

Welcome to the New and Improved Collins Collectors Association

Welcome to the premier issue of the **Signal**, the official journal of the Collins Collectors Association. No one imagined back in the winter of 1988 when a small group of Collins enthusiasts began to meet on 14.263 MHz that the whole world would be listening within a couple of short years!

Our Sunday net started out with a handful of check-ins and grew to a point where we now average a full three hours on the air! After awhile, it became evident that we all wanted another means of staying in touch with other Collins owners. In stepped Jay Roman, KBOATQ, with his *Collins Collector Magazine*. It was great... for a time. Jay ended up writing most of the articles in the magazine, because there were not enough editorial contributions, then came health and business problems, and after a brief revival, there went the magazine. It was just way too much to ask of one person.

Our group, was still active on the Sunday net and we even expanded to include an informal Tuesday night (and occasionally Thursday night) session on 3805 Khz. We still celebrated our annual dinner at Dayton and we organized two successful meets at Cedar Rapids.

But as the *Collins Collector Magazine* faded with the sunspot cycle, many people who were still active with the group began to explore other options for a Collins Collectors Association newsletter. The search and discussions went on for many months before the Board of Directors found the means to bring you what you are reading now.

We are all excited about a reawakening of the Association, especially with respect to a written publication. The Board has accepted a proposal from Jay Miller, KK5IM, to publish our new newsletter at least on an interim basis. We now have our own completely independent publication which will include Hamvention news, net news and information on activities such as swaps and our annual Cedar Rapids bash. We hope to also include information of interest to all Collins collectors and users in the form of new products and services as well as an occasional feature story.

Three more issues of the **Signal** will be published during 1996. One more issue will go

to subscribers before Dayton and then one this summer and another in the fall—approximately every three months.

To get in on the fun, you must re-establish your membership in the Collins Collectors Association. It is simple to do—all the information follows on page three. With your paid-up dues you will also receive a newly designed membership certificate (imprinted with your old membership number if you wish) which will be mailed with the second issue of the newsletter.

Please join those of us who are keeping the ball rolling to preserve the history of Collins Radios. Right now we are committed to taking small but determined steps to bring the group back—we need your support both on the air and in re-establishing your membership in the Collins Collectors Association!

Answers to some Important Questions

Q. I recently renewed my subscription to the *Collins Collector Magazine*. Doesn't that make me a member?

A. Unfortunately no. The *Collins Collector Magazine* is a private enterprise and is no longer associated with the Collins Collectors Association.

Q. Where does the money go for dues in the new Association?

A. We have established a bank account in the name of the Association which is administered by the Board and the Secretary Treasurer. All monies will be accounted for and used for authorized expenses.



At the Mike with Bill Wheeler

Chairman, Collins Collectors Association

On behalf of the Collins Collectors Association, welcome to the first issue of the **Signal**—our new official newsletter. For those of us that join-up with our renewed organization, we will see three more of these issue in the next twelve months.

Using this medium, we will be able to communicate information to the membership about what the Association is going to do in the future. From time to time there will be an article or two about Collins radios.

For several years our Association used the *Collins Collector Magazine*, published by Jay Roman KBOATQ, to inform the membership. Since we have all stopped receiving the *Collins Collector Magazine*, the Board of Directors voted to start our own newsletter and totally separate the Association from any private endeavors.

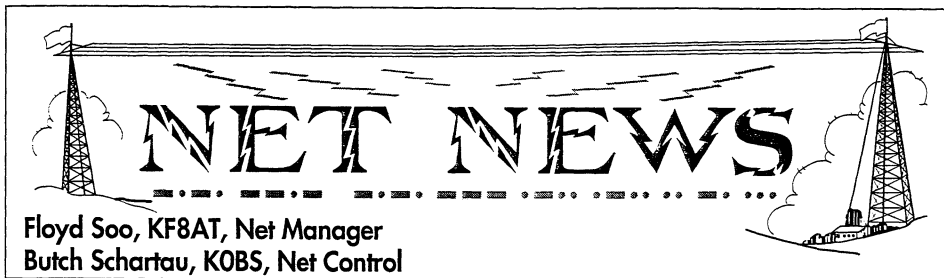
The history of this group goes back to February 1988 when the Sunday 14.263 MHz net was started. The net is still going strong in spite of lousy band conditions and QRM. The informal Tuesday night meeting on 3805 Khz started about three years ago.

Many, many people check in each week and the level of interest in Collins amateur equipment continues to escalate.

Our other activities have included annual dinners at the last four Dayton Hamventions and for the last two years, a summer get together at the Collins Radio headquarters in Cedar Rapids.

The down side of our current situation is that subscriptions to the *Collins Collector Magazine* no longer qualify for membership in the Collins Collectors Association. Unfortunately I lost my money along with many of you when I renewed the last time. None of the monies collected for the *Collins Collector Magazine* ever crossed over to the Collins Collectors Organization.

The Board is now trying to pick up the pieces caused by the absence of a regular publication. We have a plan and we have set some attainable goals. Right now we need your help and support. Because we now have full control over our own newsletter, something we did not have in the past, we are going to produce some positive results.



It is with great excitement that I am writing to all of you here in the premier issue of our very own newsletter! Jay Roman did a fabulous job with what he had to work with; no one really knows just how much work goes into a publication like that unless they've done it! I already have my hands full with a monthly newsletter for the largest and most active amateur radio club in the Detroit area, and I really didn't want to have to do a second one! We were bound and determined to make this venture a team effort! Not only do members of the Association have control over the newsletter, but we have pledged our time and efforts to insure that this publication will keep going...and going...and going!

I want to thank Jay Miller, KK5IM, for volunteering to create and edit our new newsletter at least on an interim basis. Jay must be a glutton for punishment, because he has been helping Butch, KOBS, and the rest of the NCOs with the Sunday Net. Others may know Jay for his new book, *The Pocket Guide to Collins Amateur Radio Equipment*. I think you will also come to know Jay Miller as well for this beautiful new quarterly newsletter!

One of the first things that I would like to have is your input regarding the CCA's presence on the Internet. I am in the process of putting us on line and I want to know how much interest there is for this project. This organization is yours too, you just have to be an active partner in it!

Speaking of active participation, I have been off the net as one of the NCOs because of a new QTH and it's associated headaches when it came to putting up my new tower. Those of you that have heard the story know what I have had to endure to get back on to 20 meters. I am glad to say that I am back, my TA-33 is up at the 50 foot level and I will soon finish my new shack in the basement. Hopefully, you will hear me back on the net as the winter grinds on!

I want to thank all the folks that picked up the ball and ran with it when the net needed help.

Butch, KOBS, and the rest of the crew have done an excellent job of facilitating the net operations. It is this sort of dedication that keeps our organization alive and well. If you would like to help with net operations and have the requisite transmit and receive capabilities, please contact me via: E-Mail: kf8at@detroit.ampr.org or snail-Mail to HI-RES Communications, Inc., 8232 Woodview Dr., Clarkston, MI 48348-4058; AX-25(Packet): kf8at@n8eqd.#semi.mi.usa.na or voice and Fax: (810) 391-6660.
73 and CU on the Net, Floyd, KF8AT



The Sunday Collins Net continues to be a huge success thanks to all the Collins Collectors and users who support it. Each Sunday at 2000Z, 14.263 MHz, we have been averaging about 75 check-ins, with the net lasting about three hours.

I usually open the net with any announcements that I or anyone else may have that are of interest to the participants.

One of the main services of the net is the technical assistance that is available to the net users with problems with their Collins equipment. We are very fortunate to have Bud Whitney, K7RMT our "senior technical staff advisor," as a regular check-in. About a third of the check-ins are of a technical nature, so clearly the net is filling a need for Collins equipment owners.

Of course, the activity of buying and selling of Collins equipment and related accessories is also a big draw. I try to log the whole listing and repeat everything so everyone has a better chance of copying the listings. I find the log is useful reference source for follow-up net users who may have decided to pursue an item at a later time. I receive quite a few follow-up phone calls after the net.

I try to encourage everyone who is listening to also check-in "for the numbers." Plus it's a good way to verify that your Collins radios are still performing as intended.

Normally I start with the first call district and finish with the zeros. I find that this works fairly good because of the time zones and the propagation. I usually have someone on the west coast handle the 8's, 9's and 0's since they are too close for me to copy.

I want to thank all the Collins users who have helped with the net, both technically and relaying for the users in areas that I can't hear.

73 de Butch, KOBS

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Butch Schartau, KOBS**

*A must-have for every Collins user,
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The Association is not related in any way to the
Collins Radio Divisions of Rockwell International.

**The Collins Collectors Association
P. O. Box 840924
Pembroke Pines, FL 33084**

Join Us on the Air!

**14.263 MHz
Sundays
2000Z**

**3805 Khz
Tuesdays and**

**3875 Khz Thursdays
0100Z**



Sunday for Technical and Swap.
Tuesday and Thursday for ragchewing.

May 17-19

Collins Group To Meet at Dayton Hamvention

Collins enthusiasts attending the massive Dayton Hamvention will gather Friday evening May 17 for the Collins Collectors Association fifth annual dinner.

According to George DuBose, AC4FQ, dinner tickets are still available but all hotel room reservations are spoken for.

Tom Vinson, NY0V, will deliver the keynote address following the dinner. Tom grew up in Champaign, IL and received his Novice ticket in 1968. By 1970 he held an advanced class licence with the call WA9YZN. He received his electrical engineering degree in 1974 from Southern Illinois University and went directly to work for the Collins Radio Company in Cedar Rapids. Much to his chagrin his first assignment as an industrial engineer was to close down the amateur production line and ship it to Dallas.

For the last 11 years Tom has worked as a program manager for various military programs and is currently program manager for the company's advanced data links. He was instrumental in the founding of the Collins Amateur Radio Club during the firm's 50th anniversary in 1983. He earned his MBA in 1986 from Iowa State and in 1987 he received his Amateur Extra ticket. He is active on CW and is on the DXCC Honor Roll with 335 confirmed. Tom is married and lives in Cedar Rapids.

The dinner will take place beginning with a cash bar at 6:00 pm in the Radisson Inn-

Dayton, located at 2401 Needmore Road. General introductory remarks will start at 7:00 with dinner served immediately thereafter. The Radisson Inn is our official Hamvention hotel.

Other Dayton Activities

The Collins Collectors Association will host a Hospitality Room Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights after 8:00 pm. The location will be posted and further details will appear in the next Signal. All Collins users and collectors are invited to drop by and share some of your experiences.

We will have a video cassette player and a slide projector in the room for anyone wishing to bring a tape or slides for "show and tell." Several members are planning to videotape their stations (and perhaps portions of some of our nets) so please bring something to share. If this becomes popular, it might be expanded into a regular feature (just think how impressive a two-way video of a Collins QSO world would be). Interesting photographs and historical documents would be fun to share as well.

Plan to drop by the Hi-Res Communications booth located in the indoor exhibit area of Hara Arena. Floyd Soo will have his video products on display and various officers and board members of the Association will be around as well to meet with you.

If you wish to attend the annual dinner and have not made arrangements to do so, please

contact George DuBose immediately. A limited number of dinner tickets are still available at \$25.00 each. Please mail your check, payable to George DuBose, to P. O. Box 840924, Pembroke Pines, FL 33084-0924. George advises making a quick telephone call to him at (954) 434-0722 just to confirm that space is indeed available.

Are you a Collins Collector? Would you like some information on how to get your own personal Collins QSL Cards? You can call us at 515-277-2400, fax us at 515-277-8167 or write to us at:



Parrot Printing, Inc.
2525 W. Euclid
Des Moines, IA 50310

The cost of these cards are 250-\$75, 500-\$120, 1000-\$160; plus \$5 for freight. Just let us know by phone, fax or in writing the information you would like to have printed on a Collins QSL Card and the quantity that you would like to purchase. Then, leave the rest up to us.

Please Join Us...

Take this opportunity to show your support for the preservation and continued use of Collins amateur radio equipment by joining the Collins Collectors Association. Annual dues are \$15.00 (\$18.00 in US funds for those outside the USA and Canada). You will receive three more issues of the **Signal** in 1996 and a brand new Certificate of Membership. All memberships in the 'old' group have expired so everyone must renew in order to receive further newsletters.

Please fill out the information below (please print or type to insure accuracy):

Name: _____ Amateur Call: _____ License Class: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country (outside USA): _____

E-Mail Address (if you have one): _____ Occupation: _____

Main area of interest (check all that apply):
☐ Collector ☐ Dealer ☐ User ☐ Restoration ☐ AM ☐ CW
☐ S-Line ☐ A-Line ☐ Pre-war

Your old membership certificate number: _____

Mail this form (photocopy if you wish) to The Collins Collectors Association, P. O. Box 840924, Pembroke Pines, FL 33084-0924. Enclose your check or money order (US funds) for annual dues. Your certificate will be mailed with the Spring issue of the Signal (due out at the end of April). Please send in your dues as soon as possible!

Collins Users, Collectors Gather in Cedar Rapids for Second Meet

Collins collectors, users and enthusiasts from around the country converged on Cedar Rapids, Iowa last August for the second annual get together at the Mecca of Collins Radio.

Collins Collectors Association Chairman Bill Wheeler, KODEW, welcomed the two dozen attendees meeting in the Long Branch Motel less than a mile from the company's headquarters.

An exhibit of odd and unusual pieces of Collins amateur and military gear was on display courtesy of Tom Vinson, NY0V; Rod Blocksome, KODAS and Dennis Day, WOECK.

Several videotapes of Collins commercials and research projects were shown which was followed by a general discussion of the company's rich history.

After lunch, the Collins company literally "opened the doors" to the group and, splitting into two teams, tours moved through the sprawling Cedar Rapids facility.

As one group toured the spartan but interesting museum, another group marveled at the Comm-Central complex featuring several of the company's high-power HF transmitters. Comm-Central is an active commercial radio station,

manned 24 hours a day, providing HF communications all over the world.

Outside the main building, the group toured the famous antenna farm featuring huge "billboard" antennas, Collins log periodic arrays and HF discones.

Some individuals toured the facilities of the Collins Amateur Radio Club and others simply took in the nostalgia and paid silent tribute.

At a banquet Saturday night, many former Collins employees shared their stories with the group and Dr. Ed Fong gave an interesting talk on how today's receivers compare with yesterday's classic equipment.

The meet concluded Sunday with a visit to the Cedar Valley Amateur Club annual hamfest. A third trip to Cedar Rapids is planned for this coming summer.



The gathering of the faithful at Cedar Rapids on August 17, 1995 is recorded for posterity. In the background is a portion of the famous antenna farm for Collins Comm-Central.

-Photo by Warren Hall

The **SIGNAL** 

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