

73[®] Amateur Radio Today

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To Build:

20m Shortie

Antenna

Triband Vertical

Cantenna Load

Card-File

QRP Xcvr



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Review:

Hamtronics T301 Exciter

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*****3-DIGIT 231
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QRX

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via *World Radio*, via *The Independent Bohemian* (FL), KD4VBI, editor, [kd4vbi@juno.com].

Jerry Skywalker

Amateur radio operators have been erecting antennas since the earliest days of radio. So, perhaps it is apropos that it would be an amateur radio operator—putting up another set of antennas—who would help to write a new chapter in space communications.

The ham radio operator is Jerry Ross N5SCW. He was part of the all-ham crew that flew mission STS-37 in the early 1990s. And now, Jerry was one of two astronauts who ventured out on a spacewalk on Wednesday, December 9th, to attach the antennas to the first United States section of the international space station. The module is called *Unity*.

This was the second of three excursions outside the shuttle *Endeavour* for Ross and James Newman in less than a week. They completed installing two 100-pound antennas on *Unity* at about the three-and-one-half-hours point of a planned seven-hour spacewalk. They then successfully pried open a stuck antenna on the Russian-built *Zarya* space station module.

Even with the antenna repair, the spacewalk was not nearly as difficult as the one on Monday, December 7th. During that excursion, Ross and Newman hooked up forty electrical connections between *Zarya* and *Unity*. This essentially tied the two together as the first stages of the ISS.

But the antennas that Ross and Newman installed outside of the *Unity* module may be just as important. They are part of an elaborate communications system between *Unity* and NASA's Mission Control. Once activated, the system will provide a direct, virtually uninterrupted communications link between the two without having to rely on Russian ground stations for relay.

Rounding out the mission, Ross and Newman also took a third spacewalk and checked out the new space station. And typical of ham radio operation, they kicked those stuck antennas—freeing them for future work when Russian spacecraft come in to dock.

All of this totaled seven spacewalks for N5SCW during his 18-year career as an astronaut. That's the most spacewalks by any American.

Tnx and a flip of the helmet visor to *Newsline*, Bill Pasternak WA6ITF, editor.

War of the Worlds

Call it life imitating art last year. When a Portuguese radio station decided to repeat Orson Welles' famous *War of the Worlds* broadcast, the results were predictable. Graham Kemp VK4BB of *Q-News* reported on the Martians taking on Lisbon:

... On Friday, October 30th, radio station Antena 3, in Lisbon, celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Orson Welles radio drama *War of*

the Worlds by rebroadcasting it during the morning show.

The original Welles script was used and translated into Portuguese. The station issued a warning at 7 a.m., announcing their intention to broadcast the radio play. But when the play began an hour later at 8 a.m., panic erupted.

The station broadcast the landing of a UFO at Palmela, and the bulletins said that the Martians had set off in the direction of the capital (Lisbon) and that military forces sent to stop them had proved powerless.

The program's producer said the radio station was inundated with calls from hundreds of panicking people demanding to know what was going on.

The 7 a.m. warning proved worthless because not everyone is listening to the radio that early. Some callers said they had fled their workplaces. Others with health problems complained that their health had deteriorated on news of the Martian invasion.

One of the organizers of the broadcast said, "One hundred years after the invention of the radio, there are still people who will believe anything." ...

All this goes to prove that even sixty years later, some people in radio just never seem to learn.

Tnx and a "run for your life!" to *Q-News*, courtesy of *Newsline*, Bill Pasternak WA6ITF, editor. 

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