

Listening In Articles

September 2009

Compiled by Harold Sellers dxerharold@gmail.com

Kaito KA-35 Active Antenna

by Mark Coady

Active antennas are vital accessories for many of us who cannot erect outside wire antennas either due to landlord/tenant regulations or lot size restrictions. They normally consist of a loop or whip that is connected to an amplifier before being attached to a receiver. While they will never replace the signal to noise ratio qualities of outdoor wire antennas, they can certainly make listening a lot more enjoyable.

I've owned a number of active antennas over the years – aside from the Sony AN-1 that had a whip antenna designed for mounting outdoors – they were all proximate models – where the receiving element or whip is attached to the amplifier making outdoor use or even placing the receiving element near a window for improved reception impossible. The main advantage of a proximate model is that listening can continue during inclement weather as there is no chance of it being struck by lightning, thereby damaging your receiver. The main disadvantage is that any noise generated within the house will be amplified at the receiver.



A new proximate active antenna has come on the market that seems to work better than most of the others. The Kaito KA-35 is a proximate model that can be mounted as much as 16 feet away from the receiver, such as near a window where it can receive clearer and stronger signals. This model employs a NiMH rechargeable battery so that there is no AC adapter hum during operation. An AC adaptor is provided but it is solely used for charging the battery – a maximum of 12 hours of charging time is recommended. A USB connector is also provided for charging the antenna from a computer. And, to top it all off, solar cells are affixed to the amplifier so that, if it is mounted near a window, it might never need another charge again.

The KA-35 is supplied with a whip antenna for short-wave and a small ferrite bar antenna which can be rotated for nulling out mediumwave stations. Connection to a receiver is with a cable using a BNC connector at the antenna and a mini phone plug at the receiver end. Close to the receiver end is a combination on/off switch and port for attaching the AC adapter. An antenna coupler is also provided for using the KA-35 with radios that only have whips or ferrite bar antennas.

With a frequency range of 30 KHz to 30 MHz this is a versatile active antenna and is one of the quietest proximate models I have ever used. It amplifies signals without any noted overload. If you can mount it right by a window that faces the sun then you have an active antenna that can compete with a 10 metre wire antenna and almost never run out of a charge.

The bottom line is that the Kaito KA-35 works quite well and, at \$ 79.95 (at Durham Radio), is a real bargain.

The Day Mr. Marconi Came to Town

by Robert C. Mazur, Radio Officer, Thunder Bay/VBA, July 2009.

Before the advent of “wireless,” or radio as we call it today, many ships, their crews and cargoes were lost at sea, simply because there was no effective way to call for help, at a distance. Signal flags, lanterns,

flares and rockets all had a limited visual range. Now, the story of Guglielmo Marconi is well known. He was the first to build a commercially viable and reliable system for use by land and ship stations, and the first to prove that wireless signals could be transmitted and received, at incredible distances.

For many years (since 1902), there had been speculation when a wireless station would be established at the Lakehead. It took the MP James Conmee’s hard lobbying, in Ottawa, before that would happen, in the fall of 1910, when an experimental Marconi station was located in Port Arthur, Ontario (now Thunder Bay), at the Mariaggi Hotel (pictured at left, in early 1900s). Wireless equipment was also installed on the lighter (barge) Empire, and the tug James Whalen. The tug would tow the barge out into Lake Superior, to act as a floating repeater station and extend the working range.



In November 1910, the first Canadian wireless Great Lakes station, with callsign “MUG,” was constructed at the corner of Dawson and High Streets, in the north end of town. It provided a commercial wireless telegraph service for the twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William, and ships on Lake Superior. The first officer-in-charge was a 21 year-old named John (Jack) H. Bartlett, of the famous arctic explorers and seafaring Bartlett family from Brigus, NF. Jack would become the superintendent by age 24!

On 7 December 1910, the new station received its first distress call. The bulk cargo canal boat SS Dunelm had gone hard aground, in bad weather, near Blake’s Point (Canoe Rocks), Isle Royale. She didn’t have wireless, so distress rockets were fired off, and these were seen by a passing freighter, which did have, and it sent a radio call for help to Port Arthur. The James Whalen and Empire rescued the crew and ship, and it was towed to the newly built dry-dock facilities for extensive repairs.

Just 3 years earlier, in December 1906, it was a different story, when the SS Monarch wrecked, near Blake’s Point (The Palisades). The crew was forced to huddle, for days, on the frozen, windswept shore. It was the Passage Island lighthouse keeper who

spotted their shore fires, and he rowed out bravely into the ship lanes, waiting hours for one to pass by, to get help from Port Arthur. Under very difficult conditions, the tugs James Whalen and Laura Grace rescued the crew, but the Monarch was a total loss, and one person died in the wreck.

All that would change, the day Mr. Marconi came to town. By 1914, a chain of wireless stations was built from Port Arthur to Kingston, and the station given its modern callsign "VBA." The Marconi Company would operate these stations, under contract to the federal government, for many years, and many rescues.

In the fall of 2010, Thunder Bay/VBA coast guard radio will celebrate 100 years of continuous public service.

Published in The Chronicle-Journal, Thunder Bay, Ontario, August 2, 2009 Also found on <http://my.tbaytel.net/va3rom/>

Thunder Bay VBA

CAW Local 2182

<http://2182.ca/en/history/thunderbay.html>

MARINE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAFFIC SERVICES HISTORY IN CANADA

A fully integrated Centre, MCTS Thunder Bay is located at the western end of Lake Superior, in the Coast Guard Base at Keefer Terminal. Its radio coverage is quite vast as Lake Superior, the St. Mary's River, northern Lake Huron, Georgian Bay, Lake Superior and western Hudson Bay all fall under MCTS Thunder Bay's area of responsibility.

The original Port Arthur wireless station (now Thunder Bay) was opened in November 1910, and operated by the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of Canada. It is the first and oldest of the Canadian Great Lakes stations, and has been in continuous operation from the same city. The station proved the usefulness of wireless, on the Great Lakes, when the SS Dunelm (a bulk cargo canal boat) ran aground off Blake's Point, Isle Royale, on December 7, 1910 and the ship and crew were rescued. The Dunelm didn't have wireless, but the lighter (barge) Empire did, and it relayed a call for help to Port Arthur.

Because of this incident, a chain of wireless stations, approximately 300 kilometers apart, from Port Arthur to Kingston, was built and completed by 1914. The Kingston station had sufficient range to communicate with Montreal, linking to the east-coast system, thus giving straight-through communication to Cape Race, Newfoundland.

In 1962, the Port Arthur station was combined with the aeradio station at the Fort William airport, and came under the authority of the Air Services Branch, in Winnipeg. In 1970, the twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William were amalgamated into the new city of Thunder Bay. Thunder Bay was one of the last stations to provide both air and marine radio services in the region. The combined station continued operation until April 1, 1986, at which point the air and marine divisions were separated, and it was relocated to the Thunder Bay Post Office Building as a Canadian Coast Guard radio Station.

Winnipeg Radio/VFW5 and Churchill Marine Radio/VAP closed down operations that same year. With equipment being remotely controlled from Thunder Bay, the new Coast Guard radio station provided Morse code coverage for western Hudson Bay, until the end of 1998. Today it continues to provide VHF radio services for western Hudson Bay and Lake Winnipeg.

On April 1, 1997, the station was again relocated, this time to the Coast Guard Base at the Keefer Terminal complex. The services of both Wiarton/VBC and Sault Ste. Marie/VBB (both closed in 1997) have been integrated at the new Thunder Bay site ever since.

"SOME ASPECTS OF THE FREE WORLD'S CONCERN WITH THE SATELLITE NATIONS OF EAST EUROPE"

An Address to The Empire Club of Canada by LT.-COL. ARCHIBALD S. ALEXANDER President, Free Europe Committee
Thursday, February 18th, 1960

CHAIRMAN: The President, Mr. Harold R. Lawson.

MR. LAWSON: Our guest of honour was born in New York City and studied at both Princeton and Harvard Universities, obtaining a law degree from the latter in the year 1931. He thereupon engaged in practice of law until 1942 when he enlisted in the army as a 1st lieutenant. He served thirty-four months overseas, in North Africa, Sicily and Western Europe in Military Intelligence and Military Government. During the invasion of Southern France he was assigned as Lieutenant Colonel and Chief of Civilian Supply Control Section at United States Headquarters in the European Theatre in Paris. For his services he was awarded the Legion of Merit, the European African Middle Eastern Theatre Medal with six Bronze Battle Stars, the French Croix de Guerre with Palm and the French Order of National Liberation.

In October, 1945, Col. Alexander was released from active duty and returned to the practice of law. However, in the year following, we find his talents diverted from time to time to public service in one form or another. In August, 1949, he became Assistant Secretary of the Army after short periods of service as Consultant for the State Department and the Atomic Energy Commission. In May, 1950, he was appointed Under Secretary of the Army, from which post he resigned in 1952 to run for the United States Senate. As 1952 was not a good vintage year for Democrats we are today denied the privilege of addressing him as Senator.

I will not embarrass Col. Alexander by detailing all the other positions of responsibility he has held. Suffice it to say that in February, 1959, he was elected President of the Free Europe Committee. This is a private, non-profit organization whose object is to work for the restoration of freedom by peaceful means in the satellite countries of Eastern Europe. Just how this is done will be explained by Col. Alexander himself as he addresses us now on "Some Aspects of the Free World's Concern with the Satellite Nations of East Europe". Col. Alexander.

LT. COLONEL ALEXANDER: I want first to thank you for your hospitality, not only here, but extended through Mr. Irving Smith, who gave me a conducted tour of the city this morning. There were only two

one-way streets he went up the wrong way.

Really, your hospitality started a quarter of seven this morning. I decided to take the train up in order to be sure not to be delayed by a plane and not getting in on time. I left word to be called at a quarter to eight, thinking I was going to get a good night's sleep. At a quarter of seven there was a loud knock on the door. I said "Thank you". That didn't seem to satisfy the person. He knocked some more. I opened the door and there was a very courteous but very firm gentleman in uniform. He said, "Where do you live?" I said, "In New Jersey".

"Where were you born?" "In New York City."

"Why have you come to Canada?"

I said, "To speak to The Empire Club".

He certainly went away highly satisfied, and very quickly. I got back to sleep and another series of knocks. This time I was asked if I was bringing any samples.

I said, "Only verbal".

He went away quickly, too.

I also have a slight protest to lodge with you. Yesterday when I left the office my Secretary gave me a clipping from a local newspaper, with the picture of a very beautiful blonde girl. It said: "Beauty and Brains-Mrs. Shelah Courier, 24, beats out 266 applicants for job as Secretary to Frank Ogden, President of a one man business in Toronto, who advertised for a secretary to drive his Thunderbird and to be permitted to give herself a raise whenever she felt she was worth it.

Apparently that story has received a good deal of circulation in secretarial circles in New York. They want to know if it can be done that way up here, what is the matter with us.

Finally, there is one word I would like to say about the difficulties of speaking to people whom one feels one knows as well as we and you know each other. The matter of language never seems to trap you and I hope I won't say anything you take one way which

I mean the other way.

There is a play in New York now called "The Drop of the Hat" in which two Britishers give skits-just the two of them consume the whole evening. At one point he was trying to explain for us, the New York audience, what the situation was in England. The job was going to be a political job. He said, "Of course we have two parties over there, really. One is the Labour Party which you call Socialist; the other is the Tory or Conservative Party, which you call Socialist." He was speaking to New York not Toronto.

Now, I would like if I may to say a little about the founding of the organization of which I am President, which took place ten years ago, and tell what it does and how it does it, and in conclusion indicate why it is a hopeful sign and why. We think that we of the West are making progress against certain of the features that we don't like in the eastern part of the world.

You will remember that toward the end of the war there were understandings between the Western statesmen and Stalin that so far as the countries of East Europe were concerned there would be free elections in which those peoples would be allowed to choose their own form of government. You know that that pledge was no sooner made than broken, and that Soviet Russian troops stayed in most or all the satellites and saw to it that Communist governments

took over the countries, many of which had had a long democratic tradition.

Finally, Czechoslovakia was taken over and I think that a lot of us in the West woke up. Among others who woke up was a group of important Americans-statesmen, industrialists, soldiers, teachers, authors-and they decided that they would form an organization which would try to continue to get the truth behind the Iron Curtain to the satellites-not to Russia, to the satellites, and which would seek to work toward getting freedom for those countries again.

The organization was called the Free Europe Committee, and it has also been supported principally by a fund-raising campaign called the Crusade for Freedom.

The enterprise received at the very start the blessing of the United States Government, but the United States Government does not participate in any way in its running and I want to make that distinction very clear. Mr. Truman and the people associated with him in the Department of Defence and State, gave this project as a private operation their blessing and their encouragement, and for the last seven years President Eisenhower has done the same.

In fact, six of us were in the White House and saw the President the day before yesterday in order to discuss what he will do to help us with our fund-raising campaign this year.

Now, the result of the formation of this non-profit New York Corporation has been the establishment of two main operations. One is Radio Free Europe. Radio Free Europe broadcasts to five satellite countries-Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Roumania. The broadcasts are naturally in the language of the listeners. That means six different languages for those five countries-six groups of people who must understand the language and the country well enough to be able to conduct radio programmes to those countries. In the case of the three bigger countries the programmes last more than twenty hours a day. That is to say it is a full fledged radio operation, very much like what the B.B.C. or any of the commercial networks in the United States would conduct in their own countries, the difference being this has to be conducted partly from Munich, partly from New York, and sometimes Paris and London are involved in programmes. The broadcasting has to be done from outside the country and against very serious jamming of our position.

In the case of Bulgaria and Roumania the broadcasts are about seven hours a day. There also the programmes are well rounded radio programmes-ten minutes of news, every hour on the hour, all the customary types of programme such as Youth, Women's, Farmers', Cultural, Music. Sundays there are actual religious services broadcast-Protestant, Catholic and Greek Orthodox, depending on the country, and there are church programmes on various evenings during the week. Then there are interspersed some commentaries or rather like editorials which discuss the news or main trend of events and give very clearly the western viewpoint, so these people who are cut

off from any real knowledge by their own government, any real knowledge of what takes place in our countries, have the possibility of knowing what we are thinking and doing.

Now, it is of tremendous importance for countries which had strong ties with the West. For example, Poland and Czechoslovakia have always looked to England and to France and to the United States in large measure for much of their culture, for many of their ideas, for much of their economic help in the past. They are cut off from that but they still yearn for it. We try to give them at least what can be done in a half hour every day in the commentary, some feeling of what we are thinking and doing.

Regarding the other operation of the Free Europe Committee, it is rather hard to describe because it is a lot of little things. We run community centers in certain Western European cities where exiles are asked to come from the satellites, if they can get out. They come and they really don't know very much about how to adjust themselves to live in the new country. There is some governmental help but it doesn't go very far. We have these community houses which are operated in conjunction with the local authorities and local citizens where the emigres from these countries can come and find their associates, their compatriots, learn something of the language of the country where they are it may be Munich, Paris, Copenhagen or Stockholm-and they then are if possible put in touch with people who can help them find a useful life this side of the Iron Curtain. I need hardly stress to you how important this kind of thing is because if one single person who has come from a satellite to the West and tried the West out and then found it wanting goes back East, the propaganda effect of that in the country to which he goes back is so bad, and of course besides that there are very valid humanitarian reasons why we wish to help these people.

There will be occasions when in one of the uncommitted areas of the world there will be some signs of Communist agitation and attempt to take over. There are some of the exiles who are associated with us who are fairly well known -a former Mayor of Budapest, a former Corporation Counsel of Prague. Those people can go down to South America or go to India, and tell the people of India or South America

what it was like to be in Prague or in Budapest when the Communists took over. They can do that whereas we Anglo-Saxons cannot very well do it. So it is a tremendous service in the struggle against having Communism take over the uncommitted areas that some of these exiles can do for us, and are dying to do, if we just give them a little help.

Now, I would like to mention one thing about the radio operation which is in many people's minds, and I have had so many questions asked about it. It is this, that it is sometimes said that we give false encouragement to the people behind the Iron Curtain. We have even been accused of having had something to do with the uprising in Hungary in 1956.

When a special committee of the Council of Europe was set up, we listened to all the broadcasts and came back and reported to the Council of Europe that we had not transgressed in our broadcasts, that we could not be held in any way responsible for the uprising in Hungary.

They also said it would be a good thing if this radio, Free Europe operation were closer to Western Europe, if there was more possibility of reminding the people of Western Europe that this problem of the satellites still exists and more chance to help Radio Free Europe give the West European viewpoint as well as the American in their broadcasts to the various countries. So last year we set up a West European Advisory Committee to our Free Europe Committee.

The Advisory Committee is composed of Robert Schuman and Audre Francois-Poncet, of France; Alistair Buchan, whose father, Lord Tweedsmuir, was very well known to you, who is a Conservative Member of Parliament in the United Kingdom; and Sam Watson who is a leading Trade Union Leader in the United Kingdom; Randolfo Pacciardi, of Italy, the major factor in preventing Communism from taking over in Italy after the war, and who served as Secretary of Defence in Italy for five years under de Gasperi; Belgium's Paul-Henri Spaak, former Prime Minister there; from Oslo, a leading newspaper man; from Sweden, a former State Senator and from Portugal, a former Foreign Minister.

This group has now met twice with us for three day

sessions, once in Paris and once in Munich. It has been very encouraging to us to find that these eminent representatives, Western Europeans, are prepared to stand up alongside of us and say to the public of our country, "Yes, we think this is an important enterprise and we are prepared to help it with our advice". Their advice has been very helpful. They have made several suggestions to us which we carried out and which improve our operations.

Now, I would like to say something about the effectiveness of the operation, as nearly as we can judge it. The purpose is to keep alive the hope of freedom in these peoples of East Europe and the knowledge of what decency is in the western civilization.

Are we succeeding? Do they hear us? Do they listen to us? Well, there are various ways of finding out. Of course a traveller can take a radio and see whether he can hear the station. It is easier to travel in some countries than others, but we have good data as to the extent to which we can get through the jam and we get through in about ninety per cent in some of the cities where the jamming by the Communist Government is very severe, except for Poland. We do get through and we have various techniques of saturation whereby, particularly in the evening hours, when Bulgaria and Roumania are no longer on the air, we can give enough frequencies to Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia so they cannot jam us out.

Now, do people listen to us? Perhaps the best index is that last year there were ten hundred and fifty-four adverse references to western radio stations on the Communist government radio, and in the Communist-controlled newspapers. Usually the reference was a distortion of what the Western Radio station had said, but it also indicated that the Government had heard the broadcast and that the Government was afraid the people had heard it because they took the trouble to comment on it and distort it and try to refute it. Of those ten hundred and fifty-four references in the year, seventy-four per cent were to Radio Free Europe. The others were to the B.B.C., the Voice of America, and other radio stations.

We think the trouble they are taking to listen to us and to try to refute us is a clear indication that the governments of these countries think we are getting through and having an influence with the people.

There are other ways in which we know. We receive a good deal of correspondence, and particularly in the case of Poland there is much travelling back and forth, and it appears to be clear that the majority of the radio listeners in these five countries prefer to listen to Radio Free Europe.

Now, why is it Radio Free Europe rather than the B.B.C. or the V.O.A.? Both B.B.C. and V.O.A. do an enormous amount of good service to the West, to their own country, in broadcasting as they do, but the Voice of America is the official radio of the United States Government and as such there are certain Marquis of Queensbury Rules which they have to adhere to, and if a private radio station is a little franker there is no ground on which to protest to the Government of the United States. But if the Voice of America were very critical about certain internal matters in one of these countries, I think it would probably be grounds for protest.

The B.B.C. is likewise somewhat more circumscribed in its freedom than we are. There is another big difference: the Voice of America broadcasts about an hour and a half a day to Poland in Polish, and we broadcast over twenty hours.

There are many types of programmes like jazz. There is a regular jazz underground in almost all the satellite countries now. All the kids want to hear it and, if we give them a good bit of that, they are going to be listening to our station and they will therefore probably be hearing the news and other things we have to say.

I would like to make this very clear, however-the word "propaganda" is a word which is considerably misused. If our radio station does propagandize at all, it is only by stating the facts-the unfavourable facts as well as the favourable ones.

There are certain things that happen in our country that we are not at all proud of, but we feel it is our duty to report them when they happen, as we know it is our duty to report the good things when they happen. If we do make propaganda it is by adhering very strictly to high journalistic and radio standards of truth and objectivity and when we make our argument which I confess we do from time to time,

for the democratic way of life, or the free enterprise system, we do by saying this in an editorial ... this is the view of somebody or other. We do not ever distort the truth.

I have no compunction at all about having gone from the business of law into what is termed the business of propaganda. It all depends on whether the propaganda is decent.

Now, in concluding I would like to give you two or three specific instances of what we have done and then say what I think the future may hold.

Last summer when the Vice-President of the United States decided to stop at Warsaw on the way back from Russia, we got notice of it, of course, in the United States, and you did here. It was probably more interesting to us than to you, but there was a Westerner of some importance going to visit Warsaw. The Poles, on the other hand, were told very little about it, very late, and they were not told when and where he was arriving or what route he would take from the airport, or where he was going to be staying.

Well, we did find out all those details and we and the Voice of America broadcast the information to the Polish people as to where the man who happened to be Vice President of the United States would be landing and where he would be going.

I think you remember the remarkable turnout of the Polish people which was not addressed to the person, particularly, who was visiting but it was an expression, it seemed to us, of the underlying sympathy of the Poles generally for the West. It was rather a shock to the government of Poland and I am sure it was a shock to Khrushchev to find all these people were so enthusiastic for a representative of the West.

That demonstration, I think, would have been impossible had we not been able to broadcast to Poland, and it would have made a very different type of trip and it would have been used by the Communists-the small crowd which would have come out because they didn't know where he was-it would have been used by the Communists to prove that the West and Democracy was not popular with the Poles.

Now, when Mr. Khrushchev came to the United States the thing was depicted in the Russian and satellite radio and newspaper stories as unprecedented in terms of the enthusiasm of the crowd . . . no such enthusiasm since V-Day in World War II. They also said it was the most important event that had happened in North America since Christopher Columbus arrived hereabouts.

Well, we broadcast the facts about this. Perhaps the most interesting way we were able to do it was the Paris newspaper, Le Monde had on the same page a despatch from their Moscow correspondent telling what the Russians were being told by their newspapers about Khrushchev's trip and alongside that was Le Monde's United States correspondent's report, telling exactly what the trip had been like, so the French were able to learn for themselves what they were being told was happening as compared to what was really happening.

When we broadcast that to Poland, Czechoslovakia and so forth, it rather confirmed what the people there suspect -that they are not being told the truth, and that is very important. It is very important because you have some seventy-nine million people in that row of countries beginning with the Baltic States and going down to Albania. They are seventy-nine million people who mostly have not been very fond of the Russians in the past, and generally they have real ties and sympathies with the West. I think we have a moral obligation to see that the tie with the West is kept as much alive as possible, that these people know that although we can't send armies in there to liberate them, we haven't forgotten about them and we are not going to abandon them at the summit or anywhere else.

I think it is important they should have that assurance and as a very practical matter it makes a great deal of difference to the West whether Russia has those seventynine million people completely subjugated and in her hand or whether those people are unreliable allies and unhappy vassals.

I think I can summarize my feeling about this better by reading the last paragraph of an article by a friend of mine called Stewart Alsop, in the Saturday Evening Post, the last of three articles which he wrote after visiting the satellites. He wrote:

"Communism will remain a failure even with an increasing standard of living, but the failure of Communism is not to be measured in average calorie consumption or the production of refrigerators. Its failure is human and spiritual. Through overuse and misuse, the word "Freedom" has become a shabby, tired old word in the West. (I don't agree with him.) But spend a few weeks in the countries of nonfreedom, and it will become real to you again, as real and meaningful as any other word in the language. The word "Freedom" which explains why unless we in the West are unimaginably foolish and flabby, the race to which Khrushchev has challenged us is a race he cannot win."

Our job is to help us be not foolish but reasonably sophisticated in one aspect of this contest with the Communist system. I assure you we are not flabby, but I do know that we need the understanding and the help and at least the moral support of as many citizens of the free West as we can possibly get.

Ian McFarland releases 3rd CD set of CD's - 20 Years of SW Broadcasting!

Yesterday and Today - 20 Years of SW Broadcasting. What we feel is our finest work ever. Ian McFarland joins Bob Zanotti, Kim Elliot of the VOA, Jeff White of WRMI and a cast of listeners from the 20th Anniversary Kulpville Winterfest in 2007. We combine a present day (2009) Live forum with a flash back to 1989 - The joint SWL Digest-Swiss SW Merry-go-round program devoted to the International Radio Days conference in W. Berlin in 1989. The results are stirring and insightful. Yours truly and writer John Figliozzi also toss in their 2 cents worth. It was a pleasure recording these sessions and we hope you enjoy them as much as we did making this series!

In the year 1979, the average shortwave listener would not have given a second thought to the longevity of radio - international radio. It had always been readily available.

TV had been the competing medium for over 30 years - and in light of its success, and the inability

of television to replace radio, the accepted theory at the time would have been: World band radio is here to stay.

By 1989 radio enthusiasts would have been proven wrong, and the landscape of this popular medium of global communications would soon be changed forever.

In 1989, the Berlin Wall collapsed and the tragedy of Tiananmen square unfolded in China. Ironically, these two seemingly unrelated geographical and political events would have far reaching implications for the fabric of radio broadcasting on shortwave... and usher in the dawn of citizen journalism.

In 1989, near Seattle Washington, a young software engineer named Bill Gates revealed a computer system called Windows 3.0 - It would, in part, change the way we receive, process and manage information.

At the same time, around North America and Europe the digital age was rapidly emerging in the form of the hand-held wireless telephone - the cell or mobile phone, and with it a revolutionary new way of delivering voice communications, news and new media: including Digital music...

In the third in a series of CDs, "Yesterday and Today", produced by Ian McFarland and DXer.ca, a panel of experts explains how we got here from there.

The panel includes Ian McFarland, John Figliozzi, Kim Elliott, Jeff White and Bob Zanotti - men with strong opinions and lots of experience. Their lively panel discussion captures the spirit of a highly dynamic medium - International shortwave broadcasting... Where it was, where it is now...and Where it's going in the future.

30 years of Shortwave broadcasting in words and opinions - with a nostalgic look back at a joint RCI-SRI broadcast from 1989 and a forum from 2009...

And a broad collection of opinions from DXers like you - from the 2007 SWL Winterfest in Kulpville, Pennsylvania.

Visit www.dxer.ca to order.