

The Henry Primm Broughton Memorial Award

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THE BROUGHTON AWARD

Henry Primm Broughton (1865-1959) and his wife moved to Schenectady in 1931 to live with son Bill, W2IR, after living in Chicago Heights, Illinois. Henry had held calls 9SD and W9SD although from 1893 to 1915 he operated under his initials (HPB) before licenses were required. He joined SARA soon after his arrival in Schenectady and became a life-long enthusiastic supporter of the Schenectady Amateur Radio Association.

His interest in what later became known as radio occurred during five days in March 1893, when, in St. Louis, he was the assistant to the renowned genius Nikola Tesla, during a public performance of little-known experiments with alternating currents. These experiments demonstrated wireless communication using electromagnetic waves across the auditorium stage. Scientists and engineers present at the lecture were largely unable to realize the significance of what they had witnessed. Consequently, others including Hertz and Marconi a few years later received the acclaim for wireless propagation. This early experiment deeply impressed young Henry Broughton, a 28-yearold engineering graduate of Cornell University.

Since he had his operator's license, Henry had no need to set up his own station in Schenectady and for several years operated the station of son Bill Broughton, W2IR. However, in 1948 he applied for a station license and received the call K2AE. This call later became well known with the "pajama club," a group of early risers in eastern U.S. on 3990 KHz, who for years talked to each other for an hour or so before breakfast and their daily chores. Henry was affectionately known as the "Mighty Purple Pajama No. 3" among this group of senior radio amateurs.

He always believed that preparedness and public service are keystones of amateur radio and his Ford station wagon was filled with radio gear powered by storage batteries. When required, he hauled a trailer-mounted engine-driven a-c generator to save the batteries. His volunteer services were deeply appreciated by the War Emergency Radio Service, Civil Defense and the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps.

When he became a silent key in 1959, after 66 years of radio operating, he was believed to be the oldest active radio amateur. During the last five years, he and son Bill were both members of the Old Old Timers Club (40 years or more) a record that will be hard to surpass.

Two events in 1959 have had a monumental impact on the Schenectady Amateur Radio Association. The first was the acquisition of K2AE as the memorial club station of the association used during field days and public service events. During the same year the

Henry Primm Broughton Memorial Fund was established and the accrued interest from this fund is used each year to finance the Broughton Award given to deserving amateur. The award is granted for outstanding service to the SARA, amateur radio in general or to the community.



Henry Primm Broughton, K2AE, in the ham shack relaxing between contacts in 1952