

Haiti FM Report

I arrived in Port-au-Prince on Friday, Feb 25, after the usual overnight in Miami. Revenel and a couple of others met me at the airport. The trip to Gonaives was uneventful although tiring. Much to my delight there was about 12 miles of new black top which cut quite a bit off the trip time with more under construction. Those 12 miles from St. Marc past Pontsondie used to be the dirtiest and roughest part of the trip.

On Saturday we went up to the mountain and all was as I had left it in October. The crane could come any time to do the job. Over the next few days while waiting for the crane, I looked through the transmitter and found lots of loose hardware, screws and nuts that had worked loose from the long trip from Omaha a couple of years before. We ran Conduit from the electrical panel to the transmitter and wired it in. I also went through the stereo generator and had to clean a whole lot of oxidized contacts that had developed while in storage. I did a complete alignment of it and it was in good though not perfect shape when I got through. I installed a new 4 channel sub carrier system on the microwave since the old one only had two which is one short for the TV sound and left and right for the FM stereo. It works great. We installed the new exciter in the transmitter.

The crane was supposed to be there on Tuesday but had to lay over in Pontsondie due to flat tires. It finally got there on Friday afternoon. As we rounded the last curve in the road from where one can first see the site, the crane operator balked. He didn't want to go up that road. I really think he wanted more money. After much negotiating and haggling, A price over three times the original quote was reached. Neither Revenel nor I wanted to get this far and not complete the job. Once the crane got up to the site it took all of 20 minutes from start to finish to put the antenna in place.

The following day we got some support pipes for the transmission line and welded the antenna and pipes in place. We ran the line into the building from the antenna and then to the transmitter. I turned on the transmitter and it came up with low power. I didn't want to start out at high incase there would be a problem. I ran it up to 50% power and looked at the antenna readings. They were about as perfect as an engineer could want. I ran the power up as far as I could and found that some of the calibration had changed in shipment as well. We still are doing a bit over 2000 watts. With that antenna that makes the ERP around 6000. It should have better coverage than the TV sound, which is only running about 400 watts with an ERP of 2500. With a few holes in the coverage, we could hear the TV sound all the way to the airport in PAP, 60 airline miles away.

We also got the TV operating again. It blew the modulator tube and one of the rectifiers in the process. There was a spare tube and I had parts to fix the rectifier with me. While there a small tube in the modulator went bad, though not catastrophically, and there are ample spares for it. Over all, things are running well and in good shape. I had a chance to do a bit more badly needed training too. Over all, a very successful trip.

Needs for the 2 stations:

\$830 for a new modulator tube so there is a spare, again

\$380 for a pair of driver tubes for the FM. No spares at the present.

\$650 for a spare output tube in the FM (the existing one looks to be in excellent shape)

Prayers for the radio and TV sites and the quarry.

While I was there, Revenel's sister who is a Voodoo priest called him and wanted to talk to him. She said he would have to get his congregation to do a lot of praying since there were a lot of (evil) spirits on those mountains who didn't want these things to succeed. She knows the power of prayer. We both think something is going on here in her thinking. I know that Revenel has been praying over the years that she would one day become a Christian.



COMPLETED ANTENNA WITH LINE SUPPORT STRUCTURE



Mountain top site: New FM antenna on left, TV on right. (The apparent tilt is an optical Illusion. Each is less than $\frac{1}{2}$ degree off vertical) The FM tower base is buried in 13 feet of rock and concrete and the TV in 20 feet.

I'm still tired from all of it but very satisfied. I departed PAP for home March 10.

I've been building a lighthouse. Not for the ships that pass within a few miles of the site but for those who truly walk in the darkness of Voodoo. Those who would never set foot in a church but who do watch TV (when they have power. There was power at the house only one night the whole two weeks I was there.) and listen to the radio.

Thanks to all who have supported this project. Both with prayers and materially. Most of what remains will be ongoing maintenance and upgrades as they become available. I'll try and keep you all posted.
Now a few more pix:



Raul (lead tech) with the FM transmitter and new exciter



Fixing lunch



Mountain top site from the main road



TV studio equipment



Hooking up the FM studio: Raul (l) and Claubert (r)