

Cambridge, Ohio, my home town witnessed some great opportunities in the 1950s in spite of declining coal, pottery and glass business, RCA comes aboard in East Cambridge and General David Sarnoff, RCA's Chairman of the Board spoke here at the dedication ceremonies. The date was 28 August 1957, to welcome RCA a bright banner was installed over Wheeling Avenue in the downtown area. The RCA production line would include home entertainment systems and record changers. The company would expand their business in defense production starting January 1961.



The city population increased with people seeking employment and RCA staff and engineers being transferred in from other regions. This brought on an influx of souls interested in ham radio to bolster the Cambridge Amateur Radio Association already organized and ready to serve.

We located an aerial view of the RCA plant and on the reverse side it read; "RCA Victor and Victrola Division Plant" **High Fidelity Capital of the world, Cambridge, Ohio.** That had to be a time of pride and accomplishment for our medium size Southeastern Ohio city.

I would hang out on weekends at WILE 1270 Kc in Cambridge when the studios were on Beatty Avenue as a youngster and the wonderful view of the STL radio equipment meters and bright panel lights beamed out to the College Hill transmitter and tower are still embossed in my minds view.

The local broadcast station was modernizing as economically as they could by using the RCA 45 RPM record changers (manufactured in Cambridge) on a Gates audio console pictured. The craze was the ever popular 45 RPM discs - Elvis, Vaughn Monroe, McGuire Sisters, Rosemary Clooney and hosts of others would earn their air time. Good bye 78 RPM records.

One of the RCA engineers assigned to the Cambridge plant from the east coast was **Mr. Walter W. Schmidt W3BEY - K2BPX - W2EA/8 - *1914-1994*** Continued on page two

Walter W. Schmidt W3BEY - K2BPX - W2EA- Born in 1914 and educated in Philadelphia, Pa system, attended Drexel Tech in 1943 where he studied electrical engineering. First ham ticket earned in 1930 W3BEY. His first employment was with Atwater-Kent in Philadelphia. Then Southern Steamship as a wireless officer. Most of Walt's career was with RCA at Moorestown NJ and the Cambridge, Ohio plant for a total of 40 years before retirement into an amazing endeavor.

Walt's reverence for the environment and ecology lead him to be a recycling pioneer in his early engineering days especially as a direct result of his German immigrant father who "always told his children to take care of the Earth," said his wife Anna of 52 years. "It was a natural thing with him, picking up paper discarded on the ground."

In the 70s Walt attempted to organize a recycling program at the RCA plant in Moorestown NJ where he worked as an engineer. In 1976 Walt made his first proposal to the local township, suggesting a comprehensive recycling program that would require separating recyclables in six categories. The plan was deemed too complicated. The project was ahead of its time. Schmidt was also an advocate of open space in the township. Plus supporter of the McArthur Project which acquired one of the twp's last remaining open areas with state Green Acres funds and holding many other positions.

Walter W. Schmidt, 80, who helped pioneer recycling programs in Haddon Township NJ, where he lived and also in Camden County, died Monday 20 June 1994 while speaking at a Haddon Township Commissioners meeting. "He died doing what he loved - being involved in his community," said Haddon Twp Commissioner Nick Laurito. He loved his community and got involved much more than most people ever do," said Laurito.

Survivors; wife Anna Meklesh Schmidt, a brother and sister; one son, two daughters; nine grandchildren - two great-grandchildren. Rest in state at St. Vincent Pallotti Roman Catholic Church, Haddon TWP NJ, where a Mass of Christian Burial was said.

I'm sure Cambridge was much better because of this gentleman's presence over the years and I've worked Walt on CW a few times when he resided in New Jersey on the 80 and 40 meter bands. I was not aware that he once called Cambridge Ohio, home. Today S. Jersey Mountain Toppers Amateur radio Club holds Schmidt's call sign in very high esteem. He was also a member of the fraternal group K of C and South Jersey ARC K2AA.

Partially scripted from an article by Joseph Hagenmayer, Inquirer Corres. Cambridge Daily Jeffersonian and QSL W8JYZ Bob Green collection.

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