

The 2009 Bruce Kelley 1929 QSO Party

By Scott Freeburg, WA9WFA

The Bruce Kelly 1929 QSO Party is a yearly AWA sponsored event where AWA members build their own transmitters using the designs, techniques, and tubes that were available in 1929 and earlier, and then put those classic transmitters on the air and try to contact as many other 1929 stations as possible. Since they use early designs, the contest is a cacophony of whooping, chirping, buzzing, clicking, drifting, swishing, swaying, and worbling signals. This is what ham radio sounded like in 1929.

Even if you're not an amateur radio operator or don't participate in the QSO Party, you might enjoy listening for the event and hearing those signals for yourself. The 1929 QSO Party was started, and championed for many years, by Bruce Kelly W2ICE, an AWA founder.

Prior to Bruce's passing, he asked his close friend John Rollins, W1FPZ, to keep the 29 QSO Party going. John championed the QSO party for many years and changed the name to "The Bruce Kelly 1929 QSO Party." A few years back, John Rollins asked me to take over the 29 QSO Party and keep it going. Bruce Kelly and John Rollins are now Silent Keys, but I know both John and Bruce will be with us in spirit.

Dates and Times: First two weekends of December: Saturday Dec 5 through Sunday Dec 6 and Saturday Dec 12 through Sunday Dec 13. Starts at 2300Z (6:00 PM EST) Saturday night and finishes at 2300Z (6:00 PM EST) Sunday night, both weekends.

Objective: Contact as many 1929 stations as possible. Contact exchange consists of RST, Name, QTH (State such as ME or MN or NY), last two digits of the year of the transmitter's design or publication (such as 29 or 27 or 23), type of transmitter (such as TNT or TGTP or MOPA or COLPITTS), and power input (such as 6W or 9W).

Rules: Transmitters must be 1929, or earlier, types of self oscillators such as the Hartley, TNT, PP tuned grid tuned plate, MOPA, Colpitts, etc. No crystal oscillators. Tubes must have been available during or before 1929.

Individual stations can be worked only once on 80 meters and once on 40 meters over the course of the two weekends. Contacts only count for scoring if made with another 1929 or earlier station. You cannot count contacts with non '29 stations. Use any vintage or modern receiver that you wish.

Input Power: Transmitters are limited to a power INPUT of 10 watts or less. However, to help make East-West contacts, power may be increased to 20 watts INPUT between the hours of 0500Z (12 Midnight EST) and 1300Z (8 AM EST). Power input is calculated by multiplying PA plate voltage x total PA plate current. Example:

my plate voltage is 300 volts dc, and my plate current is 30 ma, so my total input power is $300 \times 0.030 = 9$ watts input.

Frequencies: The QSO Party operates in both the 80 meter and 40 meter cw bands. The QSO Party tends to operate around 3550 to 3580 kHz and 7040 to 7060 kHz, plus or minus depending on QRM, cw nets, and RTTY contests. If you hear 'em, work 'em!

Logs: E-mail your 1929 log to: Scott at wa9wfa@comcast.net or send it via the post office to: Scott Freeberg, WA9WFA, 327 Wildwood Avenue, White Bear Lake MN 55110. Logs **must** be in the 1929 QSO Party log format otherwise it will be difficult to score you. An official 1929 log sheet will be available for download from the AWA website. For an SASE I will mail you a paper log sheet.

The 29 Log format looks like this:

My TX

Year: _____ Type: _____

Date	Time	Band	Station Worked	RST Sent	RST Rcv'd	His TX	PWR	Name-QTH

Total 40m Contacts	
Total 80m Contacts	
Total 40m + 80m Contacts	

Scoring: Scoring is simple. Add up the number of valid 1929 QSOs on 40 meters and 80 meters. Example: if I make 15 QSOs on 80 meters, and 10 QSOs on 40 meters, my final score is 25. All submitted AWA logs will be scored and displayed in the results report. Please submit logs by January 15, 2010.

Good luck to all participants! Please send me a photo of your 1929 station. Thanks. 73, Scott WA9WFA

Are you tempted to get on the air 1929 style so you can participate in the Bruce Kelley QSO party? It's easier than you might think. Scott's article on building a simple 1929 Hartley is available on line. Once you have the easy-to-find parts, putting the rig together is a one-weekend project. Your receiver can be a modern one with no point penalty.

You'll find the article at www.antiquewireless.org. It is included in The AWA Journal On Line. Click on "Sample Our Quarterly Publication," and then "Past Article Archives," where it will be permanently stored.--ed