

**O**ur Brush With History! By W8QCS Bruce Batchelor - Reprinted in part from World Radio Magazine July 2005 - Bruce tells a fascinating story in the summer of 1937 working The Infamous German Air Ace Hermann W. Goering 1893-1946 pre World War II. Here it is!

Getting my first ham radio ticket at the tender age of 15, I went down to the local post office building and along with about 40 others, took the Class B Ham Radio test. Only about 15 of us passed the exam. I went home on cloud nine, it was the happiest day of my life. I was now more “High tech” than most anyone I knew. My FCC license, W8QCS, soon arrived in the mail. Now just like KDKA, I had my own personal call letters.

We lived in Columbus, Ohio. I had built a two-tube fifty-watt transmitter and the high voltage DC supply it required. My antenna was strung between our chimney and two nearby telephone poles. At last I was ON THE AIR!

I soon got together with one guy in particular and we would become lifelong buddies. He was Clyde Miller, W8PFA. Clyde had been on the air about a year longer than I and his Dad was also interested in the game. His station was superior to mine, using a Hammarlund Comet Pro receiver with a 150 watt multi-band transmitter.

One weekend I got permission to stay over at Clyde’s and we were going to have a all night DX session. Taking turns on the key we proceeded up the band and worked every station that we could hear. By about 11-30 PM I decided it was time out for our midnight snack; we had logged at least 15 or more contacts. I had taken an RC Cola and a banana with me.

The food and drink gave us a boost of energy and we started Hamming it up again. New contacts were harder to find; most good Hams were in bed. It was past 0230 and Clyde gave up, saying, “You try a CQ Bruce” I sent a long slow one and stood by for a call return.

Then, to our great surprise, a booming signal was calling W8PFA W8PFA DE D4FND D4FND (the call sign is to the best of my recollection) K. We had a very powerful German contact! We exchanged the usual signal reports locations and names. He was in Berlin, his name was Hermann and he understood English perfectly.



I told Hermann my best Ham buddy in Pittsburgh was named Herman Ludwig, W8MTV. We used to go to the GBU (German Brotherhood Union) Hall on Friday nights to dance with the girls. When I mentioned GBU, he became very friendly. He said, “I am an officer for the German Air Corps. Continued...

“I am testing a 1KW transmitter built for the German Navy. Location downtown Berlin the antenna is a rhombic beam strung on the tops of the buildings. It is beamed to North America.” Hermann I said, you have the strongest signal I have

ever heard on the 40 Meter band. Continued page two.

He thanked me and said “I am being called away now and must leave.” Before I signed off, I asked “what is your full name?” Not expecting an answer, he sent “My full name is Hermann Goering” 73 SK - Thus Clyde and I decided we were done for the night and went up to bed.

It would take a year or so before I began to realize what I had done at the time, Hitler was in the news reels saying he was going to take Germany back for the Germans. It was no longer fashionable to brag about talking to Germany on the radio. In fact, I was careful to say nothing until much later.

I concluded that “downtown Berlin” had to be The Nazi Reich stag, Hitler’s Berlin HQ. Also the beamed signal to North American covered the North Atlantic perfectly and any submarine wolf packs or Navy vessels Berlin chose to contact! By this time Goring was back in the news again. Hitler had promoted him Reich Marshal for the German Luftwaffe. In less than 25 years, he had come from a 19 year old fighter pilot ace of WWI to their number “One” leader, behind Hitler.

In closing, I would remind you that Goering used his Ham Radio knowledge right up to the end. At



his Nuremberg war crimes trial following WW2, he knew his only outcome would be death or life in prison. He chose death. Shortly after his trial started, he tapped on his headset and said, “Tote, Kaput” (dead, not working). Whereupon, one of his assistants exchanged head sets with him. Goering, under the guise of nervous tension, proceeded to unscrew the ear piece of one phone, quickly removed a vial of cyanide, popped it into his mouth and crushed the glass in his teeth. In less than three minutes he was dead in his chair. Allied security had overlooked a breach any Ham could have known.

I don’t know if Field Marshal Goering had a Ham ticket, I do know that at that time he could have operated any radio in Germany with no questions asked.

Bruce said, my friends, Herman and Clyde are now Silent Keys. At age 85, I am the sole survivor of this brush with history. (W8QCS) Op note; Mr Batchelor could have very well worked a “slim” pirate operator as known today. He was not positive of the D4FND reply either. But.....on the other hand, just maybe? Any resemblance to persons living or dead is purely coincidental.