

## Old Buzzard George!

Dan Brown W1DAN  
34 Felch Road  
Natick, MA 01760  
w1dan@arrl.net

George Mouridian W1GAC passed away Thursday February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 after a long illness from colon cancer. He was 91. George had spent 5 and half months in hospitals and rehabilitation before his passing. He was a staple in the Northeast AM scene for over 70 years!



*George Mouridian W1GAC in his shack in 2004.*

### **My Introduction to “Old Buzzard George”**

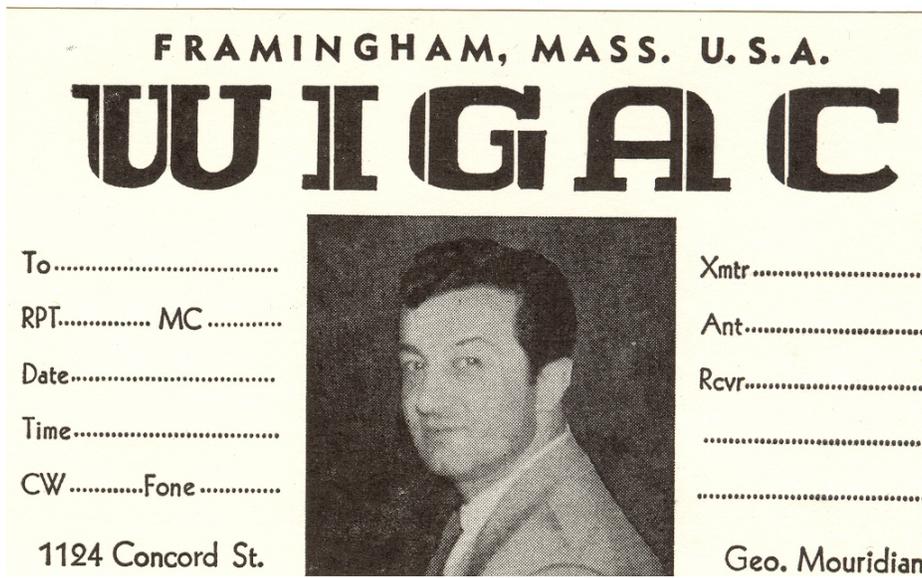
I met George in the early 1990's after I moved to the eastern Massachusetts area from New Orleans. After setting up my ham station, I heard W1GAC on 75 meters AM and soon worked him, but never got to know him well. One day about 10 years ago, Paul WA3VJB asked me to interview him on a tape recorder he had sent George a few years earlier. I started asking George on the air if I could do the interview for Paul, but he resisted. Eventually in the winter of 2004 George finally agreed to let me stop by and interview him. After that interview I started occasionally visiting him, shopping for him, doing errands, and listening to his life tales. On the air hams called him “Old Buzzard George” as an honor to his long winded transmissions and his advanced age. Being somewhat of a loner George’s ham radio operation was his main connection to society. He was an independent and interesting person.

George had a good memory and with his strong New England accent he often told a good story (some with “enhancements” to the truth). However George had what some would call a “crusty” side as could be nice one minute and complaining about something the next. What I liked about George was his design and construction of his compact radios. Each radio’s layout was well thought out and some of the most compact gear I have seen.

In preparing for this article, I studied many of George’s personal documents, photos and of course the equipment he made which were obtained while clearing his house out after his passing. George took or had professionally taken photos of many of the rigs in the 1950’s and 1960’s when they were finished, some of which appear here. Some of his radios have passed time well and others were cannibalized for new projects. I also learned more by talking to friends and relatives. However, even more is to be learned by chatting on the radio with his ham friends. Being a “young” AM'er (I am 45 years old), I appreciate the efforts George and other “Old Buzzard” homebrewers have gone through to craft a radio. George’s flavor of ham radio construction is being lost as time passes. While others knew him much longer and better than I did, I’d like to tell you what I know about “Old Buzzard George”.

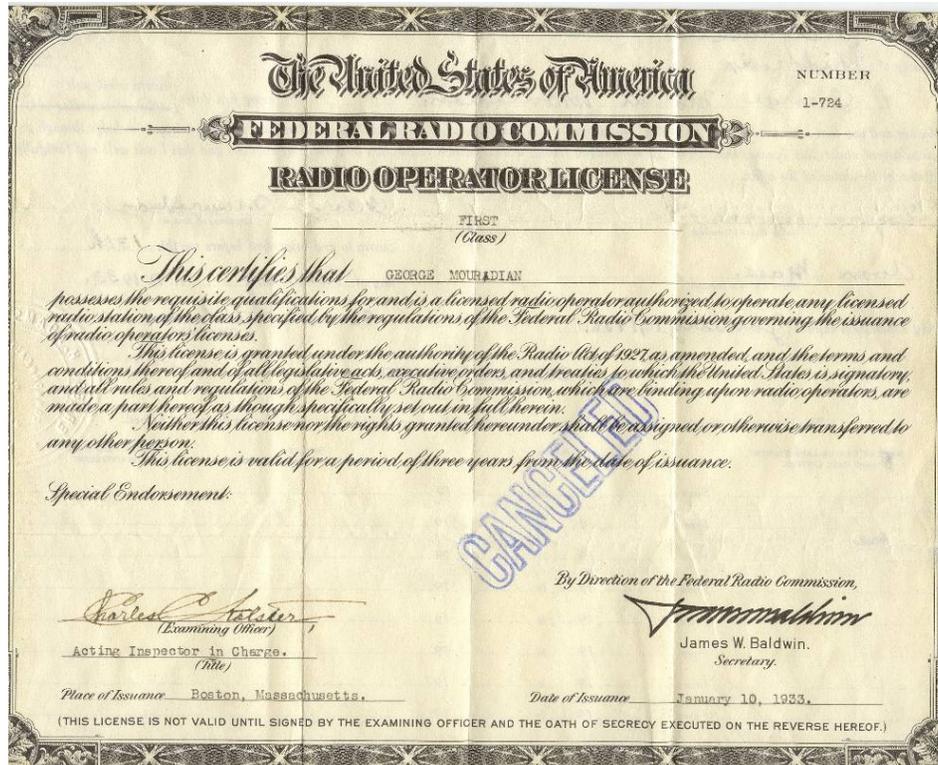
**Early Years**

George was born in Avon, Massachusetts in December of 1915 to Lucy and Avak Mouradian who emigrated from Turkey (for some reason there was a change in the spelling of the last name from Mouradian to Mouridian at an early date). Avak and Lucy probably came to the US to escape the Armenian Genocide by the Turkish government around that time. In Hopkinton Lucy was a landlord and Avak was a shoemaker, and later a poultry farmer. While George was taking summers off while a grammar school student in Brockton he worked as a railway station telegraph operator.



*W1GAC's QSL card.*

In 1932 when he was 11 years old George obtained his Class B license and became a ham with the call of W1GAC. In 1933 George obtained his First Class Federal Radio Commission license.



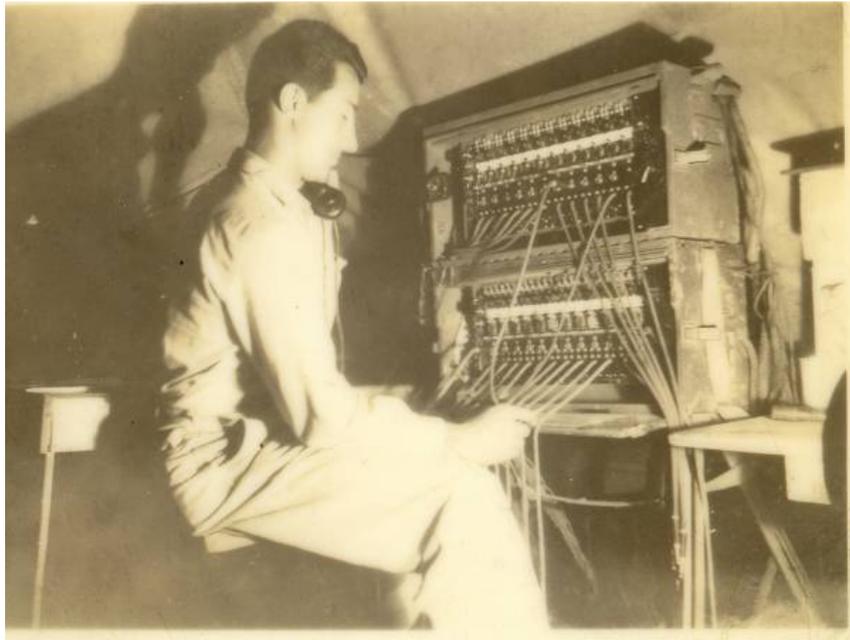
**George's 1933 FRC First Class License.**  
**Note the "I" written over the "A" in his last name of Mouradian.**

As a teenager George and his family moved to Bear Hill in Hopkinton, Massachusetts and there he built his first transmitter that used a single 112-A tube as a Hartley oscillator on a bread board. He also built a home made regenerative receiver. In 1933 he worked for a short stint at the WBZ-AM transmitter then located in Millis; and in 1934 he worked on his father's poultry farm in Hopkinton which he said paid more money than WBZ. George then studied law at Northeastern University, but did not graduate. In 1936 he earned his Associates Degree in electrical engineering from Eastern Radio Institute in Boston. As there was a dance studio near Eastern Radio Institute, George also started studying and fell in love with ballroom dancing.

### **War!**

In the early stages of World War 2 George was inducted into the army in August of 1941. He landed with the 5<sup>th</sup> Air force in Melbourne Australia as a radio operator, then went to Perth, then to Catherine and finally to Darwin as he told me to "clean up" after the Japanese attacks. He then landed at night in Port Moresby New Guinea where he helped set up and was chief operator for the first Army radio station that communicated with headquarters in Brisbane and

Sydney. While in Australia, George traveled the Australian coast repairing ship board and land based radios. He also supervised radio communication along the roads being built for the American advance. George was there for two and half years and used HF frequencies between 40 and 80 meters for communications. In his spare time, George occasionally filled up a jeep with extra sea rations and gave them to the starving local residents in Papua, New Guinea.



*A young George at a switchboard in Australia.*

George earned the status of Technical Sergeant and was at sea when Pearl Harbor was attacked. While in the jungle he got a conjunctivitis infection that badly shrunk his eyes (they eventually recovered). Because of his asthma, George became a Disabled American Veteran (DAV) in 1945 at the end of World War 2 at the age of 22.

### **Settling Down**

After the war, George met Mary Cavagni, the daughter of an Italian baker in Framingham while obtaining auto insurance at an insurance office in Framingham. They were soon married.



***Mary and George!***

In 1947 they bought a small Cape Cod style home at 1124 Concord Street in the Saxonville area of Framingham where he and Mary lived until their passing. They had no children.



***1124 Concord Street in Framingham. His 10M beam is on a telephone pole in the back yard. His Inverted-Vee for 75M is on a mast at the rear of his garage off the photo to the left.***

While George tinkered with his radio parts, Mary enjoyed studying the history of Framingham and Hopkinton as well as sewing. George also obtained a master's state technician's license and started business from his home.



***A sign found in George's Garage.***

## Working

During the 1950's and 1960's George mainly repaired television sets, but as I found different business cards at his house I guess he "re-invented" his businesses over the years. His work included radio repair, communications consulting, electronic engineering and electronic contracting.



*Some Business Cards over the Years.*

From 1967 to 1969 he worked at WKOX AM radio in Framingham as a transmitter engineer and worked at WSRO AM radio in 1981. It seems he never fell in love with broadcasting though. However his whole life George was an avid ham radio builder.

## Let's Build!

One of his proudest achievements occurred in the early 1950's when George designed and built a mobile transmitter called the Mighty Mo, which was featured in the December 1951 QST magazine.

» Small, but the performance of this little rig is out of proportion to its size. Using plug-in coils, it can be operated on the 75-, 20- or 10-meter bands. It will fit into almost any convenient spot in the car.

### The "Mighty Mo"

GEORGE MOURIDIAN, WIGAC

THE "Mighty Mo" is a midjet mobile transmitter for the 75-, 20- and 10-meter bands. The circuit is shown in Fig. 1. A 6C4 triode crystal oscillator drives a 2E26 as an amplifier on 75 and 20 meters, and as a doubler to 10 meters. Crystals in the 14-Mc. band are used for 20- and 10-meter output. The oscillator output circuit is tuned to the crystal frequency by  $C_2$  and  $L_1$ , and is capacitively coupled to the grid of the amplifier. A combination of grid-leak and cathode bias is used with the oscillator. The amplifier works with simple grid-leak bias. Screen voltage for the 2E26 is obtained through a voltage-dropping resistor,  $R_4$ . Loading can be adjusted by  $C_3$ , which tunes the link output circuit. The final amplifier normally runs about 12 watts input.

The modulator section consists of a 9003 speech amplifier and a 6K6 modulator. Microphone voltage is taken from the drop across a portion of the modulator cathode biasing resistor.  $R_5$  is the audio gain control. The unit includes a milliammeter reading final-amplifier plate current, and an antenna change-over relay.

Most of the constructional details may be obtained from the photographs and their captions. The components are assembled on a 3 x 4 x 6-inch aluminum chassis. Although the space is

limited, all of the components can be accommodated quite easily if a little thought is given to their placement.

The oscillator crystal, tube and coil are lined up along the left-hand edge of the chassis, separated from the amplifier tube and coil by a baffle shield. The modulator and speech-amplifier tubes and the link tuning condenser are lined up along the right-hand edge. The output coax connector is set in the top of the chassis at the center near the front edge.

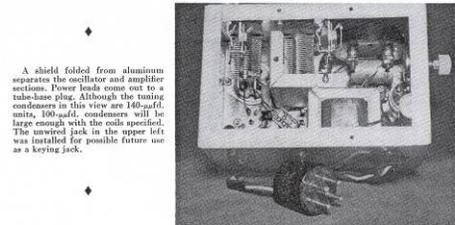
The two tank condensers are mounted underneath, separated by an L-shaped shield. The modulation transformer is fastened against the rear wall of the chassis. An old tube was pressed into service as a power connector.

#### Adjustment

The power supply used with the transmitter is a vibrator unit having a nominal rating of 300 volts and 100 ma. Under full load, the voltage runs between 250 and 270. The 2E26 is driven to about 4 ma. grid current, and the plate loading is adjusted to make the plate current at resonance 30 to 35 ma. Off resonance, the plate current runs about 60 ma., and without a load, it dips to about 6 ma. The total modulator current, plate and screen, is about 30 ma.



The speech tubes are along the right-hand edge of the chassis. Plug-in coils permit operation on three 'phone bands. The crystal-oscillator section is at the left. The variable condenser is  $C_2$ , for varying the loading. One corner should be bent over so that the condenser is short-circuited at full capacitance, this being the optimum condition at 4 Mc.



A shield folded from aluminum separates the oscillator and amplifier sections. Power leads come out to a tube-base plug. Although the tuning condensers in this view are 100- $\mu$ fd. units, 100- $\mu$ fd. condensers will be large enough with the coils specified. The unused jack in the upper left was installed for possible future use as a keying jack.

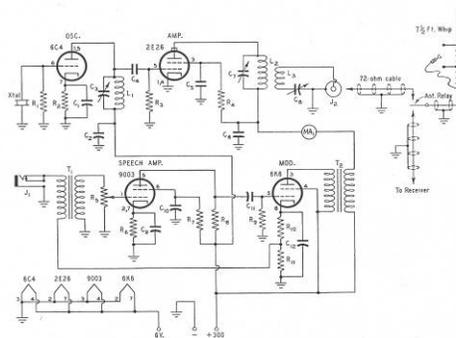


Fig. 1—Circuit diagram of the "Mighty Mo." The antenna circuit connections shown at the upper right, and part of the transmitter unit, are described separately in the text.  
 $C_1, C_2, C_3, C_4, C_5$ —0.01- $\mu$ fd. paper, 400 volts.  
 $C_6, C_7$ —140- $\mu$ fd. midjet variable.  
 $C_8$ —100- $\mu$ fd. mica.  
 $C_9, C_{10}$ —0.002- $\mu$ fd. mica.  
 $C_{11}$ —100- $\mu$ fd. oil-dielectric variable.  
 $C_{12}, C_{13}$ —20- $\mu$ fd. electrolytic, 25 volts.  
 $R_1$ —30,000 ohms,  $\frac{1}{2}$  watt.  
 $R_2, R_3, R_4$ —400 ohms,  $\frac{1}{2}$  watt.  
 $R_5$ —40,000 ohms,  $\frac{1}{2}$  watt.  
 $R_6$ —12,000 ohms,  $\frac{1}{2}$  watt.  
 $R_7$ —4.5-megohm volume control.  
 $R_8$ —1500 ohms,  $\frac{1}{2}$  watt.  
 $R_9, R_{10}$ —0.25 megohm,  $\frac{1}{2}$  watt.  
 $R_{11}$ —0.15 megohm,  $\frac{1}{2}$  watt.  
 $L_1, L_2$ —4 Mc.; 35 turns No. 28 ename. on 1-inch form.  
 $L_3$ —10 Mc.; 10 turns No. 22 d.c.c. on 1-inch form.  
 $L_4$ —20 Mc.; 6 turns No. 22 d.c.c. on 1-inch form. (Use only).  
 $L_5$ —4 Mc.; 4 turns No. 24 d.c.c. inside  $L_2$  form.  
 $L_6$ —14 Mc.; 2 turns No. 24 d.c.c. inside  $L_2$  form.  
 $L_7$ —20 Mc.; 3 turns No. 24 d.c.c. inside  $L_2$  form.  
 NOTE: The 14-Mc. oscillator coil,  $L_5$ , is used for both 14 and 20 Mc., 14-Mc. crystals being used in both cases.  
 $J_1$ —Closed-circuit jack.  
 $J_2$ —Coax connector, chassis type.  
 $MA_1$ —0-100 d.c. milliammeter.  
 $T_1$ —Midjet microphone transformer.  
 $T_2$ —Midjet output transformer, 1 to 1 ratio.

FOR RADIO AMATEURS

97

### The Mighty Mo article as seen in the Mobile Handbook.

This crystal controlled transmitter had a 6C4 oscillator and 2E26 final providing about 12 watts input on 75, 20 and 10 meters. The speech amp used a 9003 mic preamp and had a 6K6 modulator.

Later he updated the Mighty Mo, which he called the Mighty Mo Senior, now featuring a more powerful 6146 instead of a 2E26 final providing 40 watts input. The oscillator was a 6BF5 beam power pentode. The audio lineup was a 6AK5 speech amp driving a pair of 6BF5's. The construction article for the Mighty Mo Senior appeared in the August 1954 QST.



"Mighty Mo Senior" sits in a suspended shell, made of wood, under the dash of WIGAC's car. Its small size (the chassis is 3 by 4 by 6 inches) means that the transmitter can be accommodated in almost any odd space available.

## "Mighty Mo" Gets Mightier

*More Than Twice the Power in the Same Space*

BY GEORGE MOURIDIAN,\* WIGAC

**T**HE 75- and 20-meter bands are a little more crowded now than they were in the days when our original "Mighty Mo" poked its 20-watt mobile signal into the 1950- and 1951-type QEM and was written up in the December, 1951, issue of QST.<sup>1</sup>

With the initiation of the hairless youths (and the trim young YEs) holding General Class tickets into the select circle of mike addicts on 75 and 20, we have felt the need to pack a little more punch in the handy little three-hand gadget mounted under the dash of our Mercury.

Because many amateurs have felt that this is a practical rig for the average mobilist — easy to build and, of course, inexpensive — we've been asked frequently for the details. Here they are: Transforming the "Mighty Mo" into the "Mighty Mo Senior" on the same 3 X 4 X 6-inch

<sup>1</sup>124 Concord St., Framingham, Mass.  
<sup>2</sup>"Mighty Mo," p. 24, Dec., 1951, QST.

chassis size, we swapped the original triode 6C4 crystal oscillator for a 6BF5. The 6BF5 now drives a 6146 instead of the original 2E26 as an amplifier on 75 and 20 meters and as a doubler on just two bands.

In the speech department, we inserted a 6AK5 speech amplifier into the back of the chassis (in place of the original 9003) along with two 6BF5 modulators. The microphone current is taken from the two modulator cathodes.

In this bottom view the oscillator tank condenser is at the left and the amplifier condenser, enclosed in a folded shield, at the right. Ca for adjusting loading is at the upper right. The control on the left-hand chassis wall is for audio gain; the microphone jack is just below it and the mike transformer is to the right.

For the power supply, we mounted in the firewall a Carter dynamotor, having nominal ratings of 400 volts at 200 ma., in place of the single vibrator from which the original "Mighty Mo" used to draw its power. Now we have a power input of 40 watts in the same tiny chassis.

We mounted a Premax antenna on the rear deck of the car with the stub (cut in half) between the loading coil and the spring. Turns can be added on the bottom of the loading coil to make up the resonant frequency. A clip with a piece of ground strap over the loading coil is used to hop from the high end to the low end of the 75-meter band.

The final plate meter should read 170 ma., off resonance. The no-load plate current is around 5 or 10 ma. With the antenna loaded properly, the current should dip to 100 to 130 ma., depending on the plate-supply regulation, for 40 watts input.

The antenna installation is similar to the one used originally but now includes a piece of ground strap that can be slipped on for shifting to a lower frequency in the 75-meter band. The length of the strap is adjusted to provide the capacity loading required to give the desired frequency change.

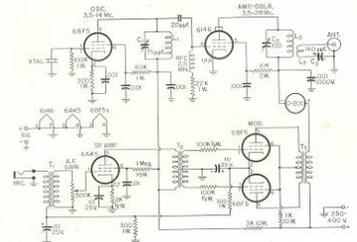
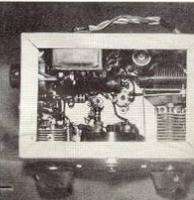


Fig. 1—Circuit diagram of "Mighty Mo Senior."  
Capacitances are in  $\mu$ f. except where specified otherwise.

C<sub>1</sub>—250 $\mu$ f. midjet variable.  
C<sub>2</sub>—100 $\mu$ f. midjet variable.  
C<sub>3</sub>—100 $\mu$ f. air-spacer type variable.  
L<sub>1</sub>—4 Mc.; 35 turns No. 22 enamel on 1-inch form.  
L<sub>2</sub>—11 and 25 Mc.; 10 L. No. 18 d.c.c. on push-pull.  
L<sub>3</sub>—4 Mc.; 35 turns No. 22 enamel on 1-inch form.  
L<sub>4</sub>—11 Mc.; 18 turns No. 18 d.c.c. on 1-inch form.  
L<sub>5</sub>—25 Mc.; 5 turns No. 18 d.c.c. on 1-inch form.  
L<sub>6</sub>—4 Mc.; 8 turns No. 18 d.c.c. inside L<sub>1</sub> and 25 Mc.; 5 turns No. 18 d.c.c. inside L<sub>4</sub>.  
T<sub>1</sub>—Microphone transformer.  
T<sub>2</sub>—Interstage audio, single-ended to push-pull.  
T<sub>3</sub>—Modulation transformer, approx. 10,000 ohms (plate-cathode) to 2000 ohms.  
T<sub>4</sub> and T<sub>5</sub> are surplus transformers from SCR-522.

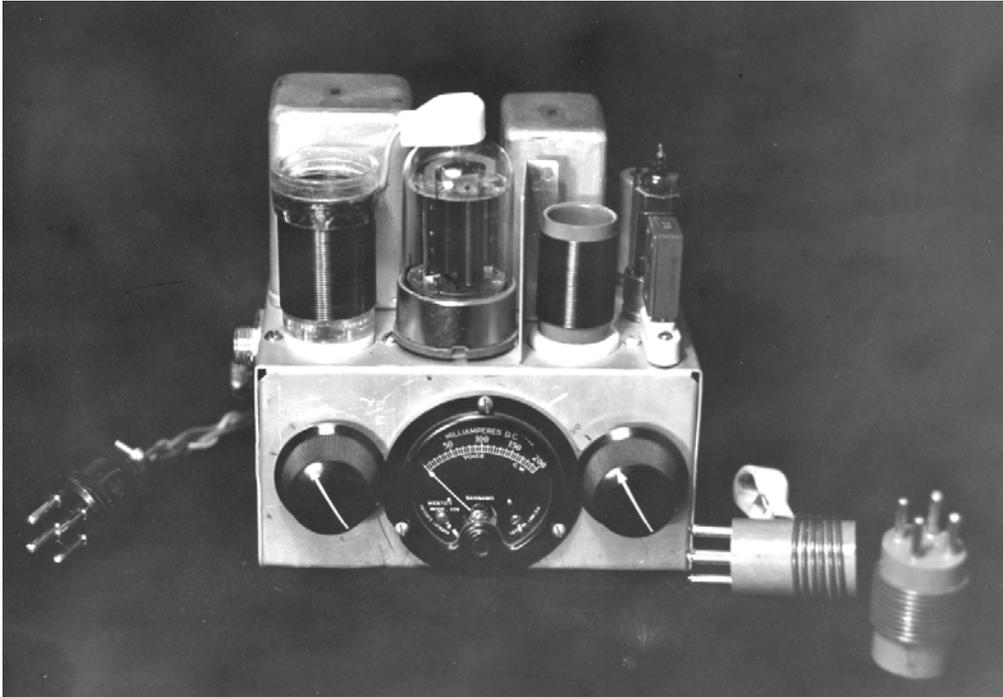
May 1954

**The Mighty Mo Senior Article in the May 1954 QST.**



**A mobile Gonset receiver and the Mighty Mo Senior as appeared in QST.**

Both the Mighty Mo and the Senior had an 8 year stint in the ARRL Mobile Manual. George received many letters from builders of the QST article asking for troubleshooting help. He did not answer many as he thought the Mighty Mo was simple and the builder should be able to get it going himself.



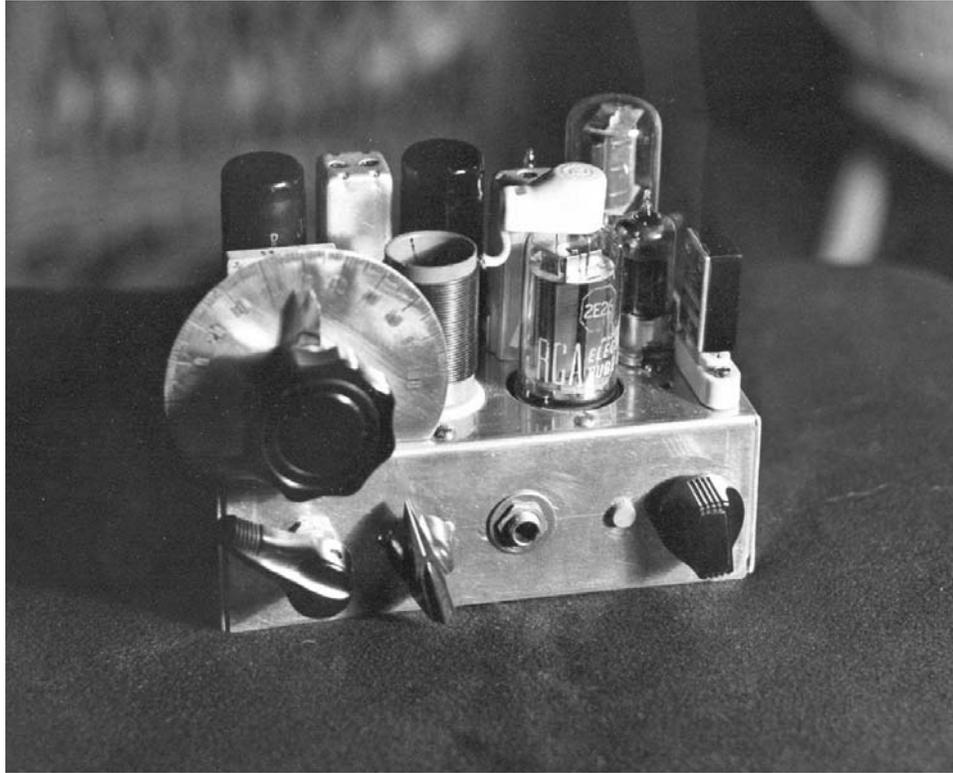
*Here is the 1954 Mighty Mo Senior which now uses a 6146 final.*



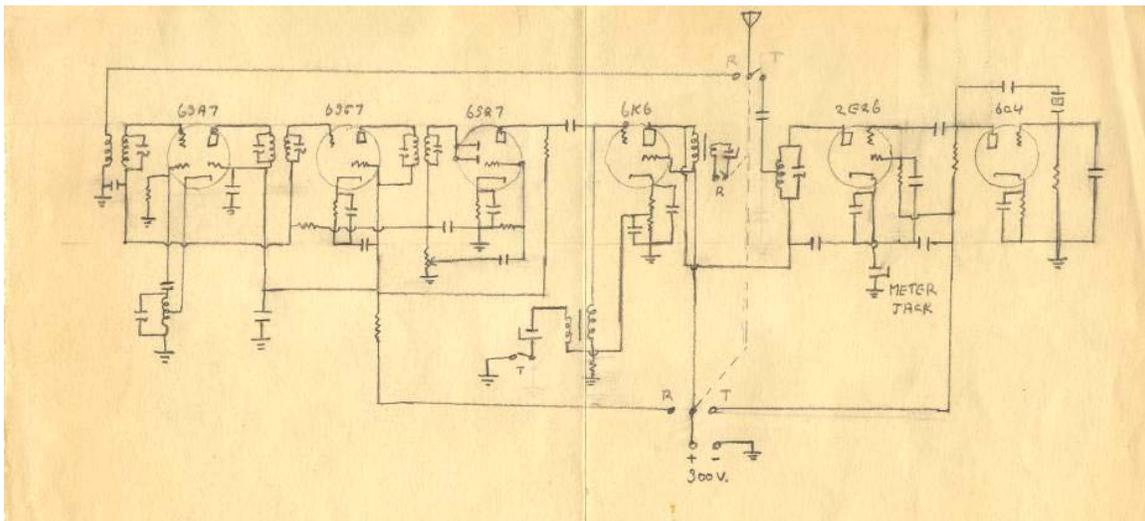
*The Mighty Mo's as found in George's workshop. Note some missing parts.*

### The Kitchen Rig

In 1957 he had built one of his smallest rigs yet, a rig for his kitchen which had a crystal oscillator feeding a 2E26 final running about 5 watts combined with a simple receiver all packaged within about a 8 inch cube.



*W1GAC's 2E26 Kitchen Rig after completion in 1957.*



*The 1957 Kitchen Rig Schematic.*



***W1GAC's Kitchen rig on his kitchen table in 2007.***



***George's basement workshop. Here is his 813 rig and 75A2. Note the Mighty Mo's on the top shelf. It seems he never threw away a bad part!***

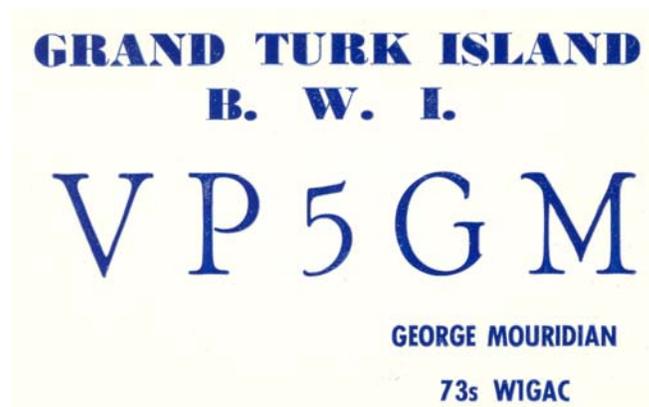
## **Grand Turk Island**

George's construction efforts did not stop there. He also built an 813 rig modulated by a pair of 811's (which he used with a Collins 75A2 receiver). The transmitter had an Italian made Geloso VFO and also could be crystal controlled. Unlike most other 813 rigs, this transmitter was small and you could easily lift the power supply and RF deck for transport.

George also built a small 10 and 15 meter transceiver that was used along with the 813 rig and 75A2 as he operated as VP5GM at the Auxiliary Air Force base on Grand Turk Island in 1959.



*VP5GM 10 and 15M rig in 1959.*



*George's VP5GM QSL Card.*

At Grand Turk Island George worked for RCA maintaining teletype communications equipment and helped track pre-Apollo test flights that left Cape Canaveral, Florida. Later at home he also built an 833 linear amp as well as constructed transistorized QRP rigs in the early 1960's. Some of his gear had "questionable" wiring and construction and none of it was fused, but it all worked!



No, this isn't a Field Day set-up. It is George Meridian, VP5-GM/W1GAC. Operating from Grand Turk Auxiliary Air Force Base, Grand Turk Island. George has been very active on 10, 15 and 20 meters. The rig, at right, consists of an Italian Gelsco VFO built into a 15" x 7" chassis. The VFO drives an 813 which is modulated by a pair of 811's. The rig is capable of more than the 150 watts it is being run at. In the center is the combined power supply for the rig and the B plus and antenna changeover switch. The receiver is obviously a 75A-2. Photo via Bill Morris, VP7BH, SKIP'S VP7 correspondent.

***VP5GM Photo and caption from 1959 Florida Skip newsletter.***



***George built this diode curve tracer on contract in his workshop in the 1960's.***

### **His Main Station**

George's main station consisted of a small homebrew superhet receiver that used a miniature 6CW4 Nuvistor front end, a 6CW4 mixer, an 8kc IF filter, a National model PW VFO dial for tuning and a 6V6 audio output stage.



*W1GAC's main station in 2004. Not shown are an antenna tuner and field strength meter/RF monitor off camera on the right.*

His transmitter used a separate 6V6 VFO or an internal crystal and had an 829B final that was modulated by a pair of 807W's feeding an ART-13 modulation transformer. The modulator stage had about 15db of negative feedback and used two 9V batteries in series for modulator bias. George's microphone was a D104 crystal mic. This transmitter was based on the circuitry of the B&W 5100, but was less than 1/2 the weight and was built as loose separate modules.

His 75 meter antenna was an inverted-vee fed by RG59 coax. George once told me the antenna has been up for 50 years! I tend to agree as the mast for the inverted-vee is pretty rusted now. He also used a 10 meter three element beam when the band was open. George used this station along with his kitchen rig until he became hospital bound in 2006. I feel his station was more effective than many stations of this power level as the rig had excellent communications quality audio.

In the 1960's George kept up to date studying and using new tubes such as the Compactrons as well as his early adoption of transistors. Construction of RF circuits became second nature for him and he believed that 50 to 100 watts is all you needed. George also enjoyed 10 meter AM and mobile operating and traveled yearly to visit a ham friend in Canada. George obtained a Canadian license every year and operated mobile there.

## Public Service and Faust Gonset

W1GAC won an ARRL Public Service Award for assisting in the August 1955 Northeast floods. George was a charter member of the Framingham Amateur Radio Association and was a town Civil Defense member in 1957.



**1956 ARRL Public Service award. He received a second award two years later.**

He was a fan of the Gonset converters, especially the Super 6 and had a working relationship with Faust Gonset. George helped to improve Gonset's design of the Sideband Engineers SB-33 transceiver, the first transceiver that used bi-directional amplifier stages (an invention of Mr. Gonset). George promoted the SB-33 in the Framingham area when it came out. George told me that Faust gave George an SB-33 serial number 3 which he said he used in his car for many years; however the SB-33 I found in his workshop is not serial number 3. Bob K1REC thinks George may have sold the original SB-33. Some of George's improvements in the SB-33 were incorporated in the release of the popular SB-34. After George passed away, we tried to find any letters of correspondence from Mr. Gonset, but they were probably thrown away.



**George's SB-33 rig. This is not serial number 3 though!**

### **The Old Buzzard's Net**

In 1946 the Old Buzzard's Net was started by W1BEJ in Scarborough, Maine, W1NPE in Vermont and other hams. This was an informal daily regional net on 3.945 Megacycles AM. It is the longest running AM net in existence and meets at 10 AM, the traditional coffee break time. In the 1950's George became a staple on the net and checked in from his home, camp or mobile every day. This net still meets every day. Listen for Charlie W1EIZ, Paul W1ECO, Bob N2NIR, Art W1UJJ and Bob K1REC among other regulars.

### **Getting Away**

Since the late 1930's George loved to go to sporting camps in northern New Hampshire where he fly-fished for trout in bogs and streams. Many times he would come home with two or three dozen trout. In 1960 George bought a little plot of land for two hundred and fifty dollars in Pittsburg, New Hampshire that overlooked Lake Francis and was near the First Connecticut Lake. This remote QTH was located about 5 hours north of Boston and near the Canadian border. For a few thousand dollars he built a knotty pine cabin, which he called his "camp".

He visited his camp many weeks and weekends to enjoy his fishing. George also loved to collect raspberries and blueberries in July and August. Oh, by the way, he had a modified Gonset Commander AM transmitter and Gonset G66-B receiver for use at the camp too. He did not like the plug-in coils in the Commander, so he installed band-switching in the door. At times he brought other rigs to his camp to use.



*W1GAC's New Hampshire Camp just completed in 1961.*



*George operating his camp rig in 1984. (photo by Georgina Duffy)*



***George showing me his modified Gonset Commander transmitter.***



***The Gonset G-66B Receiver George used at his camp. Yes it is modified!***

George was also an expert marksman, often target shooting better than the next guy. One day some friends of George's had been trying to shoot a cherry bomb for two hours. They asked George to give it a try. He hit the cherry bomb on the first shot!



*An expert marksman with style! This photo was taken on Lake Champlain.*

### **Going Mobile**

In 1963, W1GAC purchased a 1961 Lincoln Continental automobile. That was the first year they had “suicide” rear doors that opened backwards. This model is now considered a collectors item. George was also a good mechanic, often repairing his automobiles on his own. To take advantage of the then-hot sunspot cycle he built a mobile transceiver. He also had used the Mighty Mo Senior, a 75M homebrew rig (and antenna) as well as the SB-33 rig for the long rides to and from his Camp.



*The 1961 Lincoln Continental today. George used the Mighty Mo Senior, homebrew 75M and 10M rigs as well as the SB-33 in this car.*

He loved going to his camp, but about 12 years ago W1GAC's wife Mary passed away after a long illness from Alzheimer's disease. George sold his New Hampshire hide-away to his neighbor there for around one hundred thousand dollars to pay her medical bills that had accumulated. At around that time George also had to obtain a reverse mortgage on his house in Framingham.

### **Ballroom Dancing and Pet Peeves**

While in Australia during World War 2 George attended ballroom dances during his leisure time. He was able to attract the ladies with his handsome looks and smooth dance moves. He even had a couple of women who wanted him to settle down in Australia, but he eventually came back to the states. After the war in the 1950's through the 1980's George had a long time dance partner. He and Georgina Duffy danced so well that they were invited to dance clubs in the Boston area as an attraction for other attendees. George met Georgina at a diner her husband owned while having lunch from repairing two way radios in Milford, Mass. They were a pair for over 40 years. George often stated that today's dancers did not know how to dance and that they have "butchered the art". On the radio he had many other opinions. Some opinions that at first you wonder about such as his disdain for women drivers in large cars and SUV's. Others you might see the wisdom in as you get older, such as his opinions on politics. And he always talked about father time coming someday.

### **Father Time**

For many years George had trouble breathing from asthma. George often complained about his being winded and his arthritis many times slowed him down. George also had a bad leg that kept him from going down the stairs and working in his basement workshop in later years.

Sometimes he would not show up on the air and I knew he was just too tired. Many of the hams on the Old Buzzards Net would be actively looking out for him. I am impressed that he was still active and doing well into his late 80's. However, about two years ago he had a small auto accident and landed in the hospital. Later he was supposed to appear in court over this driving infraction, but was never in good enough health to attend. After a while George was sent home because of his improving health, but quickly landed back in the hospital, then to rehab as he got a little better, then back to the hospital. In the winter of 2006 he was in Norwood hospital for a few months when it was discovered that he had colon cancer. While in the hospital he told me he badly missed getting on the air. In February George was sent to a retirement home in Natick, but passed away that same night.

Before he died, George had told me that he was not religious (however his wife was) and he "wanted to be put in the ground before anybody knew about it". A couple of days after he passed he had a very small service where only a few people attended. George was buried next to his wife in their plot in Saxonville.

After he died I placed a Silent Key notice on W2INR's web site ([www.amfone.net](http://www.amfone.net)) to let the ham AM community know of his passing.

The web site notice immediately received many replies, which have been read over one thousand times! Here are some comments:

From K4KYV:

*"Sorry to hear this. George was a fixture on 75 meter AM. He was always interesting and colorful, and had an excellent memory. Unfortunately, I didn't have a chance to talk with him in the last few years. He will be missed. Farewell George Abraham Charlie.*

*k4kyv"*

From WA1KNX:

*"This is a shame; George is among the first AM QSOs I ever made after getting my ticket in 1976. There was a net on 3945 in the late morning and George, Norby, Irb, and a few others that I can't recall at the moment used to check in daily. I am honored to have known him. Very sad.*

*wa1knx"*

From N3DRB:

*"I for one found myself agreeing with George's Political views. He was a wise old man who could build an 813 rig.*

*N3DRB The Derb"*

From "The Slab Bacon":

*"Old Buzzard George" was truly a gentleman on the air! I used to really enjoy him chiming in always a kind gentleman! He always had a big signal with his "829B modulated by a pair of 807s" home brew rig.*

*"W One George Abraham Charlie from the town of Framingham in the state of Taxachusetts" You will be surely missed!*

*I haven't heard him on for a very long time, and was hoping that he was well. Old Buzzard George is another of the true icons of AM. God bless and Godspeed, George.*

*The Slab Bacon "*

From KD2XA:

*"I had heard of his passing on the air recently, but had no confirmation until now. While I am deeply saddened by his loss, he led a very full life, and was truly a Great American. George was one of my first AM contacts, a friend, and mentor of many years. My father also knew him well, and may have known him during the war, I'm not sure.*

*Does anybody have a record of his military service? I believe he served in the Pacific, and may have participated in many of the landings in the Phillipines that my father was involved in, including Leyte Bay in October 1944.*

*73 to you George wherever your are, hopefully cuttin' a mean rug with some babe way up there to the sound of a smokin' big band...you will be missed.  
DE KD2XA”*

From W1LC:

*“Just this week I learned that we lost a classic, old-time AM buzzard from New England, George Mouridian, W1GAC, reportedly at 91 years of age. That ol' boy saw some changes in his lifetime! Like many who've already posted here, I too was very saddened to learn of his passing. I was aware that his health had been in a bad decline over the last several months or longer. I had several QSOs with George on 3.945 Megacycles AM in the am, and the subject of my callsign's former (and original) holder would always come up. George knew Herman Sanborn (first licensed as 1LC in 1926, then W1LC in 1928 until Dec. 1997 when he died at 89) from way, way back--when Herman lived in Shrewsbury, MA on Beacon Street. I'd always chuckle to myself once ol' George would wind up in re-telling the story of how then young Herman was crossing the street in Shrewsbury one day as a "womin driva" struck him and knocked him butt-over-teakettle right there in the road. As George would also recall, "Herman's brotha, Orrin (who was also a ham), really gave him hell for getting hit after he saw that he was basically O.K." Now we can more fully appreciate that there may have existed those bad "wimmin drivas" through George's ealier life too, not just of recent! ;-)*

*George told me that Herman's original QSL card had a large, colorful rooster on it, and Herman would use the phonetics "Worcester's One Loud Caller"--W1LC. He was going to look for one for me in his attic where he said he stored many old QSLs, but he was never able to do so as his health declined. Funny though, W1LC's daughter, Nancy, let me look through the old Worcester homestead just before it was sold and I actually found that FB card of Herman's with the rooster on it! How cool is that? George also mentioned more than once that he was glad Herman's call sign was kept here in New England, especially by someone who knew him, instead of going out to CA or some such non-1-land area. I really appreciated him saying that. GAC didn't like President George W. Bush, or Republicans in general perhaps, so he and I never discussed politics in any detail on the air, given my conservative/Christian values and beliefs, and long GOP background. Still, I respected this talented and unique ol' timer and will surely miss his voice and FB stories of old.*

*Rest in peace, W1GAC, and hope to see you upstairs on that fine day! I thought the ham post above (KD2XA ?) did a fine job describing ol' George "cuttin' up a rug upstairs with some cute babe to the swinging sound of a big band". That was nice!! We're really going to miss this "greatest generation" on the air and elsewhere across our Republic.*

*Dana George Reed, W1LC,  
Spencer, Massachusetts”*

### **Picking up the pieces**

After his passing, his nephew Dennis and brother Jim called and asked me if I wanted his radio gear as well as other radio memorabilia. They were clearing the house out quickly for sale. So I invited one of George's long time friends Bob K1REC to pick up some gear and I "hi-tailed" it over there. Over a few days and car loads, we had picked up pretty much all his amateur radio equipment, log books, QSL cards, parts and accessories. I am glad we saved the gear. We now have all of the equipment mentioned here and more items, including a small Robert Taylor and George Raft VHS movie collection. I also brought home a collection of World War 2 newspaper clippings that Mary assembled in scrap books describing the travels of local boys she knew in the war. During the war, Mary's brother and other high school friends who were in the war sent her postcards, patches and letters from different venues of the war. If we had not picked up this stuff, it would have all been tossed in the dumpster! Much other good stuff was tossed. It is sad no one else in his family or ham community had any interest in the gear or memorabilia. My goal is to learn about and operate the gear, tell people about George and pass some of his stuff around to his friends.

I hope I have told an accurate story about one of the few remaining hams who started running AM at the beginning of the ham AM mode in the 1930's. George had an Advanced class ham license and had no interest in obtaining his Extra class ticket. Hundreds of hams knew George by his call sign or his voice and a number of new AM'ers talked to George as one of their earliest contacts.

My sincere thanks to Paul WA3VJB for the thoughtfulness to have George on tape and starting me on this journey as well as his continued support. Also thanks to Bob K1REC for picking up some of his gear and providing some history. Also thanks to Dennis and Jim (for the access to his gear and a some good stories), as well as his dance partner Georgina for many phone calls and good letters filled with stories and other information. I hope George would be proud of both his accomplishments as well as our preserving his hard earned efforts. Farewell "Old Buzzard George".

73,  
Dan, W1DAN  
08/14/2007

Here are a few web sites where you can read, see and hear more about W1GAC:

<http://amfone.net/Amforum/index.php?topic=10204.0> (the W1GAC SK thread)

<http://amfone.net/LateNotables/w1gac.htm> (photos and scans I took of George's stuff)

<http://www.amwindow.org/audio/mov/w1gac.mov> (Audio clip of W1GAC)

<http://pages.sbcglobal.net/w5hro/bin/hams/w1gac/w1gac.html> (W5HRO's page on W1GAC)

[http://www.hamelectronics.com/ham/k1deu/pages/ham/general/pages/am\\_pics/w1gac\\_t/index.htm](http://www.hamelectronics.com/ham/k1deu/pages/ham/general/pages/am_pics/w1gac_t/index.htm) (K1DEU's visit to W1GAC)

Much of this article appeared in the August 2007 Electric Radio magazine.

<http://www.ermag.com/>

Copyright 2007 by Dan Brown. This PDF document may be freely distributed in unmodified form, but cannot be used in any other manner without the express written permission by the author. Thanks for reading about George!