Guide to the Howard C. and Lyndon F. Seefred Papers 2003.44

Finding aid prepared by Catherine Mills
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Title: Howard C. and Lyndon F. Seefred Papers
Identifier/Call Number: 2003.44
Contributing Institution: History San Jose Research Library
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 6.0 Linear feet
Date (inclusive): 1914-1962
Abstract: Log books, licenses, photographs and other assorted material related to amateur radio from brothers Lyndon F. and Howard C. Seefred, who operated station 6EA in Los Angeles, California.
Language of Materials note: The materials are in English.
creator: Seefred, Howard C.
creator: Seefred, Lyndon F.
creator: Seefred, Ronald
Conditions Governing Access note
Materials are open to the public for research by appointment with the Curator of Library and Archives.
Biographical/Historical note
Brothers Howard C. (6EA) and Lyndon F. Seefred (6EB) were early amateur operators in Los Angeles, California, operating station W6EA on South Fremont Avenue. They were heavily involved in the amateur scene in Los Angeles and Pasadena, and recorded many firsts in Pacific radio communications.
Howard Seefred recounts the beginning of his interest in wireless in one of his early log books: “In the winter of 1908, I became interested in the study of wireless. One day, I got hold of a copy of the ‘Modern Electrics’ and after reading same, I thought I would construct a receiving set. After same was made, which consisted of a single slide tuner, a big telephone receiver, a fixed condenser, and a iron pyrites detector, I began hearing amateurs around in the city including two commercial stations. Later on, I bought a watch case receiver and made a double slide tuner. When this was done, I was able to ‘pick up’ signals as far as ‘TM’ (Point Loma). My antenna was thirty feet long and twenty-five feet high. The ground connection was made on a water pipe. In 1910, I bought a 3/4 inch ‘National’ automobile coil from Harry Carson (1219 W. 5th St., Los Angeles) for fifty cents, which was my very first spark coil.”
By 1910, Howard Seefred was monitoring stations as far away as Friday Harbor and Seattle, Washington. In 1916, he logged Funabashi, Japan, on a Galena crystal set. The QST for September 1916 includes a feature on the Seefred Brothers station 6EA, and reports that they were also elected District Managers for Pacific Coast Trunk Line routes B and F. In February of 1917, the Seefreds successfully transmitted a wireless coast-to-coast relay message from their Los Angeles station to New York, a feat that was recounted in the local newspaper. Their “Long Distance Record” in QST (May 1917) reports contact with WRD 1,289 miles west of San Francisco enroute to Hong Kong. In July 1920, they again made headlines in the Pacific Radio News, reporting that “For the first time in the history of amateur radio on the Pacific Coast an amateur station has been heard in Honolulu.” In February 1923, they were part of record-shattering amateur transmissions between North America and New Zealand. As managers of the A.R.R.L. Pacific Division, the Seefreds continued to provide regular reports of their transmissions through QST magazine. Station U-6EA, a 40-metre radio station operated by Howard Seefred, was featured in Radio magazine in April 1926, and in June 1929, the Los Angeles Times reported their contacts with Commander Byrd’s South Pole expedition.
Both Seefred brothers were lifelong employees of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, working as electric meter readers. Their exploits as amateur operators were occasionally featured in the corporate magazine, including one titled, “Short Wave Radio Amateurs Abound,” in January 1933. Interviewed for INTAKE in 1938, Lyndon Seefred acknowledged, “Like this work? Sure I do. I like being outdoors and being able to make friends of the consumers along my route. It was through one of them that I met my wife.” Both were married, with children, and members of the Old Old Timers Club.
Conditions Governing Use note
Property rights reside with History San Jose. For permissions to reproduce or to publish, please contact History San Jose Research Library.
Custodial History note
The papers were donated to the Foothill Electronics Museum (Los Altos Hills, California) in 1970 by Howard Seefred’s son, and were received in 2003 by History San Jose as part of the Perham Collection of Early Electronics.
Other Finding Aids note
Folder- and item-level catalog records for these papers, including many digital images, are searchable through PastPerfect Online at http://historysanjose.pastperfect-online.com/.

Preferred Citation note
Howard C. and Lyndon F. Seefred Papers 2003-44, History San Jose Research Library, San Jose, California 95112-2599.

Scope and Contents note
The Seefreds’ papers comprise station log books, diaries, and scrapbooks, as well as their radio licenses and Old Old Timers Club records. The books are in excellent condition, and provide richly detailed information on wireless activity in California, particularly Southern California, between 1900-1945. The log books list daily incoming and outgoing transmissions, as well as diary entries about travel and personal experiences. Scrapbooks contain a wealth of clippings about the Seefreds’ work as radio operators, their professional careers, and the history of amateur wireless operators in Southern California, particularly during the years 1905-1930.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Amateur radio stations
Radio operators--United States
Radio stations--California--Los Angeles

Box 1
Pacific Radio News periodical 2003-44-1 1920-1921 (partial)
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Linear feet
Scope and Contents note
Issues for October - December 1920, and January - May, July, September and October, 1921. Originally owned by the Seefred brothers, these copies include their annotations.

Box 2
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.5 Linear feet1 book, 14" x 9"
Scope and Contents note
Hard-bound book containing small amount of news clippings on the Seefred's transmission from Los Angeles to New York in February 1917, and handwritten log of all incoming and outgoing transmissions from April 15, 1919 through August 4, 1924. The log then continues December 1, 1916 from an old log through May 1, 1917. Also contains trip diaries: "My first vacation to San Francisco" August 1919; "Auto trip to Canada" August 10 - 24, 1929; "Trip to Canada" July 1930; "Trip to Mexico" July 1930. The travel diary from Seefred's trip to San Francisco is notable to those interested in the history of radio stations in the Bay Area. His entries describe visits with other amateur operators and station locations in the San Francisco, East Bay, and Santa Clara County areas. Pasted into the back of the log are the notice from the Navy Department ordering all antennas to be taken down, 13 April, 1917; and Seefred Bros. letterhead.
Box 2  
Radio Log and Scrapbook of Howard Seefred, W6EA 2003-44-3 1940-1946
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.5 Linear feet1 book, 14" x 9"
Scope and Contents note
Handwritten log of all incoming and outgoing transmissions from December 1, 1940 through February 17, 1946. Also contains small amount of news clippings on radar, and new radio bands for amateur operators, pasted onto inside cover. Seefred's log also includes diary entries about his daily life as well as travel with his family. The bombing of Pearl Harbor (December 7, 1941) is recorded, as is the subsequent shut-down of amateur radio stations by the F.C.C. Seefred noted that he heard a British Broadcasting Station (BBC) broadcast, as well as a Voice of America broadcast, on March 6, 1943. He planted his first "Victory garden" on March 14, 1943, and earned his 25-year service pin from the Department of Water and Power on March 22, 1943. On September 7, 1943, he records hearing a broadcast from American prisoners of war in the Philippines, through Tokyo Radio. On Friday, June 30, 1944, Seefred writes, "My brother Lyndon Frederic Seefred (W6EB) died of heart attack on Beverly Blvd. motor bus at Alvarado and Beverly at 4:15 P.M. Caused by too many 'shots' at Roos Loos clinic for hay fever." On June 9, 1945, Seefred and his wife watched General George Patton and Lieutenant General Jimmy Doolittle in a homecoming parade in front of the State Building and the City Hall. The diary ends in 1946. About 3/4 of the book is blank.

Box 3  
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.5 Linear feet1 book, 14" x 9"
Scope and Contents note
Log book listing incoming and outgoing transmissions. Includes a personal history of Seefred's introduction to radio in the winter of 1908, a list of "Old Calls in 1910," "Amateur Stations That I Have Worked Using Three Quarter Inch Spark Coil. 1910-1913," "Amateur Call List 1908 to 1913," "First SOS Heard," and "The Log of 6EA Station in 1913." On this page is a note, "Radio Inspector R. B. Woolverton tuned 6EA to 200 meters on Saturday, September 6, 1913". Includes a small number of news clippings on local Los Angeles wireless stations.

Box 3  
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.5 Linear feet1 book, 12" x 8"
Scope and Contents note
Autographed on the inside cover, including Seefred's License No. 6214-15. Begins Monday, July 5, 1915, listing all incoming and outgoing transmissions, as well as short diary entries. Includes details of conversations and notes about equipment used. Ends November 30, 1916. Business cards for Howard and Lyndon, pasted on the back inside cover, list Howard's address at 339 So. Fremont Avenue, Los Angeles, and Lyndon's as 343 So. Fremont Avenue. July 28, 1915: "Got permission from the Manager to put up a one wire aerial (125 feet long) from our room on the second floor way up to the roof and along the roof aways. (Insulated from Hotel). The portable receiving set consisted of as follows: Coil of #18 D.C.C. copper wire with variable taps for a loading inductance, a fiber cylinder with two windings over one another, one big wire (#18 D.C.C. copper wire for primary) and the other fine wire (#32 D.C.C. copper wire for secondary) for loose-coupler, silicon detector, fixed condenser, and two pairs of 2000 ohms each, Brandes receivers. Also ground wire."
Box 4

**Howard Seefred Scrapbook** 2003-44-6 1911-1942

- **Language of Material:** English
- **Physical Description:** 0.25 Linear feet
- **Scope and Contents note**
  Black “Ideal Scrapbook” containing business cards, blank telegraph forms from Marconi, United Wireless, and Federal Telegraph; and a large selection of local clippings about amateur wireless operators in the Los Angeles area, as well as clippings about the Seefreds themselves (including births of their children, and deaths of their mother and father). A two-page job history is pasted on pages 1 and 2. A notice is included, dated November 7, 1914, from the Los Angeles City Engineer, directing the Seefreds to change their house number from 339 to 343 Fremont.

Box 5

**Radio Log and Scrapbook of Lyndon Seefred, W6EB** 2003-44-7 1914-1945

- **Language of Material:** English
- **Physical Description:** 0.25 Linear feet 1 book, 14” x 9”
- **Scope and Contents note**
  Lyndon Seefred's leather-bound log book and scrapbook. The first half of the book is a handwritten log, beginning January 24, 1914, of all incoming and outgoing transmissions, ending October 1, 1915. The second half of the book is a scrapbook of amateur radio ephemera, news clippings, personal mementos. Includes a large selection of local clippings about amateur wireless operators in the Los Angeles area, as well as clippings about the Seefreds themselves and their extended family.

  Includes a small amount of Lyndon Seefred's school work and correspondence. Seefred has written, "I started in the wireless game in the winter of 1908-1909, but didn't start a log book until the winter of 1913-1914." Of note: a) Letter from Lyndon Seefred dated April 1906, describing the effects of the earthquake in Los Angeles and San Francisco b) Photograph of the Seefred's first aerial c) De Forest Radio Tel & Tel, Cunningham, National Radio Tube Co. ephemera d) Gray Line Motor Tours route map of San Francisco, 1926 e) 1908 postcard of Avalon, Catalina Island, with an arrow pointing to the Pacific Wireless Telegraph Co. station f) letterhead and photograph of the Santa Clara Wine Depot

Box 6

**Radio Log and Scrapbook of Lyndon Seefred, W6EB** 2003-44-8 1919-1930

- **Language of Material:** English
- **Physical Description:** 0.25 Linear feet 1 book, 14” x 9”
- **Scope and Contents note**
  Leather-bound radio log and scrapbook for station W6EB, 1919-1930. The majority of the book is a radio log beginning April 20, 1919 and ending May 1930, with handwritten notes of incoming and outgoing transmissions, as well as diary entries with details of vacations. The last eighth of the book contains clippings and ephemera related to radio, Antarctic exploration, radio stations and operators, De Forest Phonofilm, business cards. A handwritten entry, "Mast Construction at 6EA and 6EB by Seefred Bros." includes a photograph of their antenna tower. Includes a small amount of personal memorabilia, including birth announcements, and a photograph of the Seefreds' father, J. C. "Happy" Seefred, holding a 50th birthday cake. Seefred attended the Xth Olympiad in Los Angeles, 1932 (tickets included) and La Fiesta de Los Angeles "Pageant of Jewels and Electrical Parade" 1931.
Box 7  **Lyndon Seefred Scrapbook** 2003-44-9  **1918-1920**  
Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet1 book, 10" x 8"  
Scope and Contents note  
Includes news clippings, photos, assorted articles about amateur radio in the Los Angeles area, World War I and radio ban, women in service, information about the Seefreds' amateur station and where they were heard, multiple diagrams and blueprints of radio apparatus, cartoons about wireless.

Box 7  **"The Log of 6EA, Book No. 1"** 2003-44-10  **1914-1915**  
Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet1 book, 9" x 6"  
Scope and Contents note  
"The Log of 6EA, The Wireless Station. Howard C. Seefred, Los Angeles, Calif. Chief Operator H. C. Seefred, Call C. Book No. 1." The log begins Tuesday 27 October 1914, "Using galena" and includes daily entries through Thursday, 18 February 1915. The entries are usually in the early to late evenings and consist of lists of stations. However, several entries include details such as, "Listened in on his [Harry Roome] set and tikker and heard the usual Poulsen stations and boats."

Box 7  **"The Log of 6EA, Book No. 2"** 2003-44-11  **February-March 1915**  
Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet1 book, 9" x 6"  
Scope and Contents note  
"The Log of 6EA. The Wireless Station. Howard C. Seefred, Los Angeles, Calif. Chief Operator H. C. Seefred. Call C. Operator's Lic. No 257, Book No. 2." Log entries begin Friday, 19 February 1915, "Using galena," through Friday, 26 March 1915. The last several pages include a quote from the Radio Laws and Regulations, Page 59, Section 89, and a list of "Poulsen Stations we heard on Harry Roome's big loose coupler." On March 18, Seefred details a local car journey to visit several operators, and includes the detail that he "worked 6QK for awhile. He was talking over his radio phone for awhile. Got it kind of weak. It came in good at times."

Box 7  **Wireless Telegraph Stations of the World, Including Shore Stations, Merchant Vessels, Revenue Cutters, and Vessels of the United States Navy, Corrected to January 1, 1912.** Autographed by Howard Charles Seefred on the cover, "KM". 2003-44-12  **January 1, 1912**  
Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet  
Scope and Contents note  

Box 7  **Radio Visitor's Log, 6EA** 2003-44-13  **1924-1962**  
Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet  
Scope and Contents note  
Radio Visitor's Log of Howard Seefred's amateur station, call sign 6EA. Consists of handwritten entries by visitors: call sign, name, address, date, and sometimes a personal note. First entry is November 1, 1924, last entry is August 19, 1964.
Box 7, Folder 1  
**The Old Old Timers Club** 2003-44-14 1963-1964

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet  
Scope and Contents note  
Papers related to the Old Old Timers' Club, an organization of early amateur radio operators:  
1) 50 Year Award to Howard Seefred, W6EA, 19 September 1963. 2) Constitution of The Old Old Timers Club, 1 October 1963. 3) Notice of election to life membership in The Old Old Timers Club. 4) Letter from Bert Osborne, President, to Dean A. Lewis, K6KI, apologizing for putting his picture over Howard Seefred in the February 1964 "Spark-Gap-Times." 5) Blue Book Roster of Call Signs, Names and Addresses of members, compiled by Earl C. Williams W2EG, 1 January 1963. 6) "The Old Old Timers Club Roster 1964," by Wallace H. Leland, W2WL, including Call Signs, Names, Handles, Years and Last Known Address.

Box 7, Folder 2  
**Radio Licenses** 2003-44-15 1915-1940

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet  
Scope and Contents note  
Howard and Lyndon Seefred's amateur radio station licenses, amateur class, amateur first grade, and commercial second grade operator licenses. Also includes Federal Communications Commission Order No. 75 (18 June 1940) and membership certificates to The American Radio Relay League, Inc. for 1919 and 1921.

Box 7, Folder 3  
**Howard Seefred assorted correspondence and ephemera** 2003-44-16 1916-1964

Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet  
Scope and Contents note  
Includes American Radio Relay League publications warning of legislation threatening amateur radio (1918); ARRL membership card (1917); Letter from Franklin D. Roosevelt, on behalf of the Navy Department, to Senator James Phelan (California), dated 3 September 1919, "With reference to your letter of August 22, 1919, enclosing a letter regarding the restrictions of amateur radio operations [from Howard Seefred], I beg to inform you that, all restrictions on amateur wireless operations will be removed as soon as the President declares that a state of peace exists."

Also includes a Wireless Association of Pasadena, Station No. 12, Call Letter DWA, card circa 1911; blank 6EA QSL card; and a blueprint of the "Henry Radio Phone," Los Angeles California, November 1913, signed R. E. Henry, LAHS.

Box 7  
**Photographs** 2003-44-19 1910-1940

Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet 8 photographs  
Scope and Contents note  
Two portrait photographs of the Seefred brothers, circa 1916; photographs of their station equipment; one photograph of United Wireless station Pj in San Pedro (Los Angeles, California).