

Harlan Community Television
From the Beginning
by
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In 1951, my husband, Charles Hugh Hale, Sr., and I, along with our eight month old daughter, Susan, went to Ohio with our friends, Carl and Inez Swington. We visited Inez's parents and family. The Baider family were dairy farmers, and their neighbors were all farmers. The Baiders had just purchased a big television set. Cable had just come to the area. After the Chores were all finished, the neighbors came to the Baider home to watch this new thing called television. This is where my husband and I saw our first television.

After coming home my husband read and studied everything he could find on this new invention. He asked if I had any extra curtain rods. Curtain rods were made of brass back in those days. I went to the closet and gave him a bundle of curtain rods that I had stored. He took these curtain rods and cut them to precise lengths to make a Channel 13 Antennae. He put the homemade antennae on a pole and raised it in our front yard. We received Channel 13 from Ashville, North Carolina on this homemade antennae. I remember two programs very clearly, a devotional program called "Seed From The Sower" and a preacher riding horse back, going from place to place preaching the gospel. They called this preacher, "The Circuit Rider". How we enjoyed this television station.

About the same time, a group of Harlan business men were interested in seeing if a signal could be received in Harlan. They heard of Charles' interest and ask if he would make tests in these mountains to see if a signal was available in this area.

Charles organized camping trips with my younger brother, Jack Jacket and some of his scouting friends. He needed these young boys to help carry the testing equipment and food and utensils for their meals. Off they were went to the top of the mountains for camping trips. They took a German Shepherd dog named Smarty with them. Gene Douglas was one of these young boys and the three Asher brothers. Gene said that Charles would borrow a man's mule to help carry all the equipment. Gene said this was much easier, since they were now carrying food and water for the animals.

The best signal was found on the Kitts Mountain, and the work began. Charles said that Price Brumbach was the first customer connected to the cable. When the signal was found, Gene Douglas said Charles took the young scouts to the mountain top before the cable was installed and let them watch "The World Series".

Joe Detherie was the first president and D. B. Purcell was the first secretary - treasurer.

The first office was from Mr. Purcell's furniture store which was "Fuller's Furniture". Former presidents included Barney Smith, Raymond Cole, Jim Morgan and the present president is Jack Hale. V. B. Gray was Office Manager for several years.

The first vehicle for the work was an old International wood paneled station wagon.

About 1962 a group of Cable operators met in Lexington, Ky. to form what is now the Kentucky Cable Association. The Charter members were: Charles Hale, Fred Dupree, Dewight Brown, John Garrard, Everett Akers, Jim Ferguson, Bill Breeding, Clyde House, Jim Hayes, Tom Dullet, Doug Starks, Earl Chumley, Lonnie Gregory, Bill Betts, Bill Risher and Joe Dillepie.

In 1982 a Micro Wave station was placed on top of Pine Mountain in order to transport Broadcasting Stations from Lexington and Knoxville. Harlan Community Television has prided themselves in keeping up with all the latest technologies and the Cable Company in Harlan has the name of being one of the best Cable Systems.

Since 1982 numerous advances have been made to the system including installation of Fibre optic Cable, Internet Service and Telephone Service for its customers. They are currently in the process of adding

digital packages to its line-up.

The Staff now is as follows:

Jack Dale, President

Mark Lawrence Vice President

David Smith Secretary - Treasure

Other board members are Glenn Greene,

Jim Morgan, Mike Forrester, Homer Fortney

office manager is Jay Taylor

Secretaries - Deevia Lynch Ashley Hatfield

Line men are Andy Stewart, Clarence Epperson,
Brian Dale, Chris Hamlin and A. J. Hague

From very humble beginnings the Cable
Company has developed into a State of
the Art Company that Harlan County can
be proud of.