

The History of South Hills Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

In the late summer of 1993, a small group of friends got together to form a new Amateur Radio club in the Pittsburgh area. The purpose of the club was simple; work together as a team to concentrate on the promotion of Amateur Radio. During this time, the group didn't have a name or even a meeting place to call their own. As a result, Jim - KA3EBX began working on a logo that incorporated the two repeaters that he owned, 145.130 MHz and 442.500 MHz. On August 23, 1993, he coined the name "*South Hills Amateur Radio Club*" (SHARC) and incorporated the name into the logo that he was designing. After completing the logo on August 28th, 1993, Jim had the logo & club name notarized on September 15th, 1993, thereby protecting his original work. A copy of the original 1993 notarized document is on file (microfilm) with the Pennsylvania Corporation Bureau. Our group had its first meeting at "King's Restaurant" in Heidelberg.

Around the same time, Steve Hunter - N3MAA, began working diligently on a club constitution & bylaws that were later adopted on September 28th, 1993. Corky - N3MJP - assisted by providing Steve with copies of bylaws from local surrounding clubs. Ron - N3WX also helped as well. Jim began writing numerous letters to various organizations to secure a meeting place for the new group. Up until then, the group had gotten together at a local restaurant and Municipal Park. One of Jim's letters found its way to a secretary at a local church in Bethel Park (John McMillan Presbyterian Church) who was familiar with Amateur Radio. She indicated that during the 60's when her husband was overseas in the military, Ham Radio operators provided phone patches so she could speak with her husband. The secretary had mentioned Jim's letter to the church's pastor, and he agreed to let the group use one of their classrooms.

Jim and Ron drove over to the church to check out the facility and discuss their plans with the church's Pastor. On September 22nd, 1993, Jim signed a liability/ reservation agreement for use of one of the church's classrooms for the club's meetings. On December 21, 1993, Jim wrote and submitted a letter to the ARRL requesting club affiliation. On January 10th, 1994, Jim received a response from ARRL Club Administrative Assistant, Vicky Armentano that his affiliation application was in progress. On March 7th, 1994, Jim received the affiliation charter from the ARRL, which still remains in Jim's possession even to this day. Jim also received a letter from Rick Palm - K1CE, dated March 17th, 1994, confirming the affiliation.

In January of 1994, Jim created the club's first newsletter, "*The Mariner*", a name he chose to tie the club's nautical theme with space exploration & technology. Jim received a very favorable letter about his work on the newsletter, dated January 14, 1994, from then Atlantic Director, Hugh Turnbull - W3ABC. The newsletter was also favorably mentioned in QST by then Section Manager, Bernie Fuller - N3EFN (QST July, 1994, page 127).

In early 1995, Ron & Jim submitted an application to the Internal Revenue Service, requesting an Employer Identification Number, (EIN). Since April 18th, 1995, and until present, Jim has always been the only trustee of SHARC's Federal Employer Identification Number.

Later, Ron applied for a club call sign, and was granted trustee of the call sign, KB3BRF. This is the "original" and "historic" call sign of South Hills Amateur Radio Club, Inc. and which was later used by permission of Ron's family, to obtain the callsign of N3WX after Ron passed away in 2001.

Once the club's founding officers established the groundwork, Jim - KA3EBX went on to design all of the club's jackets, hats, and t-shirts. Ron - N3WX was responsible for bringing in several speakers before the club, such as then WPA Section Manager Bernie Fuller - N3EFN, a representative from Crown Communications, and Civil Air Patrol (CAP). We also watched several Amateur Radio videotapes, and we sponsored a "Test Bench" night, where hams could bring in their radios and check their performance using a wattmeter, spectrum analyzer, frequency counter and deviation meter. Another huge success was 'Auction Night', where members donated various items to be auctioned off for the benefit of the club. These were just a few examples of events that helped to raise interest and bring members together to learn more about the hobby. One approach that made our meetings unique and promoted membership participation was our "round table" approach, where everyone sat in a circle. This created a less intimidating environment and promoted open participation from the group.

In addition to club activities, several of our officers were also involved with public service activities. Co-founders Steve Hunter - N3MAA and Corky Bennett - N3MJP were actively involved with activities such as the Pittsburgh Grand Prix, and SATERN. Corky had also participated in the initial rescue effort with respect to the US AIR, flight 427 crash.

From the very beginning, it's the positive & creative contributions from those mentioned above that made SHARC a respectable and popular organization to join. It's always been SHARC's philosophy to recognize the contributions of its members... past and present. After all, its contributions like these that help establish a club's heritage and good reputation. But more importantly, South Hills Amateur Radio Club, Inc. is an organization that is based upon friendship and members who will go out of their way to help another ham or fellow member. It's basic principles like these which have established our true heritage and good reputation. It's principles like these which we hope will continue to flourish in the true spirit of SHARC for years to come.

South Hills Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

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