

# The COMMUNICATOR



#6 - MAY 1971

MONTHLY PUBLICATION



TRUK GRO ESIKAR HAIMIN WITH HIS FAMILY AND HIS HOUSE -- AFTER "AMY'S VISIT

## "AMY" VISITS TRUK - by Russ Spalding

Saturday, May 1, arrived in Truk with a real BANG as well as a "whoosh" and "swisssh."

Some 14 hours before, we had been advised that Tropical Storm Amy was moving toward Truk Lagoon and would pass fairly close to Moen with winds up to 55 knots. As further warnings arrived during Friday evening it began to appear that TS Amy might be a little tougher than originally forecast. About 2200, winds began to pick up, and some time around 2300, the old Truk Hospital moved all it's patients to the new facility.

DCO Mike Willett had already distributed Motorola "Walkie-Talkie" gear to key personnel just in case phone service was disrupted, and Communications was ready for the storm.

As May 1 arrived, the winds began to

pick up, gusting to about 50 knots, and it looked like we might get a real blow. Around 0130, Mike's foresight payed off as the telephone operator decided that discretion was the better part of valor and abandoned the switchboard in favor of the Receiver Control Station, which is a concrete structure.

Soon after that the switchboard roof abandoned the switchboard, and the front of that building attempted to join the back. Phone service was now "pau." Heavy rain was falling and the wind, now increasing in strength, gusting to 70 knots. Local housing, those picturesque tin shacks, was beginning to blow away and quonset roofs were loosening.

At 0415, Public Works decided to turn off the power before lines began shorting, and so, Moen Island became dark. But

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emergency generators at both, the transmitter and the receiver station, took up the load with no hesitation and communications continued to function.

By this time, we had decided that TS Amy might be bigger than anyone had expected, especially since many pieces of Moen were sailing through the air. Several quonset huts were beginning to shed their roofing, including the one belonging to DCO Willett.

He moved his family to the Receiver Station, along with my family. I had decided that one of my "ham" antennas could easily come through the roof of my "J&G" house and so, at about 0500, had moved my family to the Receiver Station.

At just about this time, it became very calm. No wind, no rain, no nothing. No, the storm wasn't over. Amy was now a full-fledged typhoon and was presenting us with her "eye." Ah, the blessed peace and quiet. For awhile! Then, all hell broke loose again as we caught the trailing back of the typhoon.

The last recorded gust of wind was 98 knots, then the anemometer at the Weather Bureau "fell down."

The Radiosonde Tracking Antenna, a large radar-type dish on top of the Weather Office, blew over. The large fibreglass dome sailed through the air and landed in a small canal some 80 yards away.

Inside the Receiver Control Station, we could actually feel the pressure of the wind, even though the walls are heavy concrete block!

The wind continued to increase in strength and about 0600 several of the masts just outside the Receiver Station were carried away, taking the antenna for the VHF along. All during the storm so far, the only communications on the island had been provided by the Motorola VHF system.

Saeson Poll, SEMT Truk, grabbed me by the hair and dragged me out kicking and screaming, to help him lash the mast and antenna to a large telephone pole, restoring our VHF contact with other stations on Truk.

Then, a near disaster. The Receiver Station, being solid and fairly dry, was sought out by many people whose homes had been carried away by the high winds.

About sixty persons were huddled in corners in the generator room, and in my palatial office (12 X 10). With no warning, the plate glass window in the office blew out of the frame, knocking down a woman and her small son. Fortunately, my ten-year old daughter kept the glass from falling and immediately shattering, but she could not hold it long, and it fell to the floor shattering into a million pieces among screams and shouts.

We were indeed lucky, no one was cut or injured, and soon after, Saeson Poll and Mike Willett braved the storm to get some plywood, a saw and hammer, and plugged up the opening.

After about 0800, the storm really fell off, winds only around 60 knots, and we knew the worst was over. About 1100 we began to leave the station and return home. All except Mike. His house was almost roofless and nothing was dry. A real mess.

Esikar Haimin, CRO Truk, also completely lost his house, right across the street from the Receiver Station. No roof left at all.

Most of the people who had taken shelter in the Receiver Station were now homeless. Their small tin shacks completely destroyed.

Saeson and I were lucky. Our J&G houses survived pretty well, losing only one window in the bedroom. It was wet and glassy, but the houses were intact.

Incidentally, one of my "ham" antennas did come down, but not through the roof.

At this writing, the cleanup on Moen is progressing rapidly. The spirit and energy of the people is astounding and already many of the houses which were completely destroyed have been rebuilt!

Although many power lines blew down and some poles were destroyed, Public Works restored power to most areas by Wednesday, a herculean feat.

With pride, I point out that at no time during the storm did Truk Communications go off the air, and we were in constant contact with Saipan and Guam.

The Motorola VHF units were used all through the storm with excellent results and are now in service as our "telephone system. The old Truk switchboard will never again handle a call. We must await the installation of the new phone system.

For those of you who have never been through a Typhoon, a word of advise... Don't !

THE PICTURE BELOW SHOWS MR. TOBIAS AGUON SUPERVISOR OF THE KOBLER AIRPORT ADVISORY SERVICES PASSING AIRCRAFT ARRIVAL INFORMATION DIRECT TO AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTER IN GUAM. THE ATC CAN ALERT THE KOBLER OPERATOR BY "BUZZING" THROUGH THE SPEAKER ON AGUON'S RIGHT



FASTEST RAD-FONE IN T.T. ?  
by C.A.B.

Wild Bill Hickok may have been the "fastest gun in the west," but Mr. Tobias Aguon, who supervises the Airport Advisory Service at Kobler Field in Saipan, claims he operates the fastest overseas radiotelephone circuit in the Trust Territory.

The ATC-to-Kobler "hotline" installation was completed on the morning of 23 May 1971 and was immediately put into use to pass aeronautical arrivals and departures between ATC (Air Traffic Control) Guam and Kobler Field Saipan.

Direct and instantaneous contact between ATC and Kobler has become necessary due to rapidly increasing air traffic through the Saipan terminal.

Before installation of the circuit, aeronautical movement and clearance traffic passed from Kobler through

the overseas switchboards or by land-line telephone via Kagman Control to the FAA radioteletype there, which was entirely too time consuming.

The ATC circuit at Kobler now allows such traffic to be triggered off between Kobler and ATC by cutting out the need for channelling through switchboards or teletype.

When the air ground radio operator at Kobler cocks the toggle switch, a red light goes on at the ATC inflight console in Guam.

The Operator there flips his toggle (it's the hair trigger type!) and answers "Center, Guam."

Kobler operator fires his aeronautical message and gives his initials at the end.

The ATC operator shoots his initials back, which means that he has been hit (I mean, he has received the message all OK) and then both operators return their handsets to their holster (I mean hooks). And the gunplay is over. That's all she wrote! Fast, wasn't it?

Anyhow, if there is any faster radiotelephone circuit in the T.T. challenges will be accepted at "High Noon" by the Kobler Field radio operators, if you'd like to write in your "fastestes circuit" article to--  
THE COMMUNICATOR!

KNOW YOUR COMM SYS!

Did you know that in addition to the various Trust Territory Government circuits, and commercial circuits, our Tropo Scatter system provides a 100 WPM teletypewriter circuit linking the Saipan Loran Station with the Coast Guard Station in Guam ?

## CHATTER FROM YAP

Not too complimentary a title, but what can we do when "good ol' Sal" calls and sez "send up enough words to fill a page in the Communicator AND get them on the next plane!" Hope this suffices Sal AND you get to go on leave.

We in Yap haven't had much real excitement lately - nothing like Ponape's crocodile, Truk's "Amy", Palau's indignation about not being in the "new Comm system" and of course, Ed's arrival at Majuro. Anyhow, Griff came back from the DCO Conference at Saipan and in rapid succession told me about: (1) getting a new lawn mower authorized in the FY 73 budget, (2) no travel for the CommSta Chief (me) to Samoa and (3) deletion of my position in FY 73. Personally speaking, I'm certainly glad there's only one DCO meeting each year!

### Banking & Communications

Our operators are helping to keep the newly opened Yap Branch of the Bank of Hawaii in business. Loans for purchase of vehicles from Communications personnel are flooding the bank. It's a long way to the new receiver/control site at the airport and the guys need wheels - those recent promotions make the purchases a bit easier!

### Ever Chat with a King?

Wish you could have heard a group of our radio amateurs trying to act nonchalant (and semi-intelligent) one recent morning at 5 a.m., while maintaining a schedule on 20 meters with Jordan's King Hussein, JY1 and Princess Muna, JY2. Those participating were: Len, KG6SW Saipan, Russ, KC6RS Truk, Fr. Cav, KC6JC Ponape, Bill, KC6WS and Doc, KC6CT Yap. Speaking for KC6WS it was a highpoint in my amateur radio operating and the gracious King and Princess will always be remembered. Hearing the King spelling his name phonetically: HOTEL - UNIFORM - SIERRA etc. made the early rising worthwhile.

## And the Training goes on

Rudy Aliven, SEMT, keeps the training rolling to keep abreast of the new solid state equipment recently installed at Yap. As the photo shows, Rudy is introducing Stanley Filmed, Electronic Technician to the patch panel and equipment at the new control Site. Keep going guys - you're doing great!



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### Comin' and Goin' - Vic Borja

Mr. Salazar and Mr. Wiseman are on home leave with their families and plan to be back sometime in July. The "super-duper-communicator" H. Willess is back now and will be giving exams to any newcomers.

The two newly appointed Micro Ass't Chiefs will be making an official visit throughout the Trust Territory in the near future, so tighten your belts!

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### THE COMMUNICATOR

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## HEADQUARTERS NOTES

With Homer Willess, Ray Wiseman, AND Salazar, all on Home Leave or getting ready to go, things are pretty peaceful and quiet around here.

Too peaceful, sez the Chief.

Our new "second" overseas switch-board is on hand and is presently in the process of being installed. While this will significantly improve the available service -- our girls have been looking forward to "sharing the load" with two operators on duty during peak loads -- from all appearances "calls waiting" will be doubled right along with the doubled service!

It seems incredible that just a year and a half ago, radio phone-patches with their attending static, fading, and time limitations, was the best form of direct contact between the districts, between Saipan and the districts, and with Guam. So, memoranda, letters and dispatches were relied on for the very necessary continuous exchange of communications.

Now, it seems that the only answer to any and all problems is an immediate conversation directly between department directors, Distads, district project managers, or with Washington DC and other mainland points, and of course, everything is ASAP, PRIORITY, LIKE RIGHT NOW!

Ah well, like the old saying, when anything goes wrong, when a project is delayed, there's not enough equipment, or wrong parts/supplies are received... delayed communications, faulty communications, or lack of communications is usually blamed.

But when communications is perfect -- well, we are only doing our job, that is what's expected of us.

Perhaps that's the way it should be. We are professionals! While an occasional pat on the back is nice to have, the genuine self-satisfaction of KNOWING that we are doing the best job possible with the best equipment available is even better. Or is it?

## SHARK SHASING WITH THE SHIEF

by anonymous

If you don't like to play with sharks, think twice about going diving with John Welch.

We had been lazying along down in shallow, 25-30 foot water, when we came across one of the local underwater "land marks," an old WWII vintage airplane wing. From force of habit, I guess, we had to get way down and see what, if anything, was going on under it. I could see a dim, elongated shape over toward one end of it. It looked pretty big to me and I began to get just a little queasy when Welch, being closer to that end of the wing and getting a good look at whatever it was, gave me the thumbs up gesture for us to head on upstairs for a little confab.

"There's a shark sleeping under that wing," he said, as I turned longingly toward our boat anchored about a hundred yards away, only to hear him continue, "He's only about a five-footer, I want to try out my 'bang stick' on him, come on!"

The sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach when I heard him say that is really the climax of this "report" because here I was expecting him to say, "Let's get out of here, let's make it back to the boat," instead, he wants to "try out" his bang stick on that shark, "come on!"

Me, I'm sort of a novice at this game anyway. I've done a little scuba-ing in the dim distant past. And recently, for weekend unloading, I've gone down with a "lung" and chased little fish, picked up an occasional shell or piece of purtty coral. But with little or no experience with sharks and other denizens of the deep ...I'd just as soon leave them alone, thank you!

Well, to make a short story long, we did go back down so he could "try out" his bang stick. He did try it out. But either the "baby" shark woke up and moved at the wrong time or else he just didn't hit him anywhere near a vital spot. Immediately after a water-softened bang! the shark swam out from the opposite-thank-goodness-side of the wing, had a little hole near his tail fins, and I swear he turned, looked scornfully and disgustedly at us, then swam leisurely away, again thank goodness, just slightly perturbed at having his slumber disturbed!

# NINETEENTH ANNUAL PALAU FAIR

FUN  
GAMES  
RACES  
PRIZES  
PARADES  
PALAU DANCING  
HANDICRAFTS  
REFRESHMENTS

⊕ JULY 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, & 12<sup>th</sup> ⊕

KOROR · PALAU IS.