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Dear Bob:

Glad to hear from you and will be happy to tell you what I know of the old days. I am still on the air a little but a stroke in 1972 slowed me down a lot, nothing crippling, but slowing both physically and mental.

The meetings started at Mammoth Cave in June of 1946, 1st or 2nd Sunday, we shook it around some for a few years to avoid conflict with other Ham Fests, as we were so small. John Gerard had a store in Frankfort and came to Bowling Green nearly every Sunday to see his mother and father. Johnny and his wife, Perle both had T.B. and lived at his fathers before that. He was a highway engineer and was restless and Neal McGown told him about ham work and was his Elmer as well as mine in the early 30's. We usually met at Neal's and talked nearly daily after we were licensed on the air, later named the corny Crackers which I believe still exists. But back to the subject: 1946 was the year after W.W.II was so we called the meeting a Ham reunion and it kept that name for many years. The new hotel had not been built then so most of us came on Saturday afternoon, ate dinner and sat in big rocking chairs on the front porch of the old hotel and chewed the fat and eyeballed til the small hours, (And Consumed some beer and hard stuff) The guards and personel were all friendly and didn't object.

The founders were Johnny Gerard, W4TFK, Neal McGown, W9FZL-W4KBY, K4EI, which Neal got a while before he became a silent key in memory of his old Elmer, Joe Anderson who was dead. Call W9EI Alexander Carter W4CMP had come to Bowling Green from Knob Lick, Ky. to teach a code class in electronics at western and was always in the group as we had talked to him on the air all the time, so Johnny, Neal, Alex and myself were the infamous foursome that started it. I don't remember the first number of fellows that came, I would think 60 to 70 as we all wanted to know who had survived the war. Neal was the only one of the original group that was in service. Johnny with his TB history and heart trouble kept him out, Alex was teaching and I was one eyed and making flour. Sunday was our big day with parking behind where the present hotel is. There was and I guess still a picnic area back there with about a two foot curb where we parked and traded junk. You know we were all w9s until right after the war. I would go up on Saturday afternoon and had a good old colored boy that would bring a truck by Alex shop early Sunday and pick up cold drinks and beer in ice filled tanks. I think the charge to get in was \$1.50 per adult admittance, kids free, with tabs on the ticket good for soft drinks or beer and the ticket were used for the prize drawing about 3.30 on Sunday afternoon. Adolph Abraham in Lexington and another fellow in Lexington whom I don't remember rounded up most of the prizes and a wonderful time was had by all. Margarite, Neal's wife and Christine Carter usually sold tickets. I sure am glad the meeting is still going strong after these years. I have a grandson who is a ham and may get him to bring me up one of these days. 73, Scotty