



MARCONIGRAM

WORLD WIDE WIRELESS

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Introducing the Navy Exhibit Committee

Dear CMMC Supporter,

The late Dick Lumpkin was the Chief in Charge of the teletype section at Chatham Navy Radio from 1943 to 1945 and a founding member of Chatham Marconi Maritime Center (CMMC). For some time, Dick paid an archivist to copy some 3,000 pages of declassified National Security Agency documents related to when the Navy took over the Chatham Wireless Radio in World War I & II.

Dick's daughter, Donna, has become the chief librarian of these documents. Donna has been joined in her efforts to tell the Navy story by the Navy exhibit committee composed of local and remote virtual members who meet frequently in person and by email to study the documents and do additional research.

Local committee members are Roz Coleman, Donna Lumpkin, Ed Moxon and Captain Bob Ryder. Virtual members are Henry Stamps, stationed in Chatham from December 1942 to May 1943 and now living in Forest, Virginia and Roger Denk whose background is in intelligence, intelligence research and history. Roger is a Chatham summer visitor whose book, **Stepping Stones** intelligence secrets in Chatham. Roger now lives in California. This Special issue of the Marconigram is a preview of the Navy Exhibit you will see when you visit the CMMC's Museum and Education center this summer.

Charles Bartlett President, CMMC

PERSONNEL AT CHATHAM NAVY RADIO



We invite you to visit our website to view the [Chatham Navy Roster, Oct. 15, 1942 - June 15, 1945](#). If you are related to some of these folks, please urge them to send us pictures and stories of their Navy Radio service. At the museum you will be able to look up Navy Radio personnel and see their pictures and stories when we have them. For example, you can read Navy Exhibit Committee member, Henry Stamp's story, **My WWII Career in the Navy**. Henry's story begins with his enlistment at seventeen and includes his first assignment in Chatham.

On Sunday December 7, 1941, I was enjoying a Coca-Cola and eating peanuts at the company store of a mining company in Monterey, TN. It was there that I heard the news that Pearl Harbor had been bombed by Japan. I was almost seventeen years of age at that time. I hardly knew where Pearl Harbor was but it was clear to me that we were at war.

Henry's story was first published in the NCVA (Navy Cryptologic Veterans Association) publication called the "CRYPTOLOG". Find it on the Navy Page of the CMMC website by clicking on this link: [Navy page: My WWII Career in the Navy.](#)

WAVES HIT OPERATIONS BUILDING - 1944;

When our exhibit designer Wondercabinet Interpretive Design asked us to find information about the WAVES at Chatham Navy Radio, committee members Donna Lumpkin and Roz Coleman made it their mission. Our remote committee members helped. Roger Denk explained that WAVES is an acronym for **Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service** established July 30, 1942, and directed us to a website called **World War II Era WAVES**. [Learn more about the WAVES](#)

Donna had been working on a personnel roster using data from monthly reports from Chatham's Station C from the archive her father had gathered. Roz put that information on a spreadsheet. By sorting the data, it was possible to come up with some preliminary information about the WAVES in Chatham.

Lieutenant Commander George J. Noack was officer-in-charge of the station when the WAVES were due to arrive. In his May 26, 1944 monthly report, he worried that "projected losses because of length of duty within continental limits of the United States" would cost him some of his best men. He made a strong case to the Assistant Director of Naval Communications to let Julian Lundy and Robert Agnew, key research & analysis men, Robert Schrom, a code school instructor, and John Searcy who repaired receivers stay until he could see if "some WAVES are found to be better qualified operators than are expected."



Waves lined up for inspection at Rose Acres Inn, 1944.

The WAVES began to arrive between June 13 and 27th. Ellen O'Brien assigned to fire and security came first. Mary Duncan and Evelyn Bostwick assigned to medical duties were next. Then came Virginia Tackach, Norma Ault, Frances Baker, Irma Ashenbrenner, Olive Ask, Doris Lucas, Sophia Downs, and Lois Wardner all assigned to radio. A group of about 24 WAVES assigned to Teletype and TINA (TINA is a historic term for operators doing Morse analysis.) came in July. At the end of August and September, 36 more WAVES assigned to Radio arrived. These approximately 70 WAVES had a lot to prove to the men.

During World War II, 136 WAVES and 449 Sailors were stationed in Chatham. WAVES did all kinds of jobs: Radio, Medical, fire & security, cook, teletype, TINA, office, commissary, ship's service, and officer at WAVES' Barracks. Most of the WAVES left on around June 1, 1945 because the war in the Atlantic had ended on May 8, 1945 with VE Day, Victory in Europe. Chatham WAVES were sent to stations I, Imperial Beach, CA and S on Bainbridge Island, WA. Records show they had risen in rank by attending courses suggesting that the WAVES had preformed better than expected on all kinds of jobs.

Chatham Navy Radio was decommissioned on June 15, 1945 and turned over to RCA. In a document dated June 14, 1944, John S. Cross OP-20-GX observed the following:

It is considered that the decision to take over Chatham for supplementary use was a wise one. Results from there have been excellent and Chatham repaid its costs to the Navy many times over. The lease cost \$15,000 per year and ran from July 1 to June 30. Japan surrendered on August 14, 1945 ending World War II.