

AMATEUR FLOOD RESCUE WORK



PAUL BOBERG, W7BAZ AND BOB SUTTON, W7GZ ON DUTY IN FLOOD EMERGENCY
COLLINS TRANSMITTER IN THE BACKGROUND

Early last January Mr. Morris H. Willis of the Spokane Radio Company wrote us as follows:

"No doubt the fact that COLLINS transmitters were used effectively in connection with the recent work done in Spokane and surrounding territory by local amateurs will be of interest to you.

"The amateurs in this community very effectively carried on the only means of communication for a period of over a week with the flood stricken area at Wallace and Kellogg, Idaho. A copy of the log and notes of Radio Station W7AMA owned and operated by Henry Sturtevant using a COLLINS 32B transmitter will tell the story better than we are able to tell it in a letter. (The log covering the period from December 22 and including a period subsequent to midnight December 27 is intensely interesting but too voluminous for reproduction here.)

"You will note that the transmitter, a COLLINS 4A, used by Mr. Johnson and transported with Mr. Johnson in a plane to Wallace, along with a receiver, was the one which kept up constant communication during the period of the flood.

In addition to the copy of W7AMA's log we inclose a sheet from a local newspaper giving the story and photographs, which illustrate the COLLINS equipment in use.

"If you want any more information regarding this we will be glad to supply it.

Very truly yours,
SPOKANE RADIO CO. INC.

Morris H. Willis, Manager"

The press clipping referred to by Mr. Willis appeared in The Spokane Press of December 26, 1933 and excerpts are as follows:

Peace-time heroes, working modern miracles—that's what Spokane amateur short wave radio operators proved themselves during the Coeur d' Alenes flood emergency.

When raging waters descended on the Coeur d' Alenes last Friday, isolating the towns of Wallace and Kellogg, Idaho, from the outside world, cutting off every other means of communication, short wave radio operators pierced the walls of silence that shrouded the flooded district.

GOT NO PAY FOR LONG HOURS DUTY

Without compensation, working tirelessly night and day, repairing transmitting antenna in darkness and storm, tramping hip deep in mud, carrying heavy equipment into the storm-ridden district, these soldiers of sound waves "stood by" for 120 consecutive hours.

They are still standing by, although telephone communication has been partially restored. Overflow messages are being handled by the radio operators.

When the first report of conditions at Wallace and Kellogg reached Henry Sturtevant, owner of station W7AMA, N3824 Normandie, his transmitting antenna was out of order.

It was dark at the time, and a high wind was blowing. Sturtevant, however, realized that an emergency existed. With only a single flashlight to guide him, he climbed the trees on which the antenna was suspended and repaired the wires.

Since that time station W7AMA and station W7BEV, owned by Roland Smith, W1828 Eighth, have been in constant communication with W7BDX at Wallace and with W7AQK at Kellogg.

Some of the operators, all of whom are members of the Spokane Radio Operators' association, have not been to bed since the flood started. They have stayed with the receivers, keeping awake by drinking black coffee.

McLEAN ON AIR FOR LONG PERIOD

Duncan McLean, operator of station W7BDX at Wallace, Idaho, who had been on the air practically every minute since the flood started, was relieved Christmas day when Carl Johnson, short wave operator, flew to the Osborn flying field near Wallace with Major R. G. Breene in an army plane.

Osborn and an assistant were obliged to carry the heavy transmitter and receiving equipment for a second short wave station at Wallace from the flying field to town.

WALK THROUGH MUD TO STRICKEN TOWN

They walked in mud and water that reached to their hips the four miles to Wallace, where station W7BUZ was set up in a garage.

Johnson reported that great difficulty was encountered in rigging up suitable antenna for the station, but it was accomplished.

AT 2:30 P. M. CHRISTMAS DAY THE STATION WAS FUNCTIONING PERFECTLY

More than a thousand messages were handled by Spokane short wave operators. Telegrams, stockbrokers sales, requests for food and other emergency messages were put through with speed and accuracy.

SPOKANE FIRMS ALSO HELPFUL

Short wave operators on duty Christmas day at the two local stations included Art Schwartz,