



Robert F. Bukaty/The Patriot Ledger

Ham radio operator George Forant discusses the messages he receives from overseas.

He reaches the world with radio

By Maurice F. Reardon
The Patriot Ledger

WALPOLE — When 83-year-old George Forant was a youngster, radio was in its infancy and one of his biggest thrills was picking up Springfield, Mass., on his home-made crystal set.

He has been involved in amateur radio operation more than 65 years and today has an efficient, up-to-the minute radio station capable of reaching all over the world in the basement of his home.

His transmitting and receiving ranges have increased somewhat since the early days. Today he talks by Morse code with other radio hams in Russia, Japan, Malaya and several hundred other places around the globe from Germany to Guinea.

He has received hundreds of cards from other amateurs telling the time their transmission was heard, and giving the call sign and location of the receiving station.

"My first recollection of becoming involved was as a youngster walking to school with a friend during the World War I years," he said. "We each had one of the large, round, dry cell batteries . . . and by



Walpole

touching wires together could make sparks. We thought it was a lot of fun."

Forant received his radio operator's license in 1920 at age 17, and in 1922 was vice president of the Greater Boston Spark-Coil Club.

He has a newspaper clipping that year telling how he and Jack McCarthy were vacationing on Cape Cod when they were instrumental in helping a ship in trouble.

"Jack and I used to mount our radios in the 30-foot launches we each owned and go out aways and practice sending messages back and forth," Forant said. "One day Jack picked up a signal from a tanker in distress off the coast. I was unable to pick up the message at that distance so Jack relayed the message to me and I informed the Coast Guard.

"The Coast Guard sent a cutter and I went out to near where Jack was and we stood by as the cutter took the tanker in tow to New Bedford. We felt like heroes in a minor way," Forant laughed.

For 24 years Forant has been one of 5,000 amateur radio operators in the Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS), which forms a link between the military and the local communities.

"Its very satisfying volunteer work," Forant said, "Servicemen stationed around the country or overseas can go to the on-base MARS station and send a message to mom, their girlfriend, or whom-ever, and that message will be transmitted to one of us in the community.

"We in turn telephone, or mail, the message to the local address.

It is a fast, economical and popular method of contact," he said.

For many years Forant was a musician, playing in bands all around the Greater Boston area. He is retired from the Hewlett-Packard electronics firm and has plenty of time now to devote to his lifetime hobby — searching the airwaves for someone to chat with.

WALPOLE

Forant, George E.
Keegan, Thomas H. Jr.
Kinahan, James J. Sr.

8/16/93 BOSTON GLOBE

FORANT—Of Walpole, Aug. 14th, 1993. George E. Beloved husband of the late Genevieve (Cardinal) Forant. Loving father of Aldine L. Komitsky of Georgia, Dorothy F. Ciriello, and Georgiana M. Brown both of Walpole. Also survived by 9 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. Funeral from the James H. Delaney & Son Funeral Home, 48 Common St., WALPOLE, on Tuesday at 8 a.m. A Blessed Sacrament Burial will be celebrated in Blessed Sacrament Church, Walpole at 9 a.m. Relatives and friends are kindly invited. Visiting hours Monday 2-4 and 7-9. Interment St. Francis Cemetery, WALPOLE. Donations may be made to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, 220 North Main St., (Suite #104) Natick, 01760.

George E. Forant, 89

Was Hewlett-Packard foreman

George E. Forant of Walpole, a retired foreman with Hewlett-Packard in Waltham, died Saturday of respiratory failure in Glover Memorial Hospital in Needham. He was 89.

Born in Watertown, Mr. Forant was educated in Dorchester schools. He moved to Walpole in 1970, after living in Hyde Park for 45 years.

He was employed at Hewlett-Packard for 25 years, retiring in 1968. Throughout his life, he communicated with people around the world as a ham radio operator, having received his operator's license in 1920.

Mr. Forant played trumpet for the Baron Hugo Orchestra, the Bobby Hackett Band and other local area bands.

He was the husband of the late Genevieve (Cardinal) Forant.

He leaves three daughters, Aldine L. Komitsky of Georgia and Dorothy F. Ciriello and Georgiana M. Brown, both of Walpole; nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

A funeral Mass will be said in the Blessed Sacrament Church in Walpole at 9 a.m. tomorrow. Burial will be in the St. Francis Cemetery, Walpole.

George E. Forant of Walpole, at 89, trumpet player

BOSTON HERALD 17 AUG 1993

George E. Forant of Walpole, formerly of Hyde Park, died Saturday at Glover Memorial Hospital in Needham after a brief illness. He was 89.

Born in Watertown and educated in Dorchester, Mr. Forant resided in Hyde Park for 45 years before moving to Walpole in 1970.

He worked at Hewlett-Packard in Waltham for 25 years,

retiring in 1968.

Mr. Forant was a licensed ham radio operator since 1920 and was a longtime member of Military Affiliate Radio System.

He played trumpet for the Baron Hugo Orchestra, Bobby Hackett and many other local big bands.

He is survived by three daughters, Aldine L. Komitsky of Georgia and Dorothy F. Ciriello and Georgiana M. Brown, both of Walpole; nine grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m. today at Blessed Sacrament Church, Walpole.

Burial will be in St. Francis Cemetery, Walpole.

Arrangements are by James H. Delaney and Son Funeral Home, Walpole.

Aug. 14, 1993

George E. Forant, employed 25 years by Hewlett-Packard

WALPOLE — George E. Forant, 89, of Walpole, a ham radio operator and former trumpet player with bands in the area, died Saturday in Glover Memorial Hospital, Needham.

Mr. Forant worked 25 years for Hewlett-Packard in Waltham before retiring in 1968.

He was licensed as a radio operator in 1920 and spoke to people around the world. He was a member of MARS, Military Affiliate Radio System, which formed a link between the military and community governments.

Mr. Forant played trumpet for the Baron Hugo Orchestra and many other local area bands, and with Bobby Hackett, who played trumpet and cornet.

He was born in Watertown and educated in Dorchester. He lived 45 years in Hyde Park before moving to Walpole in 1970.

Husband of the late Genevieve (Cardinal) Forant, he is survived by three daughters, Aldine L. Komitsky of Georgia and Dorothy F. Ciriello and Georgiana M. Brown, both of Walpole; nine grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m. Tuesday in Blessed Sacrament Church. Burial will be in St. Francis Cemetery.

Visiting is from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. Monday in the James H. Delaney and Son Funeral Home, 48 Common St.

Donations may be made to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, 220 N. Main St., Suite 104, Natick 01760.

George E. Forant

George E. Forant of Walpole, formerly of Hyde Park, died Saturday, Aug. 14, 1993, at Glover Memorial Hospital in Needham. He was 89.

Born in Watertown, Mr. Forant was educated in Dorchester.

For 45 years, he was a resident of Hyde Park before moving to Walpole in 1970.

Mr. Forant retired in 1968 from Hewlett-Packard, Waltham.

Mr. Forant was an avid Ham radio operator. Licensed in 1920, he was a member of the Military Affiliate Radio System (M.A.R.S.), an organization which formed a link between the military and local community governments.

Mr. Forant played trumpet for many local big bands, which included the Baron Hugo Orchestra and the Bobby Hackett Band.

Husband of the late Genevieve (Cardinal) Forant, he is survived by three daughters, Aldine L. Komitsky of Georgia, Dorothy F. Ciriello and Georgiana M. Brown, both of Walpole; nine grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

A funeral Mass was celebrated for Mr. Forant Tuesday at Blessed Sacrament Church, Walpole.

Burial was in St. Francis Cemetery, Walpole.

Arrangements were under the direction of the James H. Delaney and Son Funeral Home, Walpole.

Donations in memory of Mr. Forant may be made to Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, 220 North Main St., Suite 104, Natick, Mass., 01760.