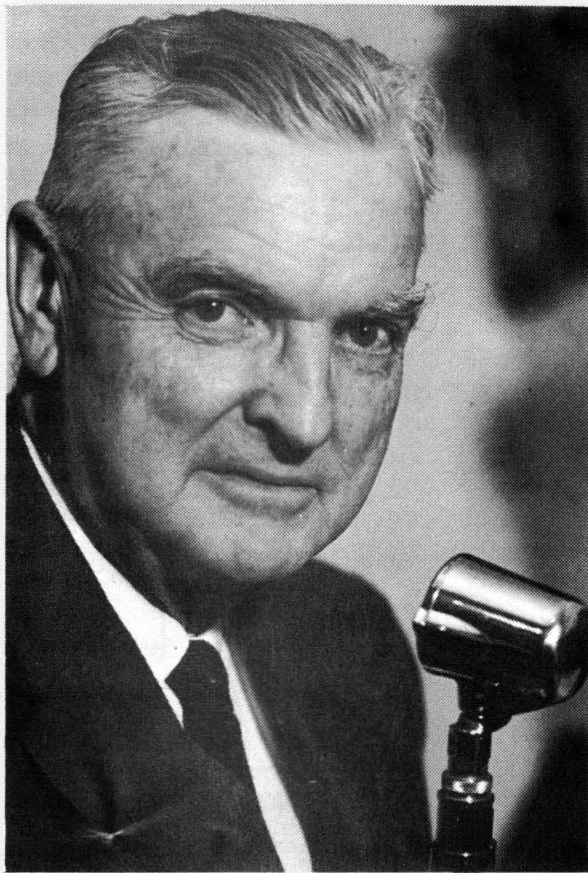


TOM GANNON W3YX

H A M O F T H E M O N T H



by Charles A. Bliley

Have you ever wondered how the other guy got started in Amateur Radio? It is amazing how many variations of the same story there can be, and this month's Ham of the Month, Tom Gannon, W3YX, has a little different twist.

Tom is another one of the many hams who got interested in Amateur Radio through an introduction to Dawson Bliley, W3GV, over thirty seven years ago. He remembers those days before getting his "ticket" as ones of "building crystal sets using oat-meal boxes as forms for winding inductances and of headphones borrowed from the local telephone set." KDKA Pittsburgh and WGY Schenectady, N. Y. were coming across the cat whisker.

Graduating from a code class at the Sylvania plant in Emporium, Tom went to Buffalo, and "took the code exam . . . using a steel pen and inkwell because they ran out of pencils." Even with such an absurd hardship as that, Tom passed his test, and received his first call sign of W8RAB.

When Emporium was badly flooded in 1936, the only link to "the outside world" for five consecutive days was the Sylvania Amateur Radio Station. Tom, a good friend, W8OYK, and the others handled so much traffic they "wore out the rug in the shack, and it had to be replaced." (Just another fine example of how Amateur Radio operators have always come across when the chips are down.)

While living in Warren, Ohio, he assisted in the formation of the Warren Amateur Radio Association and served one term as President of that group.

Upon returning to Erie, Tom began using his W3RVG call sign for which he had applied when he was commuting to Erie earlier. With the advent of incentive licensing and the "Grandfather Clause", Tom applied for his present call W3YX. You can hear him on twenty meters most every night chasing that elusive DX. (DXCC 211 countries).

In addition to operating and installing or repairing his many quad antennas, Tom loves to play golf and sail with his friends at the Erie Yacht Club power squadron. From all reports he is also doing an excellent job as chairman of the power squadron's educational program - something a bit different from his normal job as a professional electrical engineer.

All too often many people go through life quietly making contributions to their community and are never publicly thanked for the many precious hours and sacrifices they have given in someone else's behalf.

So it is with great pleasure that we salute you, Tom Gannon, as The Radio Association of Erie's HAM OF THE MONTH.

Profile provided by Tom for his "Ham of the Month" article in the radio club's newsletter for March of 1972.
Chuck Bliley, K3NAU
November 22, 2017

RADIO BACKGROUND OF THOMAS GANNON, W3YX,

Born in Erie, Pa. Educated in Erie, Pa. Attended College at University of Pittsburgh. Received degree of Engineer. Introduction to amateur radio was as a guest of Dawson Bliley, I attended a radio meeting at the studio of W0AV at 112th Armory at 6th and Parade. Radio activity was limited to building crystal sets using oatmeal boxes as forms for winding inductances and headphones borrowed from the local telephone set. SWL DX was KDKA Pittsburgh and WGY Schenectady. Actual amateur radio activity started when I was employed in the research labs at Sylvania, Emporium, Pa. My roommate was W2GSN, Bob Palmer who later was W8OYK. Studied code in a class of 40 at Sylvania. Took the code exam at Buffalo using a steel pen and inkwell because they ran out of pencils. Was licensed W8RAB in 1935. Assisted W8OYK in handling all Sylvania Corp. traffic during the 1936 flood. This station was the only outlet for traffic between Emporium and the outside for the 5 days of the flood period. The traffic wore out the rug in the room to the shack, and had to be replaced. First transmitter was a 6L6 osc.(xtal) driving a pair of ceramic based 10's in PP. First DX worked was OK1RW and I have the card to prove it, 579 on 20 meters. Moved to Warren, Ohio where we organized the Warren Amateur Radio Association, WARA. Served as President of the Club for one term. Al Adair, W8MNJ was very active in our Club activities. Moved to Vermilion, Ohio and joined the West Park Radio Ops. In my work I commuted between Erie and Vermilion, Ohio and as I did not want to operate W8RAB portable in Erie, I was given an additional license W3RVG. After moving back to Erie I retained this call W3RVG. Joined the Erie Radio Club when John Kozak was president. We met at the Fire Station on Ash Street and later at Mulligan Hall which was located next to the old City Hall. Hobbies--like to play golf in the summer and live just back of number three tee at Lake Shore. Like to go sailing with members of the Erie Power Squadron--am Educational Officer in charge of the educational program of the Squadron. Go bowling in winter. Am a Professional Engineer and served as President and State Director of the Erie Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers, and, oh yes, I like to chase DX, (that is a hobby??)



Tom Gannon, W3YX

P.S. Have a First Class Commercial Radio License for installing And servicing radio marine equipment on boats. Have DXCC with 211 countries worked--activity here is limited because parasitic element on my 20 meter quad blew out in the recent blizzard that hit Erieland.

T.G.