

COME TO GLACIER PARK

Third Annual

HAM CONVENTION

Two Medicine July 16-17

No Registration Fee

Big CAMP FIRE!

Don't forget camera

Tug-of-war Bring QSL's

Singing

Boxing Match

PRIZES!

BOAT TRIPS
Games.

Swell FISHING & GLACIERS
Bring 5 meter rig High Mts.

Cool nights
SIDE TRIPS
GALORE

MOVIES
Complete dope from
J. ARTHUR LAMB
W7ABT
Kalispell,
MONT.

YOO-HOO
CALLING
ALL HAMS

ARR
ARR!



Reminiscing Through Sixty Years of Hamfests

A Ham, a Hamfest, a Love Story and a Bottle of Beer

It hardly seems possible that we have been having Hamfests for sixty years!

I guess it is time for a little reminiscing.



I first met Art Jacques in the spring of 1936, through his sister, Irene, who was a classmate of mine.

Our first “date” was swimming at the “Poor Farm” in the Missouri River, which, of course, was a no-no, but we went anyway. It was May 1st. and 80 degrees. We were in and out of the water from 1-O’clock in the afternoon until 5 P.M. Needless to say, we looked like lobsters when we came home. Art slept in a chair with his head on the dining room table for three days, the blisters on his back being too painful to sleep in bed. That is why he had “Freckles” on his back for the rest of his life.

My next date with him was the Junior Prom the end of May at the Great Falls High School.

Art’s folks took two weeks vacation up at Two Medicine Lake every year with their neighbors, the Staffords. Knowing Art, he couldn’t stand being up there by himself, so he invited his friends up there too, and, of course, all his friends were radio hams. And, talking to people around the state, there were so many hams that lived right around Glacier Park, it was easy for them to come over for the weekend too, like Whitefish, Columbia Falls, Kalispell, Somers, Shelby, and Art’s special friend, W7FL, Jeff Woodhouse, and Mel Swallson from Butte.

I’m also sure that it was at Art’s suggestion, that Irene invite Mildred Haug and me to camping with her and her folks at Two Medicine Lake the third weekend in July, which was the third year for the Hamfest. That was about my third “date” with Art, and my introduction to Ham Radio, and I guess the “first day of the rest of my life,” because we started going “steady” from then on, and even now, without Art, I do so enjoy being with the Hams, and watching them carry on this wonderful tradition.

That first year that I came we had such a wonderful time. Art took me around and introduced me to everyone. I felt like I was “one of the fellows” right from the start.

We went swimming in Two Medicine Creek. I nearly drowned in a beaver dam, when I thought the water was so shallow. Our friend, Mildred Haug pulled me out, or maybe I wouldn’t be here today writing this.





bears couldn't smell it. Up there, they put the garbage cans in the ground so the bears wouldn't tip them over, but you could hear the lids clapping all night as the bears helped themselves anyway.

It must have been about this time that a few Canadians started coming down. Only the men came. Perhaps they weren't married, or because at that time some women didn't like camping out too much, but they didn't bring any camping gear, so Art would invite them over for breakfast and, I guess, learning from my mother-in-law, I would cook pancakes, bacon & eggs over the big open fireplace outside. Sometimes breakfast would last until almost noon. But that was what was so much fun about the Hamfests! There were always people around to visit with (have an eyeball) with you. You would really look forward to seeing them year after year.

In 1940 and 1941 we met again at Two Medicine Lake.

Then during the war I don't think the Canadians could come down and the Hams were not allowed to operate their rigs and most of the young men went to war. But a few of the older fellows did have meetings again the 3rd weekend in July in the Park in the war years of 1942-43-44 & 45, and in 1946 they again had a Hamfest at Two Medicine. At that meeting they voted to have the 1947 Hamfest at Waterton Lakes, in Canada. My twins were born that year, so I did not go, but Art and Walt Lundy W7BUJ went. It poured rain that whole weekend and when they came home Sunday, they looked like drowned rats and everything was soaked. They were quite a sorry sight.

At this Hamfest, it was suggested that the Hamfest be organized in the form of an association, and as a result, a committee was appointed to draw up a constitution and by-laws to be presented at the Hamfest in 1948.

I think that it was also at this time that the name Two Medicine Glacier Park Hamfest, be changed to the Glacier-Waterton Lakes International Hamfest. Ray Fretz W7DSS, was the main instigator in drawing up the drafts for the constitution and by-laws.

Originally, there were no registration fees. That is why they held an auction every year to generate enough money for stamps, advertising, and gifts. But sometime after 1949 they started charging a registration fee because in 1954 there was a charge of \$1.00 per couple. That year it was held in Waterton Lakes, and we went with all our children. Saturday night, they had hot dogs and beans up at Cameron Lake. It was on our trip up there that we saw our first Moose! It was standing in the middle of the road. It looked so tall with its gangly legs, I felt like we could have driven right under it, like driving through a bridge. But we waited patiently for it to saunter off.



That was also the year that I decided the wind blew harder up there than it did in Great Falls. We camped at the edge of Waterton Lake, and, as I was getting supper, the wind blew so hard, it blew our tent right on top of me, so we picked everything up bodily, and moved it as far back from the lake as we could, to again erect our tent to spend the night.

Another year in Waterton it snowed but on Sunday when we left, the sun came out and by the time we got to the border, the only snow left were in the borrow pits.

Now that I think of it, we have had a lot of cold, rainy, or snowy weather the third weekend in July, and I also remember that that was the only time of the year that I ever wore outing flannel pajamas.

After the first few years at the Hamfests, we all started having children, which seemed to be lacking at first, because most of those “Charter Members” were just young boys out of High School.

When we started going to Apgar Campground at Lake McDonald, which was probably around 1955-1958-1959, we thoroughly enjoyed being there, because it was such an ideal spot for the children. They would play in the lake because it was shallow near the shore, so they swam along the shore, instead of out in the middle, they were fairly safe. But we women did our visiting down by the water, just to be on the safe side. However, one day, I guess we talked too much, because suddenly we looked up and here were two Jacques children (BOZ’s youngsters) two Lundy twins (BUJ’s children) and Julie Peck (W7DCG’s girl) all on a huge log, happily paddling “out to sea!” We frantically hailed them back to shore, none the worse for the wear, except for a few Mothers that nearly had a heart attack.

The children were in the water so much that we had them wear T shirts and long pants in the water but they still burned through the cloths, not bad, but they still turned pink.

When night came, and we tucked our exhausted children into tents, and the older ones “babysat” or some adults who did not go with us on our rendezvous, we headed for the Dew Drop Inn!

Those times were a story all their own! One year a “few” fellows decided to put one of the “other” fellows Volkswagen on the front porch of the Dance Hall, so no one could go in or come out! And how was the guy going to get it back on the ground to drive it home?

Then there was the time when my dear husband asked the bartender if he could light a firecracker under our table to scare a friend. What he didn’t say, was that it was a “Cherry Bomb”!

The year we “Danced all night” and we had a “little red convertible”, we finally got home but Art refused to get out of the car and come into the tent, so I just let him sleep there, top down and all. I did cover him with a blanket, but people wondered how I could let him stay out in the cold!???



The Hi-Light of every Hamfest for Art, was when he and Jeff Woodhouse, W7FL would woo Clarence Silloway away from his wife for a few hours. They would come down the road singing and having a “Merry Ole Time”

One year Art and Jeff were out on the lake in a motorboat and they kept buzzing the shore, so the poor forest ranger was drowned out of his talk every time they came by.

When the Hamfest first began, they did not want to charge a registration fee, but, to generate some money for letters and stamps to notify the clubs, and later a few gifts for Bingo, they decided that

the Hams bring some valuable “Ham gear” that they thought perhaps they could live without, but might enrich another Ham’s life, and they would hold an auction, the first one being in 1939 with Art Dunkel, W7AQK, from Kellogg, Idaho the first auctioneer. Then for many years Don Ross, IBG did the honors as auctioneer.



In 1939, Glenn Davis, W7EKX, came to the Hamfest, but not having brought any “Hamgear” for the auction, he donated a bottle of Olympia Beer. Mace Reed, W7GUJ bought it for 75 cents.

In 1940, he returned the unopened bottle to be auctioned off again. Speed Horton, salesman for Spokane Radio Co. bought it for \$1.00, and promised to bring it back next year. In 1957 a group of Hams bought it collectively for \$14.80. In 1958 the bottle generated \$22.90; in 1959, \$62.19; 1960, \$80.43; 1962, \$76.17; 1964, \$73.38; 1966, \$87.07; 1967, \$144.78; and 1970, \$128.05.

This money was raised by passing the hat, for a “Chinese auction”, so when time was called, whoever had made the last donation in the hat, won the bottle for that year, but it must be returned the following year.

In 1958, the officers for the 1959 we’re nominated and elected. They were Francis Stenzel, W7YLZ Pres; Harold Colvin, K7AXD; vice-Pres, and Tom Newcomb, W7YLC, Treas. Sectary.

1959 was the Silver Anniversary. The 25th year of the Hamfest. That year they gave Art Jaques, W7BOZ, a Silver Cigarette Box in honor of Founding the Hamfest. What is confusing, is that the box was inscribed:

1934 Silver Jubilee 1959
 Glacier-Waterton Hamfest
 Art Jaques
 Originator
 W7BOZ

W7SFK
 Pres.

W7TGG
 Sec.

Durring those years there were not too many Women Hams and when they were heard on the air, they certainly had no problem making contacts!

Some of the first women that came to the early Hamfests were Flo Majerous, W7QYA; Clarise Goodman, W7FTX; Vera Woods, W7TGG; Polly Badgley, K7DC; Villa Jean Tyrell, VE6VJ. Was another old timer, although I don’t know just when she started coming to the Hamfests.

In 1960 the meetings were again held at Apgar Campground by Lake McDonald. In 1961 it went up to Canada, in 1962, back to Apgar; ’63 Waterton Lakes; ’64 Apgar; ’65 – Red Deer, Alberta, Canada; in 1966 there were 226 pd. Registrations at Apgar and in 1967 there were 287 registered, also at Apgar, and that year they charged \$3.00 per person or \$5.00 per couple to register.

In 1968 it was again held in Canada and then came back down to the States at Apgar in 1969 and 1970. In 1970, there were 238 registered.

In 1971, it was again held in Canada.

Now the Hamfests are much more sedate, with much more to do, are much more organized, and much more sensible. But most of all, after talking to all these people on the airwaves for so many years, now coming together for an “Eyeball QSO”, makes the bonding of friendships even more important. And the expectation of seeing them each year at the Hamfest is exactly what makes this organization so important and so great. After all, what would life be, if we couldn’t enjoy our friends?

Through these 60 years there are so few “Charter Members” left, or we are too old to exert the energy that you people are so enthusiastically showing, I know that you are going to carry on this wonderful tradition for the next 60 years.

Art was so proud of the Honor you bestowed on him. From the time he was only 10 years old, Radio was his whole life, and he never ceased to be amazed that voice could travel over the airwaves. When Sputnik was first orbited into space, he recorded that sound, and was so excited that he was able to hear and record it. When the astronauts were over Montana, and again, Radio Hams could talk to them in outerspace, Art was fascinated.

When Art was so sick that he couldn’t get out and about, it was his Ham Radio and all you wonderful people that talked to him every day that kept him in touch with the world. He was interested in everything, right up to the end. For that, I have all you people to thank. You were always so good to him!

Sincerely,
Ann Jacques – Mrs. W7BOZ
1915 – 1993

- Charter Members -

