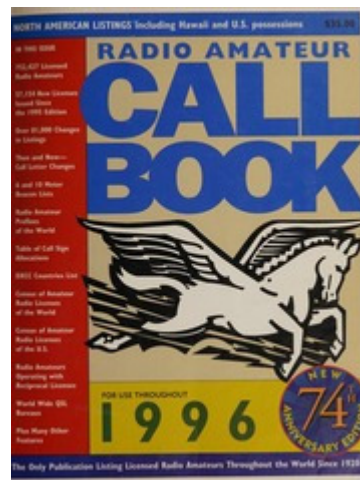
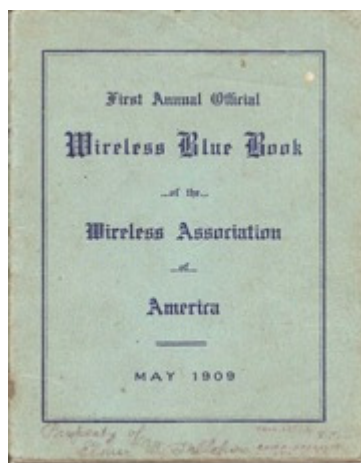


How do I?

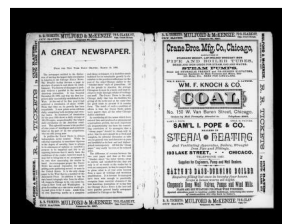
An occasional series

This week: Before QRZ there were Call Books!

Books of lists! Information at your fingertips!



People seem to like lists. Lists in book form are fairly old. As the railroad industry developed and began interchanging cars between companies, an official publication called *The Official Railway Equipment Register* (ORER) was developed so people knew who owned what and where to send repair invoices.



The telephone in 1876 quickly spurred the telephone directory. Wireless was no different. The Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America was formed in 1899. By 1909 The Wireless Association of America was publishing the first lists of radio call signs. Various publishers have printed them over the years.

By the 1930s the lists appear to have been published quarterly. Amateur operators could not only obtain names and addresses to aid in sending QSL cards but could also have in one

volume the ARRL DX entities lists, QSL managers for various countries, DX-peditions, and more.

Here is the table of contents from the Radio Amateur callbook, Winter 81-82 US edition.

radio amateur **callbook**
known the world over as the "CALLBOOK"

RADIO AMATEURS OF THE U.S.A.

VOLUME 60
 NUMBER 1

A, K, N, & W CALLS

WINTER 1981 - 82

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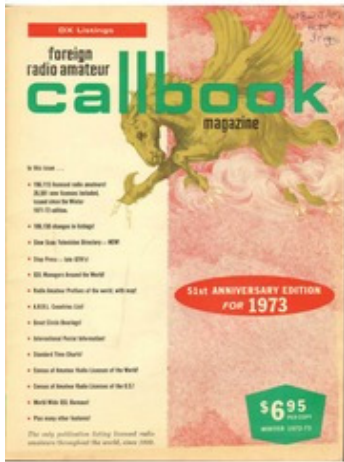
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DIRECTORY

FIRST CALL AREA	1	SEVENTH CALL AREA	722
Includes the States of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.		Includes the States of Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.	
SECOND CALL AREA	73	EIGHTH CALL AREA	817
Includes Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, and the States of New Jersey and New York.		Includes American Samoa and the States of Michigan, Ohio, and West Virginia.	
THIRD CALL AREA	189	NINTH CALL AREA	928
Includes the States of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia.		Includes the States of Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin.	
FOURTH CALL AREA	264	TENTH CALL AREA	1027
Includes the States of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North and South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. Also includes Puerto Rico.		Includes the States of Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.	
FIFTH CALL AREA	453		
Includes the States of Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.			
SIXTH CALL AREA	564		
Includes the states of California & Hawaii.			

The calls of U.S. amateurs in Antarctica, Guantanamo Bay, Japan, and the U.S. Possessions are listed in the directory section in the appropriate call area.

Yes, there were both US and foreign books available to US amateurs. The US call book shown here sold for \$18.95. In 1982 \$3 would buy a full meal at McDonalds. The minimum wage was \$3.35 an hour. So just to buy this book required nearly 6 hours of labor! The 2023 version is available only on CD-ROM and possibly a USB stick [Callbook - Home](http://www.callbook.biz).
www.callbook.biz.



Oddly enough, the Callbook website doesn't tell the current cost. I believe it is around \$50, so about 7 hours at minimum wage would purchase it. I am amazed it is still published, as today's amateurs have access to a variety of internet based sources such as QRZ.com and the free call book built into the N3FJP Amateur Contact Log application (US and Canadian amateurs only).

While the utility of the active ham having a current call book seems pretty obvious, why is there any value in old ones? The old books have some fun information and it can be pretty cool to run across a call sign you recognize and realize it is the same person from 40 years ago that you had a QSO with last week.

On a more serious note, as the baby boomers enter retirement, some are looking for a hobby. Some were exposed to amateur radio and trekked to the Federal Communications Commission office as a teenager to obtain that entry level, limited privilege amateur license. As people move, "reddup" etc, papers such as hard earned FCC licenses and Certificates of Successful Examination tend to vanish. The FCC record keeping is such that you cannot get a copy of a license that expired 30 or more years ago. One of the cool FCC rules is that IF you had certain classes of license, in some cases within particular date ranges, you can go to a test site, take the current Technician class exam, pass it, produce proof you were licensed in the past and walk out with a General or possibly an Extra Class license.

If you have lost your original documents, an old call book can be your friend. The VE team will need a copy of the front cover and preferably the table of contents or the page with the publication date and a readable copy of your entry, showing call sign and class. Fun times!

One thing that sort of puzzles me. The *Official Railway Equipment Register*, The *Official Railway Guide* and the *Open and Prepay Station* lists were classed as tariffs and filed with the ICC. The *Pocket List of Transportation Officials* and the *Blue Book* were simply directories and were not filed. Since the FCC recognizes callbook data as official, I wonder why those were never filed with the FCC, especially as the FCC was modeled on ICC?

Catch 'ya on the air!