

I Remember When...

By Capt. Ed Baker (ret.)

This story is one of many personal experiences by our retired troopers in bygone days. Captain Ed Baker was commissioned on June 21, 1937, with the 8th trooper cadet class.



We used to take care of family fights, lost children, suicides, drownings, holdups, murders, anything in our area. I even helped send one fellow up for cattle rustling. Another time I got a call that a boar had attacked a farmer and pinned him in his house. I had to go up and kill the boar.

Another time I got a call about a woman dragging a cow behind a team of horses. It was a case of a cow getting into someone's mash from a stall and couldn't walk. Did you ever see a drunken cow trying to stand up and moo?

After all of our cars were equipped with two-way transmitters, we could talk inter-car or to the station -- all on the same frequency. It really didn't work too well.

I was setting up north of Spokane one evening when a Patrol car out of Tacoma was working an accident. Tacoma couldn't hear him, but I could. I talked to Yakima, who talked to Tacoma, who talked with the patrol car who talked to me.

We used to talk to Detroit, Mich.; Mobile and Birmingham, Ala.; and Caracas, Venezuela. The Orange County Sheriff's Office in California used to sign me out of service.

Finally the FCC came along and told us to knock it off.

When I was working the roads out of Spokane, there were only four of us doing all the work out in the area. There was a judge up north of Spokane who was a farmer. If you caught a violator, you would take him to the judge.

Sometimes I had to go out to the barn to get him to come in and hold court. We wrote out the complaint, acted as the court's attorney, the arresting officer and defense attorney, and tell the judge if he was charging too much fine. We had one judge who would ask the defendant, "Do you have anything to say before I find you guilty?"