

HISTORY OF HAM RADIO

The following is a brief time lined history of amateur radio's early beginnings and how it has evolved since. Ham radio certainly has centuries of history! As you will notice, Morse code played a big part in the early days. By the way, no one really knows the real reason why amateur radio was abbreviated "ham" radio. Just like a very popular lollypop, "the world may never know". ☺

April 27, 1791

Samuel Morse, the inventor of Morse code, was born.

January 6, 1838

Samuel Morse publicly demonstrated his telegraph for the first time in Morristown, NJ

January 8, 1838

The first telegraph message was sent using Morse code.

May 24, 1844

Samuel Morse transmitted the world's first telegraph message, "What hath God wrought!" to his associate 40 miles away.

February 22, 1857

Heinrich Hertz, a German physicist who discovered radio waves, was born on this day. Hertz is remembered today in terms like kilohertz and megahertz, which give measurements of those radio waves.

April 2, 1872

Samuel F. B. Morse, developer of the electric telegraph, died in New York.

December 11, 1901

Guillermo Marconi sent the first transatlantic radio signal from Cornwall to Newfoundland.

March 18, 1909

Einar Dessau of Denmark used a shortwave transmitter to converse with a government radio post about six miles away. This is believed to have been the first broadcast by a ham.

August 11, 1909

The liner "Arapahoe" was the first U.S. ship to use the radio distress call "SOS". The ship, finding itself in trouble off the coast of North Carolina, sent out an SOS signal which was received by a nearby ship.

November 19, 1911

New York receives first Marconi wireless transmission from Italy.

June 19, 1934

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) was born.

February 1, 1999

Morse Code is replaced by a satellite-based "Mayday" system on all ships over 300 tons which have to carry satellite and radio equipment for sending and receiving distress alerts.