

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE HAM TOWERS ON 46 STREET?

Anyone living in the Forest Lawn area of Calgary knows of the two large amateur radio towers with numerous antennas attached that have been standing steady and proud for over forty years just south of the Forest Lawn High School. The towers were personally installed and many of the antennas were built from schematics by well-known home brewer and local ham radio operator Jens Jacobsen, VE6CDU, who was ably assisted by his very helpful, knowledgeable and understanding better half, Rosina Jacobsen, VE6CBU.

The sixty five foot un-guyed tower had the largest commercial antenna installed upon it which is known throughout the amateur radio service as a TH-6. Also attached was a 1.2 GHz slot antenna and a 1.2 GHz coffee can antenna. The smaller 50 foot guyed tower had three stacked linear antennas for ATV, (amateur fast scan television) as well as four loop yagis for 900 MHz communications. There was also a Ringo Ranger 2 meter vertical and an eleven element 2 meter beam. Most of these antennas had been personally built from schematics by Jens over the years. He has always been very good at custom building many things including his own home at this location starting in 1961. Jens is also well known for sharing his knowledge and ability within the amateur radio community.

Jens and Rosina have decided to take down their complete antenna farm and downsize this fun radio operation and lifestyle they have had for many years together. They asked for assistance since this was a huge undertaking that required a lot of expertise and qualified manpower. The President of the Calgary Communications Club was contacted and asked for his expert opinion and consultation regarding this project. As usual, Gerry Linton, VE6PL, lined up the very best group of experienced ham radio operators to assist.

His first choice for this large undertaking was tower builder extraordinaire Doug Westacott, VE6PR, who not only builds towers professionally, but has years of experience tearing them down, removing them, repairing them and making them work properly.

Then came Gerry MacDonald, VE6QLT, who just happens to be the chief electronics engineer for Global TV and local TV channel 2. He too has a lot of experience with towers, antennas and can climb a tower almost as well as VE6PR. In fact, it was Gerry who first saw the metal boom support separate from the bottom of the TH-6 antenna during its removal and warned those of us below. The piece crashed on to the roof and bounced toward the glassed in atrium in Jacobsen's back yard. However, it missed the glass and simply came down upon the table with the coffee machine, cups, sugar, etc. No one was injured and nothing was destroyed this time.

The rest of the specialized removal crew, who simply referred to themselves as the peons, were Cliff Linton, VE6PLC; Walt Davis, VE6DA; Lindsay Gavel, VE6GAV; Rich Roadhouse, VE6AX and Terry Finn, VE6APE. This major operation took place over the two days of September 10 & 11, 2011. Rosina and Jens were very appreciative of the time and effort expended by the volunteers.

We think that the Calgary Communications Club and these active members who participated in this project should be congratulated. Not only did they share their outstanding technical expertise, but these members provided this service on a voluntary basis to the amateur radio community in the Calgary area.

Submitted by Terry Finn. VA6TF.