



Early Radio Correspondence: QSL Cards and Social Media

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What are QSL cards?

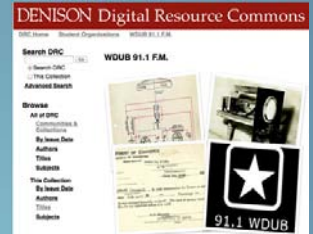
QSL cards are similar to postcards, and they are used to confirm contact between radio operators. Each QSL card typically includes the operator's call sign and a report of reception relating the quality of the signal, date, time of day, location, and equipment used.

What is the connection to Denison University?

These QSL cards were received by Richard H. Howe, former Denison University professor and founder of the Denison University Radio Club; Howe also laid the groundwork for the present day Denison University Radio Station, WDUB 91.1 FM, a.k.a. "the Doobie." The original QSL cards are housed in the Denison University Archives.

Why are QSL cards important?

QSL cards reveal the historical and cultural context of radio when it was seen as a revolutionary and burgeoning form of communication. QSL cards reveal details about the history of broadcasting like how radio was regulated or what type of equipment was available. QSL cards can also provide insight into the social conventions of the time. Additionally, QSL cards can be useful in examining political history. For example, QSL cards can assist us in examining a theme like communication freedoms in pre-Castro Cuba or serve as reminders of states that no longer exist like the Soviet Union.

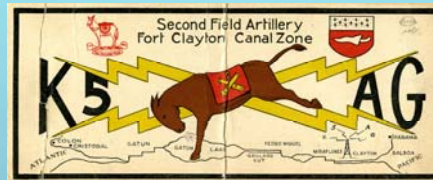
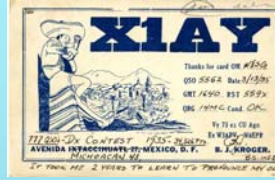
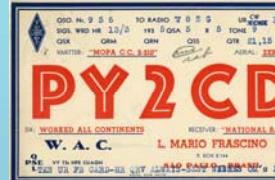
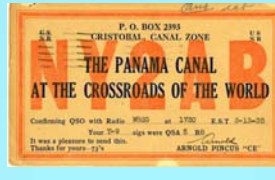
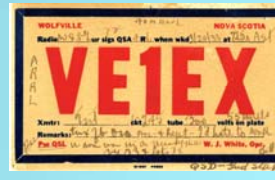


Migration Process to the DRC

Scanning of the QSL cards was done on an EPSON EXPRESSION 10000 XL. JPEGs were uploaded to the DRC, while TIFFs were kept for conservation purposes. All files were backed up on a portable hard drive. Then, descriptive, administrative, and structural metadata was created for the digital content. This project is still ongoing with many more QSL cards in the archives.

Social Media

Everplaces is a social media website and app that launched in 2011. It is often described as "Pinterest for the real world." It allows you to share, recommend, and explore places around the world. Uploading the QSL card collection to Everplaces shows how social media websites can serve as vehicles to increase the discoverability of archival collections. Additionally, Everplaces allows users to create their own micro-collections, add tags, and interact with archival material in new and exciting ways. With archival material on Everplaces, there also exists potential for curricular applications as well.



Acknowledgements

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