

# RRRC Repeater History

By Dale Marks, WB9ADB, Repeater Trustee

In 1977 members of the RRRC started talking about an amateur repeater for Dodge County. A retired 1951 Motorola repeater that had been traded for a new one was located and purchased for \$100. It was a tube type unit that could run 250 watts output - that is if we could find and afford the final tubes! Many members of the RRRC at that time were not active on 2 meters and thus were not interested in this project. A separate fund was started. The RRRC donated \$50 and several other donations of \$100 and \$50 provided for the purchase and conversion costs.

Permission from Dodge County Emergency Government was obtained to use an amateur antenna that had been installed at the 120 ft level in 1965 for AM RACES activities. This antenna was just used to receive. A separate transmit antenna was located at the 40 ft level. The 250 watt power amplifier was never used. We operated with about 40 watts output.

It was desirable to use the receive antenna for transmitting also. Plans were found for construction of a duplexer in the ARRL repeater handbook. Jack and John Klein, who were employees at Monarch Range Co. in Beaver Dam, were instrumental in getting many precision parts manufactured at that location. Everything fit together perfectly and when tuned up the specifications compared favorably to those of commercial made duplexers at the time. A solid state CW ID'er was designed and installed by Dick Feutz.

In December of 1982 Bob Schmid, who was working for Giddings & Lewis in Fond du Lac, was designing a repeater controller which used a programmable micro computer chip. Dale Marks and Dick Feutz visited him and contributed many suggestions which were found in the final design. A controller was purchased for



\$640. Bob Schmid has since moved to Colorado and has his own company which manufactures the S-Corn repeater controllers. The Controller had autopatch capabilities and several heated discussions were had at club meetings before a phone line was rented. Many members felt the repeater would never be the same if autopatch was added. There was also opposition to the phone line costs, which at the time were around \$30 monthly.

In November of 1993 the phone line was added and very strict rules were applied to its usage. Several members, who were opposed to the autopatch, refused to contribute to the repeater after this addition. Wisconsin Bell viewed radio clubs as a business since they were not a residence. In later years we convinced them that since FCC rules prohibited the use of amateur radio for business purposes, we should not be charged business rates. This lowered our phone bill considerably.

In 1988 a used, solid state Motorola Micor base station was donated to the club. It was converted to repeater operation by Dale Marks and Dick Feutz, and is mounted in the same equipment cabinet with the old 1951 repeater (as seen in the photo above, along with silent key Redd Beneditz, W9IZG and myself).

More recently, a ACC controller was purchased in October of 1992 at a cost of \$1300 to replace the S-Corn unit, which had been damaged by lightening. Some parts were no longer available to repair it. A commercially made duplexer was also purchased to replace the member constructed unit.

The repeater treasury has also been combined with the RRRC treasury. A Repeater Committee has been elected to oversee the operation of the RRRC Repeater.

In 1995 the 1963 2 meter antenna used by the repeater was replaced with an antenna purchased used from the Delafield repeater group. It has 5.25 db gain and is in excellent shape.

In 1996 the coax line was replaced with 7/8 inch line.

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