1921: Maxim sends message from IAW to California and gets a reply in 6.5 minutes via relay.
1922: Second Transatlantic test is successful. American amateur signals were heard in Scotland.
1923: FCC US Department of Commerce admits it cannot control growing Amateur Radio ranks and asks the ARRL for help.
1924: Hams are discovering the magic of HF propagation and that frequencies with these shorter wavelengths do very interesting things. Intercontinental contacts flourish. J. H. S. Macarthur writes about his "skip theory" in QST.
1925: First two-way transatlantic contact.
1927: The Intercontinental Radio Telegraph Convention defines "hamradio" and establishes international amateur frequency allocations. Call sign prefixes are allotted by country (e.g., IAR becomes WIAA).
1928: ARRL holds its first contest, the 1928 International Relay Party.

1920-1925

1920-1925

1925-1930

1925: The International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) is formed in Paris.
1927: The Federal Radio Commission is formed.
1930-1938 Between 1930 and 1938 there were a great many instances in which radio amateurs saved lives and property. Both the Federal Radio Commission starts to require all license candidates to appear in person for testing.

1934 The 1934 Communications Act establishes the Federal Communications Commission, replacing FRC.

1933 ARRL holds its first national Field Day!

1935-1937 ARRL creates the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES*).

1935 Armstrong defines FM transmissions.

1936 There are about 42,000 hams in the USA.

1938 WW2 restrictions begin for amateurs in other countries.

1939 DXCC program begins and is destined to become ARRL’s most popular award.

1939 Limited use of Amateur Radio is permitted again.

1940 US amateurs prohibited from talking to other countries due to war.

1941 Critical shortage of radio tubes causes the military to call upon ARRL and request them from hams.

1942 ARRL station W1AW is built after W1MK was destroyed by 1938 floods.

1943 ARRL’s station W1MK, located at Branford in a state of Hartford was well known. It was destroyed in a flood.

1944 Of 91,000 hams in the USA, over 25,000 enlist while others work on radio, etc.

1945 Following Pearl Harbor, all Amateur Radio action is suspended.

1946 Hams get most of their privileges back plus 5 and 2.5 meters are swapped for the 2 and 6 meter bands.

1950 The Atlantic City Conference - addition of the 15m band.

1950-1959 Between 1950 and 1959 there were great many instances in which radio amateurs saved lives and property. Both the Federal Radio Commission starts to require all license candidates to appear in person for testing.
1968 The FCC’s PRB-1 policy helps amateurs get zoning permission for antennas.

1983 The SAREX program—Amateur contacts with the space shuttle.

1985 CPRL, the Canadian Relay League, becomes autonomous.

1988 The ARRL organization is formed, Amateur Radio on the International Space Station, with ARRL as a major partner.

1989 FCC creates the "Novice" license.

1991 FCC directs license testing to Volunteer Examiner Coordinators.

1992 Novice and Technician licensees get 10m SSB phone privileges.

1995 PSK-31 amateurs develop highly efficient PSK-31 HF digital mode.

1996 "Little LEO” satellite spectrum threat to VHF/UHF bands from commercial low earth satellites.

1998 The ARRL organization is formed, Amateur Radio on the International Space Station, with ARRL as a major partner.

2000 The FCC reduces Amateur Radio licenses to three classes—Technician, General, and Extra.

2003 Advances in computers are embraced by hams and lead to the development of hybrid systems such as Fibahub (2003) and IDDR, Software Defined Radio.

2006 Hurricane Katrina—"When all else failed, ham radio worked!"

2008 FCC eliminates the requirement for Morse code proficiency in testing but actual CW use increases on the bands.

2010 Broadband Threat—BPL Threat—Broadband over Power Lines promoted by FCC despite documented interference issues.

1980-2000

2000-2010
Where do we go from here?

We continue to promote and advance the art, science and enjoyment of Amateur Radio. By being an ARRL member you not only reflect the commitment and enthusiasm of American hams, but also provide leadership as the voice of Amateur Radio in the USA. ARRL members have been there:

- to defend our spectrum
- to help teach new hams
- to encourage your enjoyment with contests and activities
- to encourage community service and promote Amateur Radio in the media
- to advocate for hams in regulatory actions
- to share the joy of creating new things, learning new things and realizing, “Hey, I can do that!”

…. and we’re just getting started.