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John Poole Broadcasting Company

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March 17 1954

Mr. Ernest R. Cooper
National Radio Club
438 East 21st. Street
Brooklyn 26, New York.

K B I G
BOX "T"
AVALON, CALIF.

Dear Mr. Cooper:

Thank you very much for your interesting letter, regarding hearing our signals, your log and our log agree as to what you heard, in other words your report is VERIFIED, and we thank you.

From your letter, you seem to have quite a few stations to your credit, was just wondering how many different receivers you used during your 21 years of "logging".

Your remark about "us nuts", well as I see it, it proves you are very interested in your "hobby", and as far as a nut is concerned, I believe you can include all of us here at K B I G.

In answering your questions about Avalon, I should like to say first of all, as you know, its located on Santa Catalina Island, 22 miles across the Pacific from the mainland, just about opposite San Pedro, look on your map and you can get our location. Avalon during the Winter months is--well I guess you could very neary call it a "ghost" town, you see, its more of a Summer resort, the population right now, during the Winter months is---a rough guess would be about 1500 or 2000.

During the Summer months, it increases by leaps and bounds.

Our transportation is by Amphibian, 15 minutes to Long Beach, or by United Air Lines, same time, or by Steamer, which takes 2 hours, you can guess which method we use when we go to the mainland.

As I understand it, this Island was discovered in about 1500, by a Spaniard by the name of Cabrillo, we had Indians on this Island but do not know whether they were here before that or not, I presume we kicked them off like we did in other cases, incidentally, there are still remains of their activities here, Indian burial grounds, broken crockery, arrow head points, etc. Then During the last War it was quite a place for the Army, we still have their buildings over on the Windward side of the Island, underground Radar installations, look-out towers, etc. Of course nothing now but their Camp, which they ably named CAMP CACTUS, the other installations are still here but of course vacated.

On the Island there are about 100 head of Buffalo---it seems a while back some movie company brot a few over to make pictures and left them---the result, about 100 now, which we run into once in awhile, then we have about 30,000 head of goats, wild pigs, deer, etc.

In answering your question about how Catalins got its name, this I cannot answer, probably Catalina means something in Spanish that our buddy Cabrillo liked.

K B I G went on the air in June 1952. In answer to your question, regarding an early morning frequency check--we do not have this, as our frequency is checked in Long Beach while we are on the air during the day.

Now a little about the station in case youre interested. We are located about 5 miles "up the hill" from Avalon, all in second gear and at an elevation of about 1800 feet, stepping out to the road, which is about 200 yards from the station, we can look across the Pacific and see the mainland, at night, we can see (weather permitting) each little town as we scan the coastline.

We have what we call Island power (which is very crummy) and we also have two 75KVA diesels which we use exclusively, we run one of them one week, the other one the next and so on.

The building we are housed in is built on a rather Ranch style, to fit in with the terrain, its concrete, very modern in every respect, We have the transmitter room, announce booth, work shop, office, store room, hot and cold shower, and kitchen. We have our own electric water heater, refrigerator, and hot plate. The kitchen is a little better looking than the one at my home. So you see they have provided for us in a great way. Each man has his own jeep, to come and go to work, and to use while off duty. There isnt much to do when youre off, but we have picnics and go out across the hills to the other side of the Island, etc. so it does make a lot of fun and certainly breaks the monotony. I forgot to tell you, the Island is about 7 miles wide and 22 miles long, so you see there is quite a bit of territory to "explore#", every time you go out--you see something different.

Our antenna system is a three tower affair, the bulk of the signal goes EAST, which would favor you, however we do have verification of being heard in New Zealand several times, which in my opinion, is more or less of a freak. I believe as far as the States are concerned, NEW YORK is the best DX.

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Ernest R. Cooper


I neglected to tell you 49 per. cent of our programs come from Hollywood, the rest originate from Avalon (this is FCC rules). Well I guess thats about all for this "book" and I do hope you get some useful information from it.

One thing I forgot to mention was the Summer activity: The steamers capacity is 2000, we have one arrival a day and during the Summer I might add, its loaded, in addition to the two plane services, which amounts to about 250 extra. The city? is a-buzz anytime of the night, early morning or day during the summer. When I came up this morning about 900AM, i counted the people on the street, i counted up to the exciting figure of FOUR! You see the merchants do not open till around 1000AM during the Winter, they close at 600PM so if you want a quart of Ice Cream for a gathering in the evening, youd better get it before 600PM or youre out of luck. You cannot get anything like this, except food from restraunts--after 600PM.

Well I guess I have answered a lot of your questions and probably a lot more which may or may not be interesting, except our hours of operation; we operate on DAYTIME hours only, at the present time we are on from 600AM to 600PM, next month its from 530AM to 630PM so you see with three of us here, we do not hurt ourselves as far as a 40 hour week is concerned, the hours for the engineers averages about 34 per. week.

If you are interested and if you will remind me in a couple of weeks I would be most happy to send you a few snap shots for your records. Thank you for your interest and continued good luck in your "hunting".

Yours truly,


C. Harvey Haas
Engineering Supervisor.

CHH/vw