell R. Benson
TREASURER	J. Michael Shaw



“S.O.S.” Painting by Frederick Roe (1864-1947)

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## BOARD MEMBERS

J. Michael Shaw  
Francis T. Cassidy  
John Chooljian  
Robert C. Marzen Jr.  
Douglas S. Stivison  
Richard T. Kenney  
Wendell R. Benson  
Miles D. MacMahon  
John Dziekan  
Alan M. Ehrlich

Richard H. Singer K6KSG was the first person to contribute Database Information to VWOA on Radio Officers lost at Sea during World War II and greatly influenced the creation of the Database that Miles D. MacMahon and your Editor put together and now called;

**Registry & Electronic Memorial to Sparks Lost at Sea during World War II**  
and can be visited at the following URL:

<http://www.vwoa.org/Registry/VWOA%20070829%20Registry%20RO%20LOST%20AT%20SEA2.pdf>

**Sent: Sunday, October 23, 2011 11:27 AM**

**To: [Francis T. Cassidy](#)**

**Subject: VWOA member Dick Singer from an Italian web site**

Yes it is okay to use the picture and write up on my career. I am privileged to have worked in such a wonderful and fulfilling career and to belong to the various CW organizations. My XYL made up the logo for the Italian radio site. The world scene with a ship on the ocean, a telegraph key, head phones, and a mill.



In 1939 I was born at Pana, IL. U.S. In my early teenage years I was interested in Amateur Radio. During 1957 I learned the Morse code and in early 1958 I received my ham license with the call K6KSG. In 1958 I joined the U.S. Navy as radioman and later served on the aircraft carrier the U.S.S. Midway/NIIW until 1961. I worked ashore as a civilian in various jobs until I decided to get my commercial radiotelegraph license to ship out on merchant ships. While waiting for a ship, I was breaking in to be an operator at the ITT coastal station KOK in Los Angeles, CA. Meanwhile the U.S. Government hired me to work as R/O on their ship the Hughes Glomar Explorer/WCHG. When that project was laid up, I then shipped out on a tramp tanker for six months on board the SS Mount Explorer/KTSY. My next employment was with the Exxon Oil Company working on their tankers as Radio Electronics Officer. Exxon sent me to the following schools, the Fort Schuyler Maritime Academy at Bronx, N.Y. for instrumentation and automation, Sperry Marine for the Collision Avoidance systems. Later I attended the Communications Associates Inc. single sideband school, Raytheon radar school, Limitourqe electrical valve systems, and Tano engine room console. The SS Exxon New Orleans was my favorite ship. All in all, I served on 19 ships in my 22 year career as a seagoing Radio Electronics Officer. I retired from Exxon Oil Company in 1994. It is sad to hear the demise of CW on the marine frequencies. 73 to all the R/O's that I have passed on ships in the middle of the night on the high seas.

Richard H. Singer K6KSG

*VWOA Editor Comment:*

The following page is an article from the Pages of the VWOA Newsletter #24 in 2007 in which he was thanked for his contribution.



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**Richard H. Singer/K6KSG** wrote to VWOA Director John Dziekan and asked to bring to the attention of VWOA his recent compilation of Radio Officers lost in World War II.



**Richard H. Singer/K6KSG**

Excerpts from his letter are as follows:

As per our email conversation, here is the list of Radio Officers lost at sea while sailing on ESSO (Standard Oil of New Jersey), and Mobil Oil Company (Socony-Vacuum), ships during World War II. This list also includes the Panama Transport Company ships that were on charter for Standard Oil of New Jersey, (ESSO)

The names of the Radio Officers as well as the ships name and dates are taken from the two

books from Exxon Oil Company. "Ships of the ESSO FLEET in WORLD WAR II," and "THE YEARS OF PERIL, THE WORLD WAR II STORY OF MOBIL MEN AND SHIPS."

There are two data base lists sent, one for the ESSO Ships, and one for the Mobil Oil Ships. The Mobil book is quite descriptive of the men on the ships that were sunk by German U-boats and their attempt to survive.

Here is an interesting bit of information from the Mobil Oil book. During the period of 1939 to 1945 during WW II, the ship casualties and losses were 51 ships and 437 Merchant Marine sailors.

These two books are from both oil companies' that were operating independently at the time of WW II.

### Editors Note:

Many thanks Richard, for your continued support of VWOA. The database provided will be the start of a VWOA Registry of Radio Officers lost in War Time.

Your submission is the last page attached to this Newsletter.

We hope to hear about your experiences when you were a Radio Officer aboard the spook ship Hughes Glomar Explorer/WCHG.

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## WENDELL'S NEWS CORNER

For those VWOA Members who are users of Facebook, VWOA Director Bob Marzen recommends that you visit the Facebook URL listed below for a continuing update of the Coast Guard in Alaska.

Your Editor found his first visit to the site to be interesting and brought back memories of many Airline touchdowns in Alaska when returning to the USA from Indonesia, Cambodia and Japan.

Subject: (4) Coast Guard Alaska

Date: Fri, 04 Nov 2011 11:23:48 -0400

<http://www.facebook.com/CGAlaska>

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Otto "Otts" Claus W3LZZ

CLAUS , Otto "Otts" On Sunday, February 20, 2011, Otto "Otts" Claus , 87, died at Oak Crest Manor, Parkville, MD.

Otts was born in Baltimore, the second of six children, on December 18, 1923. He and his friend Jack Heintz, hitch-hiked to the New York World's Fair in 1939, with less than a dollar between them.

Otts joined the Merchant Marines in 1941 and travelled the world delivering supplies to the American military during WWII.

In 1947 he went to work for WITH radio where he met his future wife, Anita Richter.

In the early 1950's, Otts started working in television, and years later became Chief Engineer of WBAL-TV.

At age 82 Otts was still climbing and helping maintain the 1000-foot candelabra tower, a Baltimore skyline landmark, that he helped design.

His beloved wife, Anita, died on February 22, 2004.

A memorial service and reception will be held on Thursday, March 31, at 10 AM, at Redeemer Lutheran Church, on 20440 Downes Rd., in Parkton, MD. For more information call 410-343-1665. Condolences may be sent to his sons at P.O. Box 100, Eggleston, VA 24086. In a world of grasshoppers, Otts was a zestful ant.

Published in Baltimore Sun on March 27, 2011

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From: "Boo Lahman"

Date: November 10, 2011 10:38:00 PM EST

To: "Wendell R. Benson"

<[wenben@nyc.rr.com](mailto:wenben@nyc.rr.com)>

Subject: RE: Otto "Otts" Claus Obituary: View Otto Claus's Obituary by Baltimore Sun  
Hello Mr. Benson,

I am Glenn's daughter and I can tell you that Dad was aware of Otto's passing. I need to tell you that Dad now is also SK. He passed on October 10th after a fairly rapid spread of his cancer. A celebration of his life will be on Saturday, Nov 12, 11 at the Annapolis Maritime Museum, 723 Second St, Annapolis, MD 21403 at 2 PM. Here is a link to his obituary on the John Taylor Funeral Home site and I've attached several links to various versions of his obituary.

I do greatly appreciate Otto's obituary and the mention of the 1000 ft tower on TV Hill as a child I remember seeing it being constructed. Dad spoke of Otts fondly; it is nice to have some context as to how their lives intersected.

Best wishes,

Ellen R. (Boo) Lahman

CAPT, Nurse Corps, USN, Ret

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From: Wendell R. Benson

[<mailto:wenben@nyc.rr.com>]

Sent: Thursday, November 10, 2011 9:52 PM

To: Glenn Lahman

Subject: Otto "Otts" Claus Obituary: View Otto Claus's Obituary by Baltimore Sun

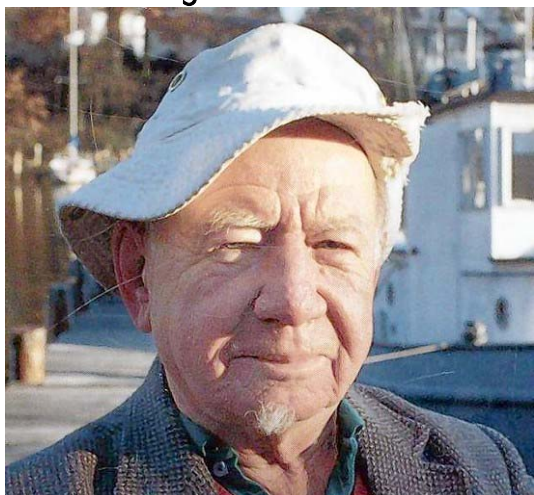
Glenn,

I had noted on my file card for you that you were a friend of Otto Claus.

Just discovered that he is SK. Were you aware?

73

Wendell ww2g VWOA



**Glenn H. Lahman**

Chief engineer at the old WAAM-TV  
WJZ's predecessor

Jacques Kelly, The Baltimore Sun

*6:15 p.m. EDT, October 18, 2011*

Glenn H. Lahman, a pioneering television broadcast chief engineer who never lost his affection for old tube radios, died of cancer Oct. 10 at his Annapolis home. He was 86. Born in Bucyrus, Ohio, he left a farming community for the Valparaiso, Ind., Technical Institute, an engineering school. He then joined the Army and served in Europe during World War II. He landed at Normandy in July 1944 while in the Second Armored Division and later fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

In later years, Mr. Lahman wore his original master sergeant uniform in the St. Patrick's Day Parade and in the Annapolis Memorial Day Parade. He appeared in this year's event as a passenger in a car.

After the war, he resumed his interest in broadcasting and moved to Baltimore from a radio station in Iron Mountain, Mich. He was an early hire at the old television station WAAM-TV on Malden Avenue on Television Hill. As a technician, he helped build the new WAAM television station on TV Hill in 1948. He was present at the station's Nov. 2, 1948, opening. The station was owned by brothers Ben and Herman Cohen, who also owned Pimlico Race Course. It was affiliated with ABC and the old DuMont Television Network. Mr. Lahman helped broadcast early Baltimore Colts games.

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While at the station, the first built and designed for television, he met and married its payroll clerk, Jeanne Carre. The couple lived near Pimlico on Whitney Avenue. He later moved to Annapolis' historic district, where he often took walks while attired in a cotton duck hat, known as a Tilley hat.

Family members said he stayed with WAAM as its chief engineer until 1957, when it was purchased by Westinghouse Broadcasting and changed its call letters to **WJZ-TV**. While there, he worked on the construction of the three-antenna candelabra tower, then the tallest free-standing TV antenna in the country.

He also designed and built WJZ's first mobile videotape truck in 1962. A Sun news account said the "van about town" was a "self-sustaining, complete station."

Mr. Lahman went on to travel with Westinghouse Broadcasting. He spent a summer at KYW-TV in 1967 when he directed the move of the **Mike Douglas** show from Cleveland to Philadelphia.

He also served at Westinghouse operations at WBZ-TV in Boston and KDKA in Pittsburgh before returning to the Baltimore area. He was the national president of the Society of Broadcast Engineers from 1975 to 1977.

He left Westinghouse and joined cable news as engineering manager of Satellite News Channel

(SNC) in Washington, D.C., from 1982 to 1983, which was a competitor to Turner Broadcasting's **CNN**. Satellite was purchased by Turner Broadcasting.

Mr. Lahman supervised the building of Home Team Sports, later **Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic**.

Before his retirement in 1990, he was head of the Westinghouse Central Licensing Bureau in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Lahman retained his interest in broadcasting and became fixer and restorer of old, vacuum tube radios. He joined other radio enthusiasts at a store in Curtis Bay. A 1995 Evening Sun story called him its senior Golden Age radiotrician.

"When a radio stumps me, I give it a little time. I go out, walk around the block, think about it. Maybe I make a stop. Then it comes to me," he told a reporter in 1995, after taking a long draw on his pipe.

Mr. Lahman was also a devotee of Chesapeake Bay sailing. He was a former member of the Annapolis Yacht Club, the Fleet Reserve Club and once owned the Nellie Jeanne, a steam-powered tug boat.

He also was a member of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and the Veteran Wireless Operators Association.

In addition to his wife of 61 years, survivors include two daughters, Ellen "Boo" Lahman of



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Harwood and Paige "J.P." Cumberpatch of Annapolis; a brother, Lyle Lahman of Fostoria, Ohio; and a granddaughter.

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From: "stig jokinen"  
Date: November 12, 2011 8:42:10 AM EST  
To: "Wendell R. Benson"  
<[wenben@nyc.rr.com](mailto:wenben@nyc.rr.com)>  
Subject: stella Polaris

Hello Wendell!  
Long time no hear. Hope everything is ok!  
I just watched a documentary on finnish national tv regarding a bunch of finnish military radio-operators during the last war, that was able to crack the sovjet radiocode and thus probably saved the finnish army from even greater losses in the end of the war.  
The group fled in small boats to Sweden over the Gulf of Bothnia. I attatch a link to the english website, where U can read more about it. The operation was called Stella Polaris (The Northern Star).  
When I sailed in m/v Agneta/ofyy the masters wife had been one of these operators. I met her a few times when she accompanied her husband onboard.  
A very interesting lady, indeed.  
<http://stellapolaris.net/english/20/what-was-the-operation-stella-polaris>  
73 de Stig-Olof+

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The VWOA Editor is desperately in need of news stories. Can you take some time out of your Daily Chores and submit something, short, medium or long. We would prefer to hear from you by Email at:

[ftcassidy@optonline.net](mailto:ftcassidy@optonline.net)

Or

[wenben@nyc.rr.com](mailto:wenben@nyc.rr.com)



