

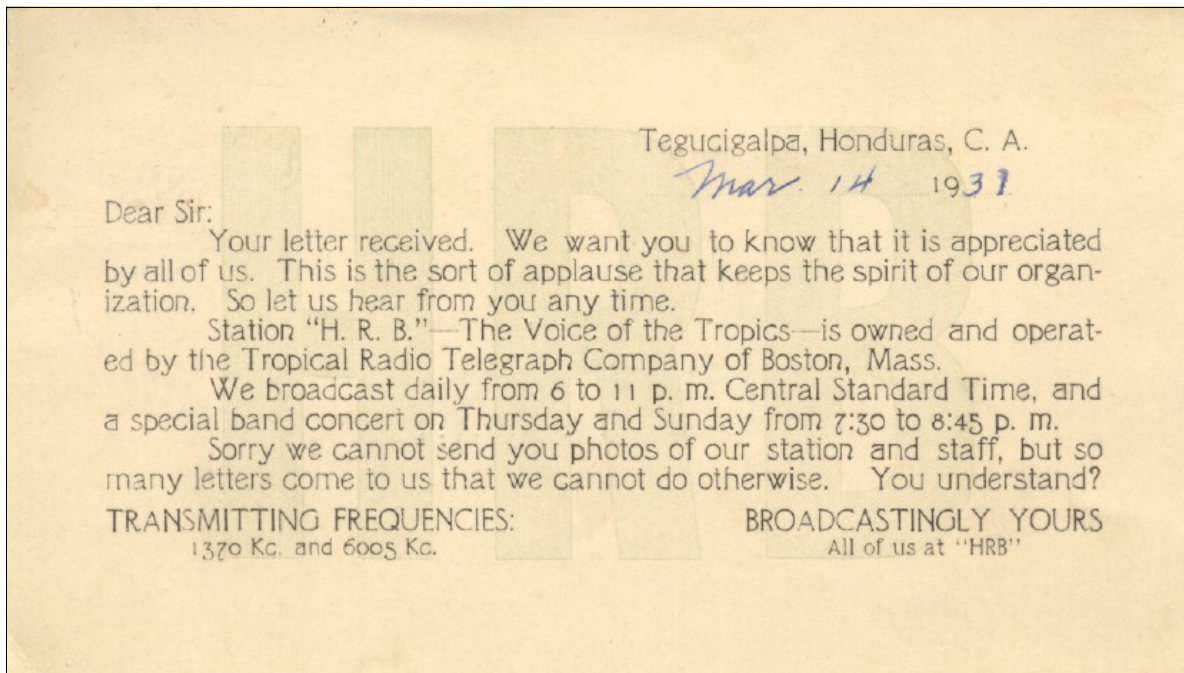
HRB - The Voice of the Tropics

by

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In *Radio Swan and Radio Americas—A DX Saga*, [posted recently](#) at www.ontheshortwaves.com, the role of United Fruit Company in the radio history of Swan Island was referenced, and mention was made of the company's broadcasting station in Honduras, HRB, The Voice of the Tropics. It was a short-lived project in the early days of shortwave broadcasting, coming on air circa January 1930 and shutting down late in November the following year. But the station left some tracks that are worth a look.

The usually-reported shortwave frequency was 6005 kHz., although the frequency apparently changed at times. They were also on 1370 in the broadcast band. Below is a QSL sent from Honduras to a listener in the Bronx in March 1931.



As indicated, the station was owned by the Tropical Radio Telegraph Co. of Boston, which was the headquarters of United Fruit. Tropical Radio Telegraph was formed by United Fruit to provide radio communications among company sites, but it developed into a full-fledged public communications network, providing messaging services between many locations for many years. The 1968 QSL from this "utility" station, on the next page, found its way into many QSL collections.

0411 (11-66)



TO: Bill Flynn

Thank you for your report of the
reception of our signals on HPH 10,670 kHz .

This station is part of the Tropical
Radio Telegraph Company's network of stations in the United
States, Central America and Panama.

We appreciate your interest.

Gregory J. Nixon
Gregory J. Nixon
Plant Engineer


Tropical Radio Telegraph Company, pioneer in radio communication between the United States, Central America and Panama, provides continuous telephone, telegraph and Telex service via radio and cable between these countries, as well as other parts of the world. Tropical provides rapid and accurate service to all the world from Central America and Panama. In order to file, using Tropical Radio facilities, insert the words Via Tropical immediately after the address and take the message to the local Telegraph Office.


In addition to telephone and telegraph service in these areas, we also offer lease service via protected circuits on radio. In areas where we are served by cable, we also provide data service.

If you are interested in this service, and wish any additional information, please address correspondence to headquarters, Tropical Radio Telegraph Company, Prudential Center, Boston, Massachusetts, 02199.

On the broadcast side, it was a happy day in 1930 when a DXer found this item from HRB in the mailbox. The original is 11" x 12-1/2". It wasn't designed as a QSL, but the note at the bottom from station manager Kenneth H. See surely qualifies it as one.


THE VOICE OF THE TROPICS
 TROPICAL RADIO BROADCASTING
STATION "HRB"
 TEGUCIGALPA HONDURAS, C. A.






RECEPTION ROOM

BROADCASTING BUILDING



Announcer
RAFAEL FERRARI



STUDIO

Mr. J. B. Sessions, Dear Sir:- Wish to thank you for your kind reports and trust that with the new transmitter you will have no difficulty in receiving our programs. Our new set should be on the air before April 15th.
 Very truly yours,
Kenneth H. See

3/15/30

It seems that HRB was quite well heard. Here are some entries from two good sources of DX news in those days, *Radio Design*, published by the Pilot Radio & Tube Corp., and the International Short Wave Club bulletin.

Radio Design

"Spring 1930"

SPECIAL PROGRAM IN ENGLISH

"This month's prize happening was when the new station at Tegucigalpa, Honduras, call letters HRB, put on two special English programs for club members. We sent them their first report on reception in the U. S. A., and in return they gave us the two programs on January 18 and 25. (Ed. Note: These programs have been reported by hundreds of 'Super-Wasp' owners.)

"This station is owned by the Tropical Radio Telegraph Company, and broadcasts on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9:15 to 12:00 p. m. E. S. T. The present wave is 49.95 meters and the power 25 watts. (Ed. Note: Is that all? This station comes through like the proverbial ton of bricks). This will soon be replaced by a new 350-watt crystal-controlled affair that will work on the present wave except in static seasons, when the wave will be 25 meters. This station is very easy to get.

PROGRAMS FROM BANANA LAND

"I want to congratulate you on your information on the short-wave broadcasting stations. That is what I call real information.

"Saturday evening, January 18, I had a station putting on test programs from 10:00 to 12:00 p. m. They came in just above WENR-W9XF. The Tropical Radio & Telegraph Company of Honduras, Central America. I could not get the name of the city as there was considerable static

and a code station on either side of them. They announced in both English and Spanish.

"Here are a couple of good ones for fans to tune in: the S.S. *Leviathan* and S.S. *Olympic*. I have had them both on the phone, the *Olympic* just a night's run out of Southampton, and the *Leviathan* practically all the way across. Now as to my set: it is two years old, with home made coils and all Pilot parts. Just put in one of the new No. 1611 condensers, and it helps a lot. Thanks again for all the good dope in RADIO DESIGN."—R. V. Perry, 600 W. 141st Street, New York, N. Y.

EDITOR NOTE: This city is Tegucigalpa. No wonder Mr. Perry couldn't get it straight! The Jan. 18th program was a special one, arranged with Arthur Green of Ohio.)

"Summer 1930"

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Station HRB, the Tropical Radio Telegraph Company, Honduras, Central America, is putting on a special Saturday-night program for the benefit of members of the short-wave club. This station broadcasts on 49 meters and stages the programs from 11 to 12 p. m., Eastern

Standard Time. During this hour the names of 15 or more members will be called, and each member reporting the time and date of his own name will receive a souvenir from the station.

We take pleasure in reproducing herewith a photograph of some of the staff artists at HRB. These people are quite up-to-date and are known to broadcast excellent programs.

Summer 1930 (cont'd.)



This trio entertains short-wave listeners regularly from HRB, the Tropical Radio Broadcasting Company's station in Honduras, Central America. LEFT TO RIGHT: Senorita Davilla, Fernando Ferrari, and Senorita Cordova.

"First Issue, 1931"

HONDURAS, CENTRAL AMERICA

HRB, Tegicigalpa, Honduras, is an old favorite. Uses 48.62 meters or 6170 kc., and is on the air Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 8.15 to 11.00 p.m. Central Standard Time. It expects soon to be on the air every night. Kenneth H. See is manager, and the Tropical Radio Telegraph Company, with headquarters in Boston, Mass., is the owner.

International Short Wave Club

June 1931

HRB. Station HRB is now broadcasting on 49.95 meters. During the past two months this station has been testing on several waves, but for some time has been on 49.95. Listeners may find them on some other wavelength soon. Thanks to Wm. Leeds, New York, Arthur Stapfer, Missouri; Ralph G. VanName, Connecticut; Carl Stengler, Pennsylvania; Henry Materna, Michigan; Robert Bandell, New York; Mathew Hetzell, Pennsylvania; W. H. Reeks, Illinois; Winkler C. Gosch, Connecticut, and H. W. Macomber, Rutland, Vermont.

Just three short months ago the best stations to be heard in the Eastern part of the United States were VRY, HRB, HKF, and LSK. At the present time stations VRY and LSX are closed down, but HRB and HKF are seldom heard. In reverse, G5SW and Zeesen were merely heard and today are quite well. This proves that up-to-date information is a necessary part in the success of tuning.

July 1931

HRB REPORTED TESTING ON NEW WAVELENGTH

Harold Christmas of Philadelphia, Pa., reports reception of station HRB, Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on approximately 31.6 meters. William Reeks of Chicago, also reports reception of a station on that wavelength, but states it is not HRB. This station is heard near 10 P. M. E.S.T. HRB is now broadcasting on 49.95 meters daily from 7 till 12 P. M. and Sundays 8:30 to 9:45 P. M. E.S.T.

SPECIAL ISWC RADIO PROGRAMS

There will be no International Short Wave Club programs broadcast from station W9XAA, Chicago, until September 12, due to the fact that this station is now undergoing some changes. On that date the station will again be on the air with these programs, and they hope to broadcast them on several wave lengths at one time.

Daylight savings time brings us the International S.W. Club programs one hour earlier from station VE9GW, Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada, on 49.22 meters. These programs take place each Saturday from 6:00 P. M. till 7:00 P. M., Eastern Standard Time.

The club programs from station HRB, Tegucigalpa, Honduras, which have now been on the air for fourteen months, are continuing to be very interesting and helpful. We suggest that our readers tune for this station each Saturday from 11:30 to 12:00 P. M., Eastern Standard Time on 49:95 meters.

Our Mexican representative, station X26A, at Nueva Laredo, on 39.4 meters broadcasts an International S. W. Club program each Wednesday from 11:00 P. M. to 12:00 P. M. midnight, E.S.T. One of our members tells of hearing these programs when on the sea, many miles from the station.

Down in Colombia, we have a station broadcasting programs dedicated to our members each Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 P. M. till 10:30 P. M. E.S.T. This station broadcasts on several wavelengths, the latest reports saying they are on approximately 47 meters.

After several months of inactivity, station VE9CL, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, returns with their International Short Wave Club programs. These programs will take place each Thursday evening from 6:30 P. M. till 7:00 P. M. E.S.T. on a wavelength of 48.70 meters. In addition to these programs station VE9CL broadcasts special test programs twice monthly, on the 15th and 30th of the month, beginning at 10:00 P. M. and lasting till 5:00 A. M. E.S.T. Listeners in Australia and Europe should remember this is the next day in their countries, or the 16th and 31st of the month. This schedule conforms with 0300 to 1000 G.M.T. Reports should be addressed to the Royal Alexandra Hotel, Winnipeg, Canada.

September 1931



A few of the Artists who may be heard over Station HRB, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.



September 1931
(cont'd.)

HRB ON 48.05 METERS

As this edition of the club magazine goes to press, station HRB at Tegucigalpa, Honduras, may be heard on 48.05 meters. They have moved several times in the past three months, and perhaps may move again before this information is in the hands of our members. Thanks to H. G. Peebles, Detroit, Michigan; Charles J. Schroeder, Philadelphia, Pa.; Victor Skrobot, Watervilet, N. Y., and Robert Stuart, Allentown, Pa.

October 1931

HRB ON 48.62 METERS

After wondering around quite a bit on the dials, station HRB at Tegucigalpa, Honduras, seems to have settled down on their old wavelength of 48.62 meters. We hope they stay on that wavelength as listeners in the United States like this one best. The station is now found just under VE9CL, Canada.

January 1932

HRB Closes Down

For some unknown reason, station HRB at Tegucigalpa went off the air some time in late November. We have a telegram which they sent to Mr. Egon Lenz of Managua, Nicaragua, which states that they are really off the air, but gives no reason for their closing down.

November 14, 2021