

Chief Charles Brown *K7CHP* 1902-..... Born of Native Indian parents Wm. H and Annie Brown in Ketchikan Alaska. Chief Brown was Unit In Charge at Guard Island Light, a desolate outpost in 1938. The Light had been in continuous service since 1903. I recently learned C.G. families were allowed to reside there until approximately 1960. The light was automated & closed in 1969.

It is ironic that Chief Brown was using CW at the time of his radio contact from Guard Island. He was using very low power and a decent Hallicrafters receiver. I might add that I was stationed very close to Guard Island for two years starting in December of 1958, in the Coast Guard.



I would pass Guard Island at the head of Tongass Narrows on the Cutter Citrus (NRPQ) - she was a ocean going buoy tender with a three compliment radio watch. We never had an opportunity to stop and off load provisions but that was done with smaller vessels out of the Coast Guard Base Ketchikan.

I bring this issue to focus because it was rare that isolated stations such as Guard Island had hams on station and especially interested in cw. About 6 miles across the

narrows at Point Higgins was the primary Coast Guard Radio Station NMJ. NMJ ran big power, had a MF - HF radio watch both CW and Phone. There was no VHF being used then.

Guard Island was a lonely place and only a few incidents in its nearly 65 year career. The place was manned by civilians for many years and there was one story where there was a murder, seems as if one of the wives was killed due to a extra marital problem. Also a boat turned up near the Island beach with two dead persons, it was felt that they were murdered and set afloat. In those days there was a big rum running operation and unfortunate souls would get bumped off for many reasons.

In December of 2007 we find more background and an earlier Light Station Duty Chief Brown assignment. We found a January 1934 QSL card of Charlies K7CHP at Cape St. Elias Alaska., Coast Guard Light Station installation. In the 1930 census Charles was age 28 and married to Anna age 23, residents of Ketchikan and Charles was an electrician at a local saw mill. It was noted they were Native Alaskan Indians.



I had chatted with some locals and learned Charles lived out his days in retirement in Ketchikan. Brownie had good taste in QSL cards! It would have been a joy to have worked him on the key.