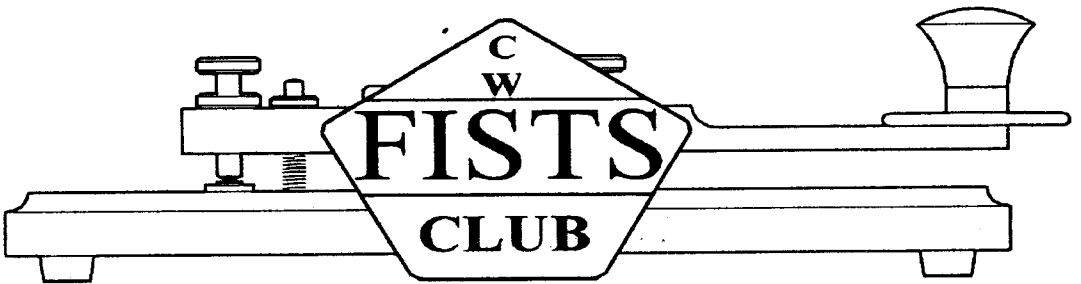


The Keynote

Newsletter of FISTS CW Club, the active chapter of the
International Morse Preservation Society

“Accuracy Transcends Speed”



- Further the use of CW
- Encourage newcomers to use CW
- Engender friendships among members

“When You’ve Worked A FISTS , You’ve Worked A Friend”

HOW DO I...

...ORDER CLUB SUPPLIES? Irene WO8E 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066 has gold logo stickers, 200 for \$5; Blue enamel/gold metal clasp-back logo pins \$3.50; Cloth logo patches 3" octagon shaped \$1.50 Rubber stamps with the FISTS logo for use with an ink pad (not included) for \$5. "I Support KNOW Code" buttons for .75 Cobalt blue w/gold FISTS logo coffee mugs are available for \$7.50. Pse make checks out to FISTS. These prices DO include first class postage.

...GET AN UP-TO-DATE MEMBERLIST? The list is printed in the KeyNote twice a year and is also on the Web page. A printed updated list may be obtained by sending \$1 (to defray costs- it's 10 pages long) to Ed N7CFA 2628 Lilac Street, Longview WA 98632.

...GET ON THE FISTS ON-LINE Email LIST? Send your Email address with your name/call/ FISTS number to blafont@tir.com

...GET/SEND FISTS QSL CARDS Via BURO? Stan K4UK, with the assistance of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club handles FISTS QSL bureau. Sort your outgoing FISTS cards by call area, then alphabetically and mail to K4UK, 1020 Long Island Dr, Moneta VA 24121. To receive cards you may have waiting at the bureau, send K4UK a few SASEs. QSLs will NOT be sent to you unless you have sent in an SASE or made arrangements with Stan. His Email is stanreas@rev.net

...RENEW MY KEYNOTE SUBSCRIPTION? Send a check/money order made out to FISTS for \$15/year to Nancy WZ8C POBox 47 Hadley MI 4844 ***What's the Family Plan?*** All CW folks at the same QTH can belong to FISTS for one subscription fee of \$15. You will each have your own FISTS number, but only one Keynote will be mailed per address.

...SPONSOR A DX FISTS? DX FISTS have a separate block of numbers; their Keynote is mailed from Geo G3ZQS. Send their info to Geo 119 Cemetery Rd, Darwen Lancs, BB3 2LZ; he'll send them a DX application .

...HAVE AN APPLICATION OR NEWSLETTER SAMPLE SENT TO FRIENDS? Send their address Joe K5HLR 29 Melrose Dr, Marrero LA, 70072. Pse enclose \$1 if sample Keynote is requested. An application is also available, in text format, for downloading on our Web page <http://www.FISTS.org>

...APPLY FOR THE CENTURY or WAS AWARD? Send a list of contacts (call, FISTS #, qth, date, band) and power used to Lee N9NVV 4530 N 15th Street Terre Haute IN 47805 Don't submit QSLs. There is no charge to FISTS members for the regular Century Award. If you are applying for the Golden Century, send your request to HQ in England (119 Cemetery Rd, Darwen Lancs England BB3 2LZ) including sufficient return postage.

...VOLUNTEER FOR or GET A CODE BUDDY? Ed WA3WSJ 775 Moonflower Reading PA 19606

...SHARE COMPUTER SOFTWARE? Joe WZ8U 5428 Bolander Grand Blanc MI 48439

...GET MY PHOTO ON THE PHOTOPAGES? Send a snapshot of yourself to Ken W8ROG 25206 Hayes Roseville MI 48066.

...GET A COPY OF FISTS PRESENTATION to give at my local club meeting? Contact Randy K8EZ, 2674 Gemini Dr, Lk Orion MI 48360 email - k8ez@concentric.net

...FIND THE WEB PAGE? <http://www.FISTS.org>

...SUGGEST IDEAS FOR THE WEB PAGE? Contact Bill KK4KF at bjmyers@arc.net

...ORDER FISTS CLUB QSL CARDS? send SASE to WX9X at 354 West St, Valparaiso IN 46383

...ORDER A FISTS CLUB ID BADGE? Our club badge is dark blue, with FISTS logo in gold and your name, FISTS number, callsign and "Int'l Morse Preservation Society" in white. They are \$6.95 post-paid from The Signman of Baton Rouge 879 Castle Kirk Dr, Baton Rouge LA 70808; email nv5a@aol.com

A non-engraved, laminated club badge is available from Bruce Eichmann W2BE, 204 E. Lake Blvd, Medford NJ 08055. Cost is \$4.75, NJ residents \$5.00 because of tax.

...IMPROVE MY CODE SPEED and MEET LOTS OF NEW FRIENDS? Join FISTS! Get involved in the nets and activities!

The Keynote is published approximately monthly by Nancy Kott WZ8C, P. O. Box 47, Hadley MI 48440-0047 Email: nancy@tir.com WZ8C reserves the right to edit submissions for space, clarity and topic suitability. Comments not attributed to another are written by WZ8C. **Articles from The Keynote may be reprinted if credit is given to the original author.**

NORTH KEYNOTE AMERICAN

Slow Traffic Net: Tuesday & Thursday 9pm EDT on 3.682

Century Award Net: Sunday 2000Z on 14.058MHz

Slow Ragchewing Group: W8BI 8pm EDT Wed on 3.720

Saturday QSO Groups: 14.058 at 2000Z and 7.058 at 2300Z

Please keep watch on the Novice Bands and frequencies ending in .x58 (.058, .158, .258 etc)

Accuracy Transcends Speed

Courtesy At All Times

Hello FISTS! This has been a very busy time with our Fall Sprint and 10th Anniversary Special Event happening in secession. Both events were a great success and I appreciate your suggestions and comments. Did you send in your log? I really hope you did - some FISTS who didn't make a lot of points were hesitant to send theirs in. They figured that since they didn't have a chance of winning, it would just make unnecessary paperwork for the Sprint Manager. That could not be more wrong! One of the ways we judge the success of the event is by the number of logs we receive, so please send yours in even if you just made a few contacts.

It seems like there would be a lot of support for a Sprint every season, so maybe we'll add a Summer Sprint. What do you think?

I heard a lot of FISTS on the air during our anniversary and have been getting a lot of requests for Commemorative QSL cards, so I declare that to be a success also. I hope you had fun with it!

During the Anniversary Event, my Kenwood 440 bit the dust. I bought myself a birthday present and splurged on a TenTec Omni VI. I got one of the used/demo rigs that they offer for sale periodically, so I didn't feel TOO guilty, since I didn't pay full price. Besides, I deserve it, right!? Now, I just have to find time to get on the air and use it!

Inside this month's Keynote, you'll see that G4ZPY (of G4ZPY paddle making fame) is interested in having a big HamBoree in Hawaii in July. He's sending this invitation to all the CW Ham publications, including Morsum Magnificat, and European magazines - not just FISTS. It would be an amazing gathering to say the least, but I don't know how feasible it would be. If you tell your non-ham spouse you want to go to Hawaii, I'm sure that would get a great response, but when you spend most of the vacation on a volcano rim doing DX, it might take some of the romance out of it! It sounds pretty romantic to me, but...maybe I'm looking at it from a different point of view than most YL's would, hi.

I kept the Key Note to 24 pages this month, so I'll shut up now and get on with it! Keep those cards and letters coming!

PHOTOPAGE WINNER

The October winner of our computer generated drawing is NI6P. You are automatically entered in the drawing just by sending in a photo for our photopages! The winner gets FISTS stickers and a FISTS patch. I just got a batch of the old photopages from the printer, so hopefully by the time you read this, I will have mailed them out to the new FISTS who need them so everyone will be up to date on the photopages. Page 13 is scheduled to be printed in the next issue.

A-1 Operators

Jim K9JXW wonders how many FISTS are ARRL A-1 Operators. This is a good program that seems to have fallen by the wayside and it would be nice to see it resurrected before the ARRL decides to make it go the way of the Novice Round-Up for lack of use.

Don't yell at Lee N9NVV, pse!

Bob, G0FRL, the OM who assigns the Century numbers, is in Australia for the whole month of October. Lee, N9NVV, our North American FISTS Award Manager, is unable to process any Century Award certificates until Bob gets home and catches up on his mail backlog. Lee asks that you be patient and assures me that your awards will be in the mail as soon as he gets the numbers from Bob.

Car Window/Bumper Stickers

Bob VE2OBK, #1481, makes a very nice car sticker with the FISTS key-logo (like on the cover of the Key Note) and your name, callsign and FISTS number. He didn't send any price information, but I imagine if you send him an SASE, he'd answer inquiries. His address is Robert Kennedy, Lettrage 2 Valleees, 300 Rang 7 Est, Thurso, Quebec Canada J0X 3B0.

NOVICE ROUND-UP

FISTS will be sponsoring the Novice Round-Up in 1998. It will be Valentines weekend, because we LOVE Novices, from Friday to Monday. Details to follow, but talk it up and get the word out there WILL be a Novice RoundUp next year.

Welcome to the New FISTS

B.A.	TX	W5RPJ	3863	Randy.	AL	KS4L	3914 (W7GB)
John	NJ	K2JF	3864	Jim	MN	W0HPD	3915 (K0DTQ)
Jerry	TN	KF4PTB	3865	Brian	ONT	VE3MJD	3916 (G3ZQS)
James	IN	WD9EYB	3866	John	MI	W8QA	3917
Don	NC	N4VZD	3867	Robert	KS	K0BXF	3918
W.D.	MN	K0EVZ	3868	Tony	AB	VE6CGX	3919 (WJ0C; VA3LK)
Andy	VA	KF4RKQ	3869	Paul	PA	N3YSI	3920 (N1PT)
Roland	VA	WX4X	3870	Bill	FL	W4STX	3921
Mary	TX	KC5IKG	3871	Dave	NY	KC2AFK	3922 (WA3WEE)
Carl	ME	WA1KAX	3872	Bill	KS	W0NYG	3923 (KA3LOC)
Robert	OH	AD8L	3873	Joel	OR	N7KOJ	3924
Tom	MI	NU8Q	3874	Perry	MS	KB5EOU	3925 (AA0XJ)
Dale	LA	AC5KI	3875	Steve	PA	N3YWQ	3926 (K4CMG)
Jay	CO	K1EQA	3876	Don	IA	no call given	3927
Michael	MI	N8MR	3877	John	CA	AC6SL	3928
Wayne	OH	WA8JCU	3878	Leland	VA	W4YE	3929 (K4UK)
Louis	MI	WD8OI	3879	Randall	IN	AA9TG	3930
Steve	CA	N6TT	3880	Gary	OK	KM5HG	3931 (KA1RVV)
Giff	NC	KC4SAM	3881 (W8IIS)	Tom	CA	K6LQI	3932
Peter	FL	KA4VVC	3882	Jack	KS	KU0KU	3933 (K7GT)
Bill	AR	K5WB	3883	Jan	CO	KB0WQT	3934 (N1FN;AB0CD)
Brian	NH	AA1QW	3884	John	ONT	VA3JJ	3935
Norman	NV	KC7SUI	3885	Don	NC	W4DON	3936 (K6DF)
Tim	AL	K4CWL	3886	Lloyd	OK	KE5VK	3937 (N4ZMP)
Wayne	LA	K5EOA	3887	Charles	FL	W4LIF	3938
Ron	MO	KB0TWH	3888	Richard	MO	W0EX	3939 (RRAP NGroup)
Bruce	NJ	W2BE	3889 (K2SB)	Marvin	CA	KA7MGM	3940
John	BC	VE7CBU	3890 (N5DCF)	Sylvia	CA	KA7TJU	3941
Helmuth	OH	AA8GQ	3891 (WWBeacon)	Bill	SC	W9UGC	3942 (N1WL)
Bill	CA	KC6DKE	3892 (KJ6LB)	Frank	MD	N3ZOC	3943 (N4ZMP)
James	TX	KC5HAC	3893 (KA1RVV)	John	CA	WA6RND	3944 (AC6TO)
Oscar	ONT	VE3PIO	3894 (AA0YY)	Chuck	OK	KM5KR	3945 (W6DDB)
Wesley	KS	KE0H	3895 (WB0AUQ)	James	CA	KF6DHB	3946 (KD6POC)
George	AZ	W6NVN	3896 (WWBeacon)	Colleen	CA	KF6DHA	3947 (KD6POC)
Arthur	NJ	N2MUT	3897 (AC6TO)	Otto	OH	AA8KK	3948 (N8FU)
Ed	MA	N1NTZ	3898 (N1WWI)	Tom	OH	W8KKI	3949 (WA4KQL)
Jim	MD	W3JIM	3899 (KX8LL)	Jon	CO	N0EHZ	3950
Debbie	NY	N2MQ	3900 (W3CG)	Gary	WA	WA7NTF	3951 (K5HLR)
Steve	FL	KB4MFO	3901 (W4IUI)	Roger	WV	KC8GOJ	3952
George	MA	KA1LQO	3902 (AA9KH)	Ray	HI	KH6JOI	3953 (AC6TO)
Mark	PA	K3MP	3903	Dave	TX	AB5WX	3954 (AC6TO)
Claude	IL	W9CL	3904 (AC6TO)	Jim	CA	KF6EAA	3955 (K5HLR)
Stew	IN	KB9IWF	3905 (W6DDB)	Larry	TX	WA5NSF	3956 (K5HLR)
John	TX	KC5OJT	3906 (N0IC)	Linda	MI	N8VEP	3957 (W9MYZ)
Craig	VA	KF4NYZ	3907	Mike	PA	KB3BOA	3958 (K3DC)
Mark	FL	KF4QFF	3908 (KE4PPI)				
Graham	WI	KB9CGF	3909				
Roger	CA	W6LAX	3910				
Jake	WA	N7WO	3911				
Kerry	CA	N6WU	3912 (AC6TO)				
Fred	NY	K2EU	3913				

From Mike N3HLM:

F Find a frequency to listen to

I Intently listen before you transmit

S Send your call to indicate you want to talk

T Talk like you would in person but use the key

S Sign off when complete

CALL CHANGES:

Harvey # 2912, was N6HL, is now **W8DX**
 Jim #1705 was KF8UQ is now **AA8YW**
 Ron #3237, was N7HOK is now **K7RON**
 John #3146, was KC8GCD, is now **KX8LL**
 Joe #2025, was N2USK is now **N3NY**
 Bob # 3856, was KO9R is now **N9MU**
 Jeff # 3612, was KK7IK is now **AB7WJ**
 Paul #2003 was KB7ZTV is now **KB7V**
 Jim #3012 was N0SHK is now **KB0GQD**
 Dave #0719 AE4OM is now **NG6X**
 Marty #3841 was KG2JB is now **WN2DX**

Thank you..

....to Harold **W8SYU** (formerly **KC8BVS**) for donating a supply of cassette tapes. We will use them for our "talking Keynote" which is sent to our blind FISTS members. For those who don't know, the Keynote is read on tape by Randy **K8EZ**. Irene **WO8E** did the reading for five years before deciding to take a break from it. Ken **W8ROG** duplicates the tapes and keeps track of the operation. Their efforts are appreciated by our FISTS who otherwise wouldn't be able to keep up with all our FISTS happenings!

QSL Cards

More and more QSL card printing companies are adding the FISTS logo to their collection of stock logos. The latest one is by Bill Snell, **W0BIL**, 33864 Upper Bear Creek, Evergreen, CO 80439 (303) 674-6225. Send him an SASE for info/prices.

Commemorative Cards Still Available

I still have a lot of Commemorative QSL cards available for your use. All you need to do is send postage and I'll get some out to you. They're very nice cards, suitable for all QSLing and good publicity for FISTS!

CW Nets

Congrats to Ted **N1CUR** for taking his first Net Control Station (NCS) 'job' with the Central Maine Code Net. This net meets each Thursday nite at 8PM on 3685.

Ed **AD4FJ** is NCS on Saturdays for the Water Way CW net on 7128 at 1100Z. The net runs daily and Mon/Wed/Fri are designated slow nets to encourage new or out of practice old hams to check in.

1200 per year!

I estimated we were growing by about 100 new FISTS per month - and I was right. Bill **AC5BG** tells me 1200 FISTS have joined since he joined a year ago!

CONGRATULATIONS To:

Bill **N1SGI** on his upgrade to Extra!
 Charlie **KG8ZK** on his upgrade to Extra!
 Jeff **AB7WJ**, on upgrading to Extra!
 Phil, **KJ7NS**, on the upgrade to Extra!
 Barnaby, **KQ6EX**, on his upgrade to Extra!
 Jim, **AA8YW**, on his upgrade to Extra!
 John, **KQ6ES**, for winning 1st place low power CW for the LAX section in the 1997 ARRL International DX Contest!

Corrections

Luther #3650, was incorrectly listed as **KB8ZMI**. Correct call is **KB8ZMU**
 Jim # 3827, was incorrectly listed as **WA3JPM** and should be **VA3JPM**.

FISTS QSL Bureau

Stan, **K4UK**, and the Franklin County ARC are now handling the FISTS QSL Bureau. The address on the inside cover of the Keynote is correct. There has been some confusion because when you look Stan up in the callbook or an FCC Database, the address shows as something other than the one I printed. All ways believe what you read in the Keynote, hi!

All the stamps and cash contributed to Brian **W8BL** for your incoming QSL cards have been forwarded to Stan. The next time you send in cards to the Bureau pse try and include a note telling Stan if you already sent in stamps and if you haven't sent in SASE's yet, pse do so. There may be a few glitches while we make the transition, so please be patient. And also, please SORT YOUR CARDS by call area and then alphabetically by suffix before sending them into the Bureau. This may not sound like a big deal if you're only sending a dozen or so cards, but multiply that times 2000 FISTS and you can see that it will save a lot of time if the cards already arrive in order.

If you are expecting to get a lot of cards, you can put additional postage on your SASE's as follows:

Postage	Ounces	Quantity of Cards
32 cents	1.0	7
55 cents	2.0	15
78 cents	3.0	23

(U.S. rates; Canadian costs more; pse check with your post office)

Many thanks to Brian **W8BL** for running the Bureau after John **N8FU** became a Silent Key, and thank you to Stan and the Franklin County ARC for taking on this important responsibility.

John K3WWP noticed that the Ontario and Atlantic QSO Parties don't include CW operation in their contests! After a lobbying effort, Bob Chandler VE3SRE, the organizer of the Ontario QSO Party, agreed with John's point of view. The Ontario QSO Party will have CW as well as phone next year. John did the same with the organizer of the Atlantic QSO Party, and has learned they will have CW next year. Now, we'll have to be sure to participate in those events to show them they made the right decision. If you'd like to Email Jim Irvine VE9WH, the OM in charge of the Atlantic QSO Party and let him know they made a good decision, the address is mjirvine@nbnet.nb.ca

Grand Ham-boree

by Gordon G4ZPY

How would you like to put a face to a Call Sign, a face to a name. Gordon G4ZPY and his wife Brenda, are arranging one big get-together of Hams and their partners from all over the World for an evening meal in Honolulu Hawaii. For the rest of the vacation, everyone does their own thing.

Why Hawaii? So far away, and expensive for many? Well, we have been there three times. It is our Island of Paradise on Earth. We were married there on July 26, three years ago, and are going there once more next year 1998. We would like to invite everyone to help us spend the evening of our anniversary, 26th July. There are many friends and acquaintances that we would like to meet, and many that would like to meet us. What nicer surroundings can anyone wish for on such a special occasion.

Believe me, the Island of Oahu is far far nicer than they illustrate it to be on the Television. In July the temperature is approximately 80 - 85 degrees F. with a lovely pleasant breeze most of the time. It rarely rains, and when it does it is only brief. The drinking water is more pure than England, and the Hawaiians are lovely people.

It may seem expensive, but no more than you would perhaps spend on three other holidays. One firm and fast rule though - no bad language. The Hawaiians will not tolerate it. (we do not like it either). Everyone must make their own holiday arrangements themselves, and pay for their evening meal also. For those who are interested, there are a lot of mountains that you can DX from. Hawaii is on the Pacific Rim. If you are interested, and would like more information, our address is 41 Mill Dam Lane, Burscough, Ormskirk L40 7TG England. We must know at the earliest time possible of your intentions. We have to notify our Hawaiian friends so that they can locate a venue large enough to seat us all.

by Arley WB5NKC

There is a certain satisfaction to be had in life by doing something for someone who cannot do anything for us in return. It builds up our self-esteem and makes us feel needed. When Pat and I started in the amateur bands our Elmer suggested we get into a CW net since I was having so much trouble with CW. We started looking, and found the OSN (Oklahoma State Net). We helped run the net for over 10 years, but with more problems than we had solutions, we went off the air for about 9 years.

When we restarted, we noticed there weren't any other Oklahoma stations that went to and from the rn5 CW net. So we started a 'school' CW net on 3692.5 khz at 6 pm. We ran the "school" until a little after the 6:30 pm mark, when the net is suppose to start. Then we start the OSN, which is the traffic part. The rep from the OSN then checks into the rn5 net which is on 3650 khz at 7:30 pm and 9:30 pm local time. We have a second session of the OSN at 10:00 pm, but we start looking for early 'stns' as soon as we clear the rn5 net. I do not like to refer to early stns as 'birds' (earlybirds!) as I think that ops should be classified in a better class than 'birds'.

While checking into the ICN (Indiana Code Net), I noticed they had 'students'. We inquired about this and they sent us a group of the lessons that they sent the students. It is a total of 166 lesson broken up into 4 groups: 1. basic 2. advanced 3 liaison (the relay from one net to another) and 4. how to be a ncs. Each section gets a 'net certificate' sent out, and this is something that is just not done anymore on nets.

After the 'student' finishes a section, they move into the status of being a 'vol instructor' and we assign a new student to them. By sending the lessons they have copied to another student, they not only learn how to receive, but how to send traffic.

Here is the thing FISTS members, if there is not a 'slow speed' net in your area of the country, in order to get things going, why not just start it yourself? Find a state, or section net you can check into, and you will have an outlet for any traffic you receive.

There are three things that all nets need. 1- a NCS 2-stations to check in, and 3- something to do. The 'pink card' from ARRL is a must for any station. It's number is FSD-218. Your section manager or the traffic manager for your section should be able to get one to you and give you some suggestions on how to start. My suggestion is just do it, we ain't getting any younger, and if not 'I' then, who? will do what needs to be done?"

QRP With John Shannon

This month's column will be a potpourri of things that were left over because of space limitations in previous columns.

First a couple more thoughts on QRP Dxing. Keep in mind that a DX station with a 0 in his call is often at an exotic location and not the country commonly associated with that prefix. For example PY0 is not Brazil itself, but one of several island groups belonging to Brazil that count as separate countries. The same with OH0, not Finland, but the Aland Islands, etc. Casual Dxers may not be aware of this and pass over these stations affording the QRPer a chance to pick up a rare one from a smaller pileup.

Judge conditions by a DX stations strength. If he is very strong to you, you may have a good path between each other and be able to work him easily. However, don't ignore a station because he is weak. The DX may be QRP also. I generally try weak stations a few times, and if I don't get them, I move on. Surprisingly, I have worked many weak DX stations on the first call, and even had trouble copying them while they copied me just fine.

Get a feel for what parts of the world you can work easily. Figure out what paths at what times are successful. Keep at least mental notes on everything concerning your DXing. This will eventually show you when to try for a station with a good chance of success, or ignore a station because you know the circumstances are not right to work him. For example, I seem to be able to work into Asiatic Russia somewhat easily near or after local sunset on 20M. When I hear something in that part of the world at that time on that band, I know it is worthwhile trying to work him. This way you can use your time more efficiently.

Now some of your correspondence. AA2YK, Ernie wrote: Hi John, I regularly check your web site since it is a very good all around ham radio resource. I noticed one of your latest entries: (8-26-97 1455Z) I just received in the mail the 2 way QRP Century Award from FISTS. It is serial # 001. Congrats John! Great work. I read your FISTS QRP column in the Keynote and get a lot out of it. You and I QSO'd earlier this year. Thank you for clearly articulating the latest issues in our hobby, especially the CW debate.

Thank you, Ernie for those kind words. And thanks to all of you who worked me with your QRP rigs so that I could earn the award. That's the first time I have ever been the *first* to earn a particular award. While I am thanking folks, thanks to WA2BQI, Bud for his kind comments in the last Keynote. Thanks to all who have written or made comments in Keynote.

If you have written me something that required a response, and I haven't written back, let me know. The volume of mail here does get overwhelming at times, and I may have overlooked someone. I hate to do that, but it happens.

K8UCL, Corb Emailed me: Hey John: Just thought I'd drop you a note. In the mail today I received my first ever contest award. First Place, Ohio for the 1997 Hootowl Sprint awarded by QRP-ARCI. I continue to be delighted at the fun and sense of accomplishment afforded by QRP operations. That sums up QRP very well. Congrats, Corb. Let me hear about what YOU have accomplished with QRP, and I'll mention it in the column.

KB2SUE, John writes: Hi John, Just a short note to say how much I enjoy your column in Keynotes. Keep up the good work. Question for you, what do you think of the MFJ QRP rigs? How about a column on getting started on building kits, which ones are the easiest to build, basic tools needed, building tips and hints. All the things a new builder would need to know.

Well, John I have not built any of the QRP kits here. I've mentioned this before. The kits are great if you are interested in a single band or perhaps a couple bands, but I operate all 9 bands regularly, and there is no kit that I know of that operates all 9 bands, so I design and build my own gear. Let's hear from the kit builders out there about the different kits.

I have built many kits in the past, mostly Heath and Knight Kits. I even built a TV from a kit once. The last kit I built was a keyer a couple years ago.

I can give some generic tips about kit building. Make sure you have all the parts. Before you do anything, check the parts against the parts list or schematic. It's no fun finding you have a missing part in the middle of building a kit. If the kit has a large number of parts, it helps to separate them into small piles by type, value, etc. Once you start building, be careful to not apply too much heat when you solder, especially to semiconductors. If you are working with a densely packed printed circuit, check after each solder joint is made to be sure you don't have a solder bridge between traces. If you do, get rid of it before continuing.

As far as basic tools go, I use a SMALL soldering iron (I find one with dual heat settings to be very handy), a small and medium size flat and/or Phillips screwdriver, needle nose pliers, and wire cutters. If your kit does not include solder, use the finest solder you can find at Radio Shack, etc.

Let me have your kit-building tips for my next column. I now have pictures of me and my station on my web site if you are curious. Visit <http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/3852>. Thanks. 73

Setting Up On A Budget

By Jim K5JAZ

In the Keynote last month I described how I erected a dipole and violated every antenna construction practice you can think of, but I use it regularly with good success. For my \$8.00 I was up and running on 40, 20, and 15 meters.

My next goal was to put up an antenna with a low take-off angle for DX work on 10, 12, and 17 meters. The lower the take-off angle, the more distance you get out of your signal, whatever the power. I decided on a vertical antenna. A classic vertical is a quarter wavelength high, base fed over a reflecting screen (ground) that makes the antenna appear to be a dipole standing on end. The better your ground, the more it resembles a regulation dipole, and the better the thing works. But getting a perfect ground over anything but salt water takes more time, energy, and money than I care to invest, so I had to look elsewhere.

I saw an advertisement in a ham magazine for a vertical antenna that claimed to cover 10, 12, 15, and 17 meters with a reasonable SWR across all bands, mounted high in the air, and required no ground screen. This antenna is the A99 manufactured by Solarcon (419-865-5877) in Holland, Ohio. I obtained one new in the box for \$50 delivered and proceeded to mount it as high as possible.

I bought two 10 foot sections and one 5 foot section of heavy-duty antenna mast from Radio Shack and a couple of galvanized stand-off brackets used to mount a TV antenna to the roof peak of a house. Using lag bolts, I bolted a bracket to the peak of my detached garage and another about 3 feet lower. I attached a 5-foot and the 10-foot mast sections together and sealed the each joints with a couple of stainless-steel sheet metal screws. I slid a guy ring plate down the 5-foot mast until it rested on the two screws. Then I attached the A99 base section to the 5-foot mast (with RG8X feed attached) and screwed on the middle and upper sections to complete the assembly. I tied three guy-wire wires onto the guy plate. I placed the base of the mast against the end of the garage and walked the whole thing up until it was vertical and captured by the two brackets. I drove the mast into the ground as far as I could with my body weight, and tightened down the bracket-to-mast clamps and install the guy wires to anything I could find with eye hooks and turnbuckles.

I had just spent about \$100 on this contraption and still didn't know if it would work! With sweaty palms, I hooked the station-end of the RG8X up to my Autek Research RF-1 analyt to take a look. I couldn't believe my eyes! This thing had a 4:1 SWR bandwidth

from 17.96 MHz to 31.70 MHz and all ham bands except 17 meter were below 3:1. 17 meters measured the highest with 3.8:1 at the low end and 3.2:1 at the other edge. Not bad for an 18 foot long fiberglass rod sticking right up through the branches of a pecan tree to a total height of 43 feet. On-the-air tests have shown this little antenna to be extremely stable, reliable and boy, does it work DX when these bands open!

The antenna has two rings on its base that with move up and down when turned, and stay tightly locked when tightened against one another. To increase the resonant frequency, move the rings up, and to decrease the resonant frequency, move the rings down. The manual has a chart that gives the lengths to trim the upper radiator if you wish the antenna to operate at the high end of 10 meters. Not being one to "fix" things that already work well, I have never touched these adjustments. I use this one right out of the box.

Solarcon makes a radial kit for this antenna, which I installed six months after the antenna was in place. These radials extend from the base at a 45 degree angle, and are supposed to "improve" the performance. For the life of me, I can't tell the difference with or without these radials. Since they cost almost as much as the antenna, I wouldn't repeat that purchase.

If I had it to do all over again, I would use the A99 without the radials, but I would mount it differently. I would get a piece of rope over one of my very high limbs, tie it to the upper section of the antenna, and haul the whole thing up as high as possible. Can't see why that wouldn't work, and higher is better!

Let's see -- a dipole for 40, 20, and 15 and a vertical for 17, 15, 12 and 10. I'm missing 30 meters for a clean sweep of my favorite bands. I picked up my trusty ARRL Antenna Handbook and started looking for something that would fill the 30 meter requirement. I was intrigued by an article on delta loops, and decided I would put one up. After some head scratching and some quick calculator work, I chose to go with a full-wave loop for 40 meters, because that was all I could make fit in my backyard jungle. If everything worked out, the antenna would be about 45 feet long on each side, so I would need 135 feet of wire, three insulators, and a lot of rope to tie it all down with. For this antenna, I went first class and used real stranded 14 gauge antenna wire and store-bought insulators. I looped the wire through two of the insulators, and tied the ends to the third. I tied this insulator to the eaves of my garage, got a rope over a limb about 60 feet up and hauled 'er up. The remaining insulator was tied with rope to the rail of my chain-link fence, so the whole thing resembled a lopsided triangle of about equal leg lengths. I used commercial 400-ohm ladder line for the feed at the corner attached

to the garage roof. A couple of hours of work and a pitcher of iced tea and it was done.

For this system, I needed an antenna tuner to feed the balanced line, so I called around town and found a Johnson Matchbox rated for around 300 watts for a mere \$30. I got lucky there, as I understand these are selling at hamfests for double that amount. I definitely recommend the Matchbox over the newer tuners.

The Matchbox uses huge differential variable capacitors and an airwound coil and is designed explicitly for driving ladder line. The new units are unbalanced tuners that drive ladder line through a (usually) undersized balun built into the tuner (ala MFJ-929E style, which I also have). The Matchbox has a bandswitch for 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 but not for the WARC bands. Don't despair — just put the bandswitch to the nearest band and tune it up. Works fine!

Hook all this stuff up, and pop a little power to it and tune 'er up. The frequency really doesn't matter. This antenna will operate 80-10 meters with ease, although the tuner settings are a little touchy on 80. Your modern rig will be happy because the tuner lets it see a low SWR; the feed line is happy because it is capable of working into very high SWR and the antenna will radiate anything you can push out to it.

The results? An antenna with a low take-off angle that will work 80-10 meters with ease and with very low noise levels, because it is a closed loop. On this antenna, my S9 interference now is only a measly S7. I can almost hear signals now and have worked many EU, African, and S. Amer. stations with it at low power.

Since this antenna is not a resonant design, the size of the loop is not critical. I didn't even measure the wire length, I just used what I received. Make it as large as possible, and at least one-half wavelength for your lowest desired frequency. I made mine a full wavelength on 40 because that is what would fit. Remember to keep the bottom of the antenna out of the reach of children, pets and the like. Nasty burns can result if touched while you are transmitting. Hang the antenna with the top as high as possible.

Oh yea -- remember my dipole? I had to take it down to erect the loop. Since my space is very limited, I had to pass one leg of the dipole through the center of the loop. Model that, NEC! I have noticed no change in the performance of either antenna.

New QRS CONTEST on Nov 9, 0000Z-0500Z;
speed 5 wpm. Freqs: 1805 - 1820; 3675 -3725,
Power -100 watts or less. Call CQ QRS;
exchange = sig report, name and QTH.
Canadian contacts = 10 points, others = 1 point.
For more information contact Rick VE3YAG
80 Kinrade Ave, Hamilton ONT L8L 6L6

Vehicle Battery Connections

In an article called "Car Battery Connections" (Issue 8 1997), a fellow ham's radio had an untimely death. Luckily his car was not damaged! The article then recommended using a fuse in both the positive and negative radio leads. This may not be optimal. If the negative fuse blows, the radio may inadvertently seek ground through the radio chassis or, much worse, the antenna coax shield. If the coax can't handle the current... well you get the picture.

The best solution is to never attach the radio's negative lead directly to the negative battery terminal. Connect the radio's negative lead to where the battery's negative terminal is connected to the vehicle's body. If you look at a typical vehicle electrical system, with a negative ground, you'll see there is a large cable that runs directly from the battery's negative terminal to the vehicle's body. It's usually very close to the battery, the cable is usually short, and the connection point at the vehicle body is fairly convenient. This is the best place to attach the radio's negative lead.

Now if the main lead going to the battery's negative terminal is removed, or if it has a poor connection, the vehicle's electrical system can not seek ground through the radio. This is because it too is disconnected from the battery's negative terminal. No fuse is needed in the radio's negative lead if this method is used. A fuse must still be used on the radio's positive lead, preferably as close to the battery's positive terminal as practical. If the above connection method can not be used, the next best thing to do is use a fuse in both the negative and positive radio leads as the prior article recommended. However, there remains the potential problem of having coax melt down if the negative fuse blows. I hope this helps, 73 Jim AA8YW FISTS #1705

CW has served us quite well,
So on its demise I won't dwell.
Now it's up to that new satellite,
To see that the message is sent right.
If CW on ships has to end,
On the ham bands it still is our friend,
Ensuring the message gets through,
By a system that's tried and not new.
For many years, CW had no equal
And satellites are now just a sequel.
So let's all pray when the chips are down,
The up-link's up and the down-links's down!
Now satellites are up there in space,
Hopefully each in its proper place.
But if system choice were left up to me-
I'd stake mylife on my CW key! by w6w0w

Last month, Brian W8BL wrote an article called Fire in the Wire. The point he made was that he enjoyed high power operating and with the solar cycle being the way it is there's nothing wrong with using high power. He also said that the real skill involved in QRP is exhibited by those WORKING the QRP stations, not necessarily those USING the QRP stations. As you can imagine, this generated a lot of discussion, some of which I will share with you here:

Isn't HAM Radio Great?

by Bill KK4KF #2390

I truly believe that amateur radio is one of the best HOBBIES around. I have only had my ticket since mid 1986, but have been associated with the hobby since I was a teenager in the 60's. This letter is not meant to flame anyone, nor is it meant to start a "debate". This is just one lowly ham's opinion.

One of the reasons I think this is a great hobby is it's diversity. How many other hobbies allow you to experience so many facets on a single license. CW, SSB, RTTY, AMTOR, PACTOR, PACKET, QRO, QRP, HF, VHF... you name it and it's available. Can't afford to buy a new multi-functional-do-everything-but-go-to-the-bathroom-for-you radio, then build your own. Can't afford a new stacked multi element beam system and hundreds of feet of tower to put it on, then string up a wire. And when you get tired of a specific mode, you just move to another.

When I started out, it was CW on 40 meters only. It took a lot of effort on many people's part to get me to use voice at all, HF or VHF. I still prefer CW and the HF bands. That is my preference. Many of you out there have other preferences.

This letter is partially in response to Brian's (W8BL) "Fire in the Wire" letter in the FISTS CW Club "Keynote" issue 9 1997. At the present time I operate QRP on the HF bands, this is my preference. Even when I operated QRO, I limited myself to 100 watts. In accordance with FCC rules, I make an attempt to use the minimum power necessary to effectively communicate. If the person on the other end can hear and understand me, then I have accomplished that, whether I am running 1 watt or 100 watts. The FCC rules have been interpreted by some to mean a 599 report indicates that you should reduce power. Using the definitions for the RST system, a 3 for readability is adequate. I have received many 349 - 359 reports at 100 watts, much less at 5 watts or less.

As for the term QRP, it means low power, PERIOD. At the present time, the following definitions apply to CW (they are different for SSB):

QRP - 5 watts or less power output from the radio
QRPP - less than 1 watt output from the radio
QRO - more than 5 watts output from the radio.

The antenna is not a factor in determining the power output for the QR? designation. Maybe we should expand the ERP designation, say add an additional letter for ERP power.

ERPP = < 1 watt ERP

ERPP = 1 to 5 watts ERP

ERP = over 5 but less than 100 watts ERP

ERPO = 100 to 1000 watts ERP

ERP-LOTS = Over 1000 watts ERP

But I don't think that solves anything either.

Brian asked "So what is QRP?" Brian, and everyone else, I believe QRP is a frame of mind.

Yes, you have your fanatics (I only run QRP period), true believers (I know I can do it, but if it takes a little more then I'll increase as necessary), sometimes believers (let's start out at high power and reduce later), and doubters (it's lots of power period) just like you do with everything else in the world. Brian, you come across as a QROO (ERP-LOTS) "fanatic". That may not be the case, but that was the impression I got from your letter. And, at times, the QRP - QRO discussions take the same tone as the code - no-code discussions.

How is QRP a frame of mind? Many QRP'ers BELIEVE that they can work the world using minimum power. Chuck, K5FO, is a FISTS member and has worked all states on most all of the bands on .95 watts. I routinely work with 4 watts or less, and rarely have a problem making a contact. And I'm not running a lot of metal in the air, I just replaced my 40 meter dipole with a 90 foot extended zepp antenna and it's only up 25'. I also plan to put up a vertical antenna shortly in the hopes of being able to load it up on 160 meters this winter for some QRP work. Not a lot of gain there.

And radios, look at the size difference. Can you put your radio, battery, antenna tuner, and antenna in a 1 pint ziplock bag and carry it with you? I can, and I'll make contacts with it when I set it up. The radio? Pick one, a 40 meter 40-9'er, a 30 meter NC38S, a Pixie II. Antenna tuner? How about a Rainbow Tuner, it fits into an Altoids (or Sucrets) Tin, complete with internal battery and a LED display to let you know when your SWR is set. Antenna? W3EDP (85' radiator and a 17' counterpoise). Battery? Some operate off a single 9 volt battery, a couple will run off multiple AA cells. Never heard of some of the radios? Probably not, the radios were designed by some of the other QRP'ers and are "kitted" by QRP clubs. The parts are bought, circuit boards made, everything bagged up, and mailed out to the buyers. The Northern California (NORCal) QRP Club just kitted and sold over 2000 NC38S kits and most of the work was done by just a few members, and they're about to an-

nounce a new kit that comes available at Pacificon. Many of these clubs have more members than we do. Don't want to pack the equipment into a ziplock, got a briefcase handy? Move up to a larger multi-band radio and a 4 AH battery. The Wilderness Sierra, Heathkit HW-7/8/9, Oak Hills Research 400, are just a few of the multiband QRP radios available.

Many of the QRP'ers I know also enjoy building their own equipment; radios, antenna tuners, meters, frequency counters, etc. There are a number of commercial kits that are results of QRP'ers designs and debugging. The NW series radios from EMTECH are QRP radio kits available to the club members at a reduced price. Roy, W6EMT, is a QRP'er and a FISTS member.

Don't want to build a kit, there are builders out there that will build kits for those unable to. Ten-Tec and MFJ are two companies that make QRP radios. I have a MFJ-9040 and love it.

Have you noticed how many QRP'ers have joined FISTS lately? Wonder why? Think it's because we all support and endorse the pro-CW stance of the organization? Think that's maybe why there is more QRP talk going on?

The bottom line is we're all part of the same team, we're all HAMS. Whether you prefer QRO or QRP, CW or SSB, Digital or non-digital is merely a matter of preference and it doesn't make you any less a HAM. As with everything else in life, we all have preferences and we're all NOT going to agree on everything. But this hobby allows us to exercise those preferences and STILL BELONG TO THE AMATEUR RADIO COMMUNITY, and that's what it's all about.

BTW Brian, I've lived in Michigan, and spent a year in Greenland. Though I really like the glow of tube rigs, I prefer the central heat unit to keep things warm in the house. And I've found it's cheaper to run the central heat.

From Robert **KB8AQD**: I enjoy QRP...but I do also agree with **W8BL**, Brian. When conditions do not allow QRP contacts...run the rig barefoot (50-200w), too.

FISTS members should get a copy of the ARRL's "Beyond Line of Sight" compendium of VHF/UHF articles. These propagation studies do apply to 15, 12 and 10M...and sometimes work better because of the lower frequencies.

Forward scatter propagation, with high power and beams allows Hams to communicate up to 600 miles during "dead" band conditions on 6M, as well as 10/12/15M HF. The signals bounce off of irregularities in the troposphere and ionosphere for some extremely

weak but reliable propagation paths available up to 99% of the time. If a meteor burns through the path - watch out for S9 plus signals!

Monitor the 28495-28505 kHz range for CW meteor scatter, too. Here's a great place for QRO and barefoot CW operators.

Do any FISTS have 12M CW capability? I have yet to work ANYONE on 12M CW, 12M CW, FISTS or not.

Much like 6M, few listen nor transmit. DX abounds on 15 and 10M, while our perfectly usable 12M band lies idle and unused. When I get a chance, I give a call near 24908 kHz. And wait. And wait.

Twelve remains dead, so we FISTS should adopt the entire orphaned WARC subband as our personal project. Besides E-skip, we could exploit groundwave, forward scatter, transequatorial ducting, meteor scatter, aurora, auroral-E, and even line-of-sight. Mountaintopping 12M FISTS DXpedition, anyone?

As for "Fire in the Wire"? Let's put BIG signals on 17M and 12M, and run the 200W maximum on 30M after that band dies out to skip.

I do not know if the noise or path loss will allow it...but wonder if any FISTS with 1500W PEP and big beams wants to attempt 10/12M moonbounce? And...do not forget groundwave. Let's experiment, and see if we can ragchew at night on 17M and 12M out to the limits of our local range. If no one else uses CW here...let the FISTS be the first!

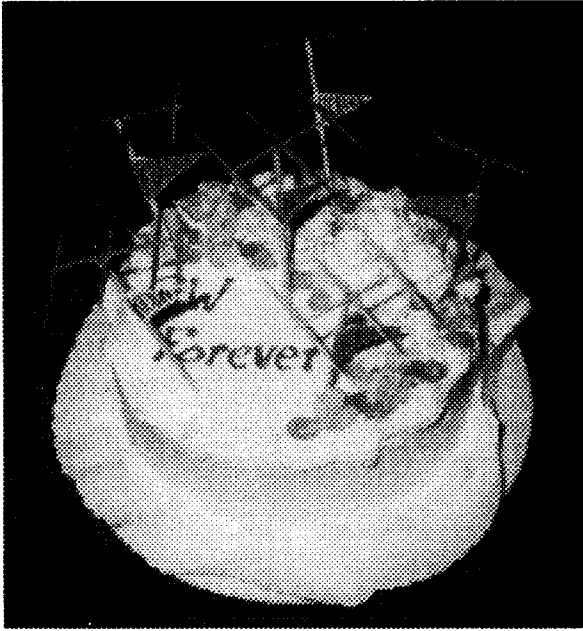
From several 6M fans, I found that the CW calling frequencies are the same as the SSB calling frequencies. The part of the band below 50100 kHz has many propagation beacons from around the world, so the 6M ops are not as picky about modes as some are on HF! Calling Frequencies: 50110 DX Only 50125 CW/SSB USA domestic; 50200 CW/SSB USA domestic alternate, if 50125 is busy.

As Magic Band DXers now use two calling frequencies, when the 6M band opens -- Hams spread across the entire 50100-50400 kHz range. Hams are restoring classic tube AM rigs for DX on 50400 kHz, keeping this useful band from remaining inactive.

From Chuck **W8LQ**: Like to read the QRP articles by John Shannon, et al, but must confess I like the comments by **W8BL** about QRO!! Yes, I do use an amplifier...consistently (except on 30 meters, of course!). I like to think I have the operating skills Brian mentioned to pull the wee signals out of the noise, and do enjoy even the R2 or R3 QSO's. Would rather not have the QSZ unless I ask for it, though. Pet peeve.....BTU (also sent as B2U, bk to u, etc.) The prosign "K" says it all!

Code Class Takes The Cake!

Fred, **K8PP** (ex-AA8FQ), teaches CW classes and sends along a photo of the celebration cake he made for his 5 wpm students when they made their first CW QSO's from his station. He constructed a 2 element Yagi for each student out of wood - Fred adds that too bad wood doesn't carry RF very well, and the size is 2GHz! The cake says "CW Forever"



FISTS Club Presentation Program

The FISTS Presentation has been given all over the country now, with very favorable results. Randy, **K8EZ**, and I have done almost a dozen in Michigan. If you're looking for a program for your club meeting, why not consider having one about FISTS? Randy's made a very professional looking set of transparencies and with the accompanying script, you can't go wrong! He's written the following paragraphs to answer any questions you might have:

The purpose of the presentation is to tell people who we are, how the club got started, our activities, purposes, and, hopefully, dispel misconceptions about FISTS and its members. We also tell them about the member supplies available, how the club is funded, and about the popular Key Note (you're reading it now). All you need is an overhead projector and a screen. Delivery time averages just 30 minutes.

Having personally made this presentation to many groups in southeastern Michigan, I can assure you it is well-received (diehard no-code techs being the only exceptions). It has generated very favorable responses

from both newcomers and veterans, and a lot of new members.

The actual presentation consists of 16 colorful framed transparencies for overhead projector use plus a "script" you can use to deliver the detailed information. These items are packaged with sample copies of the Key Note and a supply of informational tri-fold brochures. You are encouraged to present the material extemporaneously and to stress facets of particular interest to your group.

I receive numerous requests via both snail and Email for copies of the presentation and for more detailed information about its content. I reply to every inquiry quickly but can do so more efficiently if I know:

1. Your full name, call sign, etc. Sometimes I get only a first name and an Email address!
2. Specifically what you want, when you want it, and how you want it sent.
3. The name of the organization for which the request is being made (just for our records).
4. To whom and where the information is to be sent. An important but often-missing item.

I strongly encourage e-mail information requests but they can be challenging because I use Office 97 and frequently encounter compatibility problems if recipients can not use Word 97 and PowerPoint 97 documents. However, if I know beforehand what software you plan to use, I can usually convert them into something usable.

Shipment of the actual presentation materials is done via priority mail or UPS with delivery several days before your actual need.

We keep three copies of the presentation transparencies in circulation. So, when you're finished using it, return it promptly so it can be rerouted to the next user.

Hope this answers most of the questions. But, if you have questions about something not covered here just ask me via Email, snail mail, or smoke signal.

Randy **K8EZ** <k8ez@concentric.net>

Randy's Postal mail address is on the inside cover of this Keynote.

FOR SALE:

MICRCRAFT CODE STAR, A-1 Condition \$75.00
Bill Chatterly N1SGI, 13 Kennedy Rd,
Foster RI 02825

Irene, **WO8E**, passes this tidbit along: "Gene Autry, the singing cowboy, of olden times (my era).....turned 90 yrs old recently...and what is not too well known abt him is that before he became a singing cowboy and a movie star, he was a radio operator at a railroad station as a telegrapher. The story goes: Will Rogers was passing thru at the railroad station where Gene worked as a telegrapher and heard him singing while he was working....and Will Rogers said to him... and here I paraphrase.... hey there, you have a gud voice, you shud be on the radio.... and therein was the beginning of his career."

QSL Etiquette For Contests?

It seems like the "typical" FISTS member QSLs more than the regular ham population, as Brian **W8BL** and now Stan **K4UK** and the Franklin County ARC can attest to! I personally think this is terrific. Sometimes it seems like QSLing is becoming a lost art, mostly because of the cost of cards and postage.

I received this question about the FISTS Sprint (from a non-FISTS) and thought it might make a good discussion for the Keynote.

"I just completed the log sheet for my first ever contest - the FISTS Fall Sprint. After my nerves quieted down I really had a blast. My question is this: What is expected for sending out QSL cards after a contest?

I asked another op for a QSL card because I needed a verification from his state for my W.A.S. award. I also had one station ask me for one during the QSO and I will certainly reply. Am I expected to send QSL cards to everyone I contact? Do I still need to send in log sheets even if I'm sure I'm not going to score high enough to place (it seems like I would be adding work to an already overworked volunteer). Thanks for your thoughts...73 de **KU0KU**, Jack Sippel, Kansas City <jack.sippel@nellcorp.com>

One important point is: YES yes yes, please send in your logs when you participate in FISTS activities. Your response is encouraging, rather than making more work. It's the only way we have of knowing if anyone really participated and adds to the fun by showing how others did in the event. Even if you were only able to get on the air for a couple hours, or made only a few contacts, your log and comments are very much appreciated. No one is going to make fun of you for having a low score; making the effort to get on the air makes you a winner regardless of how many contacts you make!

Bis, **WD0HCO**, sent this excerpt from "Electronic Design" a periodical for Electrical Engineers and others working in the consumer electronic's industry. From page 14...

"Identifying Satellites For Consumer Receivers"

The Star Trak 800 consumer satellite receiver is able to automatically recognize some of the 44 North American C/Ku band satellites by adjusting the audio circuits to 7.02/7.11 MHz on which some satellites carry Morse code.

The audio signal is digitalized and the receiver is able to move its antenna from east to west, to find and record maximum signal strength on both polarities and, in the reverse dish motion, to stop on peaked positions (where the satellites are) to listen to the Morse code to identify the satellite. In the group of 44 satellites, the receiver is able to recognize 6 to 12 satellites, while the positions of the others are calculated. The whole process takes about 20 minutes.

This was taken from a paper entitled "Automatic Satellite Identification for Consumer Analog Satellite Receivers" by Branko Kovacevic, Tee-CommElectronics @ 1997 Wireless Symposium

QSLing

By Bud **WA2BQI** #2009

I'll probably get into trouble with my feelings toward QSL's but here goes anyway.

I truly believe a QSO isn't a QSO until you have a QSL! It's great to receive a card from your QSO's. HOWEVER, simply having your QTH, call and your many awards on the card just don't hack it for me!

It's nice that I can see that you have WAS, DXCC and belong to half a dozen clubs with your club numbers on the card, but wait a second...What can I get out of your card so I, too, might earn WAS, DXCC and other awards?

I've spent money and maybe an SASE if I need your card bad enough. Oh! Oh! Nothing is there for me to use for my efforts. Simply put, not even a county, a grid-square, CQ-zone, ITU zone or IOTA number if you're on an island! Heck, so many cards I receive only have a prefix and a state on them. I probably would remember our QSO if I could use some of your information towards an award next time we chat.

Next time you plan to order your new QSL cards do a little thinking on what you should have printed on your cards. Make your QSL card user-friendly for your fellow amateur. Make QSLing interesting and above have fun collecting them before it becomes a dead art.

News and Views From FISTS Members

I want to say TNX to the FISTS that I worked during the 8 months it took for me to get my Century Award. It was a pleasure meeting everyone on the air while collecting the 100 points needed for the award. Now it is framed and hanging on my shack wall with pride. Tnx to the FISTS organization for making CW a fun mode to use, the Century Award gives us all something to work for while meeting new friends. Now I look forward to having a QSO with some of the other Century Award FISTS. Take Care CU on the air 73 de Rick, VE3FMC #2767 Century Award #219 *Thanks Rick, I'm glad you had a good time earning your Century Award. Good luck on your Century of the Century (also called the Platinum Award in England)*

I think the growing membership will send a positive message to ARRL and FCC about CW. I've already met many members on the air and they're first class folks. Tnx es 73, Mike, KB4KKL #3840 *I agree with you Mike! I think that people are beginning to realize FISTS is a Force to be Reckoned With!*

George KG8DA is busier than ever now that he's in NJ. He and his son Benjamin KC8HHH are spending a lot of time with learning CW and checking into the many fine CW traffic nets they have in NJ on 80 meters. George also sends along his comments on a FISTS/QRP to FISTS/QRP contact he had: 2/X/97 KB1BIC Rik in Ludlow MA, 7.106 and then 7.107 MHz, IQRP NorCal 40A in Lincroft NJ on solar charged battery (2 watts) and 40 meter horizontal loop up 30 feet. 2139-2234Z, His and mine 599. Rik answered my CQ. It was only after we got to visiting that we discovered that we were both QRP. We were both using a 40 meter horizontal loop up 30 feet and a straight key. I asked him, you wouldn't happen to be a FIST wud you and he said he was #2059! Rik was using a Yaesu 890 running 4 watts. I asked him quite a bit about this antenna which is so new to me and he asked about the NorCal 40A. This was a red letter QSO. A real gem to treasure. Rik signed in a most interesting way God bless es Peace to KG8DA/QRP de KB1BIC/QRP SK

Jim KE6LPQ, #2429, sends in his subs and says "Please keep pleading the cause of those of us Slow Senders, we need all the help we can get." *Of course Jim, I can't imagine FISTS any other way!*

Mark KK5ZN just got a new boat anchor, so look for him on the air soon!

Richard WA7SNY has a question about something that has puzzled him for the last couple of years. Some North American operators and a few foreign operators have been using the characters "TP" during QSO's. I do not find this abbreviation in any publication. My older ham friends say that I am hearing "KN" but I have copied CW for 37 years and know a "TP" when that is what is sent. If one looks at the CW configuration of TP and KN we see:

TP as - .--. and

KN as -.- -.- If anyone has heard and can explain why TP is being used I am really interested in the explanation. Richard Perkins, WA7SNY, 126 South Pioneer, Ashland OR 97520, FISTS #2553 *This is a new one for me, anyone got any clue?*

John KA5QYR, #2488, sends in his renewal with the update that he's installed a new Gap vertical for the higher bands and just finished a new OHR-100 15 meter QRP rig. He's looking forward to working many FISTS on 15. He says that FISTS are a wonderful group and he's proud to be a part of the club.

Thanks John, I'm sure you'll have lots of fun with the new vertical and QRP rig on 15 now that it's opening up a bit. 15 used to be my favorite band, I'm looking forward to getting back on it.

Al KC8BSC, #2069, sends in his subs and says he enjoys FISTS although he doesn't participate in nets, contests, etc. He is working on his second Century (which is quite a feat if not gotten from net/contest points!), but has never been able to figure out how to get into nets and contests. But he says "no problem, I still enjoy what I'm doing and firmly believe in CW and it's importance to ham radio."

Bob K8FN #2455: "Here is my dues renewal - FISTS has given ham radio new life for me. After 30 years things started to get a bit old, it's fun again."

Thanks for letting me know that Bob, letters like that make this all worth while!

Carl KA2KAX: The reason I like CW is that it keeps prejudices from cropping up. I and they - (unless we wish to tell them) - don't know if we are short or tall, Korean or Black, young or old, male or female, rich or poor, etc. We are just human souls communication with each other. Also the amount of useless information that is common on the phone bands is greatly reduced.

Brian KE4QZB #1934 bought an 1967 Swan-500, says it sounds great on CW, and mostly works 40/80 meters. He hopes to work lots of FISTS, so look for him!

From Tim WOFU, #2574, "Guess it's time to renew! I really look forward to seeing each issue of The KeyNotes. I don't spend much time on .058, but I do spend most (97%) of my time in CW. I can count the number of times I have been on SSB on my hands. SSB just does not interest me. CW is where the real communication is at. Been a ham since 11/94, in 1/95 I have pretty much stayed on 20/40 CW - People are just a lot friendlier than what I've heard on SSB."

Henry N1SNH #2706 sends this note with his renewal: Enclosed is my membership for the coming year. If there's a little more than required, please add it to the "general fund".

I look forward to the newsletter every month. I especially enjoy reading the English section, as I traveled there last summer and got a reciprocal license. Only brought my HT though. The FISTS membership seems to take a positive approach to CW, rather than a negative attitude toward other modes. Hope that continues. Let's be positive about what we enjoy, not negative about what others like to do. I have worked a few FISTS on the air, and all were friendly and enthusiastic. Hope to work more this year, and maybe venture onto a slow speed net.

Thanks for the "extra" Henry and the observation that FISTS philosophy doesn't include tearing down other modes. There is something in ham radio for everyone.

Art AA1HO, #1283, just put up a Rohn 25G tower, 65 feet. The tower holds an 80M folded dipole, a Cushcraft A4S beam and a VHF 10 element beam! He would like to thank three other FISTS members who gave him a hand during the installation, he couldn't have done it without them. *Here's a big Thank You to: K1CL - Chuck; AA1HV - Zoel; and N1PVP - Marino!*

Pat K8LEN, #1494, renews his subs with the note: Just an excellent club. Never recv'd more QSL cards than I do now for years.

Rich AE4IX, #2499, looks forward to great things next year for FISTS and is proud to be included with our great organization! He asks about a Life Membership....I don't know if we'll get to that point - but who knows...

Stan AC6TO writes: Our FISTS Club is growing so fast and there are so many trying to use 14058, why not call between 14040 and 14070? I'm enjoying FISTS very much and am trying to get new members all the time. Have given a presentation at our Fresno Amateur Club. Hope we get some from there.

FB Stan, I sure wish FISTS would spread out on the bands, especially to the Novice subbands. There're so many FISTS on the air, if you call CQ FISTS almost anywhere you'll get an answer!

Cindy KO6TQ called in this address for Ray, who was looking for KEYBOARDING information. She says AEA Company has the equipment he needs. Their address is 2006 196th St SW, Linwood WA 98036, phone is 206-775-7373. Thanks, Cindy!

Jan KB0WQT, #3934, has to use a code reader to receive code. Jan likes finding ways to work around various disabilities and is working on a little LED flasher that will plug into the earphone jack of any radio. The drawbacks thus far for the LED are speed and QRN. Jan's also learning to use a BY-1 iambic key left-handed utilizing a mental "bounce-count".

Ken K8AJD suggests we print some schematics of equipment for CW ops - filters, VFO's, etc. Great idea! I can only print what I get, so if you have an interesting project, please send it in!

George W5RUK says he'll give FISTS a try for one more year. For the past year no one has taken the time to talk to him. He wonders if he's too slow. *Sorry to hear you haven't met FISTS on the air George, Contact Ed WA3WSJ about getting a code buddy (his address is on page 2 of the Keynote)*

Bill W6DDB emphasizes that we should use alternate freqs when the .058's are busy. He suggests looking for FISTS on 3708; 7108; 21121 and 28128. Bill also said that it's too bad no one sent my side of the WZ8C/W5YI debate to CQ magazinewell, Bill - I faxed it to the editor Alan, K2EEK twice and Emailed it to him once and know for a fact that at least three other FISTS sent him printed transcripts via postal mail. Besides, I'm good in the callbook, all he had to do was look me up. He gave W5YI three pages and none to the opposing point of view; but NOT because he didn't receive the material!

Jay AC6GR, #2097, has FISTS applications on hand when VE testing and suggests other FISTS VE's consider the same. *Good idea Jay! Anyone needing a quantity of FISTS brochures pse contact me*

Thanks to Stan AC6TO and the Fresno ARC for the terrific publicity for FISTS in their October newsletter. They printed two pages about FISTS, including an application. You can see from the New FISTS this month, quite a few new ones are sponsored by Stan.

Info Wanted

If anyone has a Patcomm Rig, get in touch with Bert W4JRU, 11370 SW 60th Terrace, Miami, FL 33173

Quick Net Closing - Sorry!

Please post this in the next Keynote. I want to apologize to everyone on the 21 October FISTS Slow Net. I strive to be professional, but had a very urgent situation come up and had to close the net quickly. I hope everyone understands that I didn't have time to ask for a QNG. Again, thanks for your understanding.
Arnie- KT4ST

Century Confusion

There is confusion about the scoring for the Century Awards. Most of this stems from FISTS not realizing that the requirements are different for earning a Century while in Europe than it is from earning a Century while here in the US. Because of geographical differences, the number of FISTS on each continent and other reasons, there is a different set of requirements.

When Geo prints something in the DX part of the Keynote, it doesn't necessarily apply to us here in the US. I don't edit that part of the Keynote, so keep in mind what you are reading in that section of the Keynote is written for DX FISTS.

Here are the Century rules for stations in the US. I THINK it covers everything, but just when Lee, N9NVV (NAFAM) and I think we have everything covered, someone comes up with a new "what if".....so if I've left out a situation, let Lee know.

Remember, the rules, are slightly different for the DX FISTS than they are for the US FISTS. If your station is located in the US, other US stations are worth 1 point. All other countries (as defined by DXCC rules) worked are worth 2 points with the exception of FISTS affiliated club stations (both DX and US) which are 3 points.

For the sake of continuity and clarity, we accept mobiles from a different callsign areas or country as new contacts. So, for our purposes, working Geo G3ZQS while he's in the UK would be 2 points, working him here while he's in MI (signing G3ZQS/8) would be another 1 point, working him again while he's in Dayton (signing G3ZQS/8) would NOT count because you already worked him as G3ZQS/8. If he went to California and was operating as G3ZQS/6,

then he would be worth another 1 point to you.

If you contact a club station, it doesn't matter who the operator is. You're claiming points for working the club call, not any particular operator. You could work Brian as K8EY (FISTS of MI Club Call) for three points, sign off and call him back, and work him as his personal callsign W8BL and get him again for 1 point, assuming you don't already have him in your log. If Geo G3ZQS were operating using K8EY while here in MI, it would be worth 3 points to you, unless of course, you had worked someone using K8EY previously. Who is operating the club call has no bearing on the points for the club call.

If you submit your log and don't claim the proper credit for the QSO's, for whatever reason, you lose them.

Admittedly, this can be confusing when the "rules" seem to contradict themselves...which is why we decided to go ahead and make the rules for our NA FISTS once and for all as simple as possible and not reflect the changes anymore when they make changes in the rules Across The Pond. (for example GX0IPX used to be worth 5 points, etc).

Finger or Thumb Dits?

by Art W8PBO

I wanted to pass on something that may not be a problem but yet it could be. I'm speaking about the use of the right and left side of a key paddle for use with keyers. We have a few newer hams here that use CW and on Field Day one of the fellows told me I had my DITS and DAHS reversed on the paddle.

People like my self with nearly 50 years on CW have no problem with which side we use for the DITS and DAHS because we started with a bug and the DITS ARE ON THE THUMB so I assumed that everyone used the thumb for the DITS.

At a club meeting I asked everyone which side of the key they use for the DITS and about half said the first finger and the rest said the opposite.

No paddles that I know of come with any instructions about which side to put the DITS and the DAHS. Since I have heard no one say that thumb-dits work better than finger-dits, it could be no problem. We as CW leaders should have a standard and make sure that our members use it?

If you poll our FISTS members, I will bet that there are a great number of them using the first finger for the DITS.

So, how about it FISTS? Are you a ThumbDitter or a FingerDitter? To me, it seems more natural to use the thumb, but I'm a bug user.

Missing Morse Characters

by Carl **KD6WNM**, #2632

Under CW TRIVIA by Roberta J. Barmore, "RJ", **KB9GKX** in Key Note #7, p. 16, I found my own mysteries addressed, especially those concerning why there is no exclamation point in our code; and on the drawing of symbols from landline telegraphy from ampersand (&) to the term "lid" for a bad operator. It occurred to me that FISTS is possibly the focal point for the future of CW, presuming to establish missing characters like the exclamation point.

Exposure to a literary level of CW began for me just over 4 years ago by listening to **K7HLR**, old seaman R. V. Evans' CW practice station in Clearfield, Utah. I had been a visual Morse operator as a Navy signalman in WWII and when ham radio became an option for me 50 years later, I listened on my SWL radio to ham CW and code practice stations. **K7HLR** used Sparks Journal of the Society of Wireless Pioneers (SOWP) for practice texts, and I could relate to all those historic sea stories. Being literature, many or all punctuations were applied. With those sorts of things rattling around in my head, and with RJ's notes, I am trying to settle on a symbol for exclamation point! This may be where a borrowing from landline telegraphy may again apply.

The Call Books for 1997, p.22A, have parallel tables of Continental and landline codes. For the first time in my experience I saw, there, a telegraphic symbol for ! as dah-dah-dah-dit, on the landline side. Why had that not been adopted? My shadow of a guess is that it is the same as the international radio code's German-type O.

My other source of radio-code symbols is Charles Chapman's Piloting, Seamanship and Small Boat Handling which includes international, or at least west European alphabetic extensions.

N	dah-dah-di-dah-dah
A	di-dah-di-dah
A, A	di-dah-dah-di-dah
E	di-di-dah-di-dit
CH	dah-dah-dah dah
O	dah-dah-dah dit
U	di-di-dah dah

There are four more for use with Esperanto.

The Call Book shows all the punctuations but lacks a radio exclamation point. The Chapman declares the comma, dah-dah-di-di-dah-dah, as also exclamation point. Doesn't appeal to me, but I give a second look when there seems to be international acceptance of dah-dah-di-di-dah-dah as a signal for DANGER,

HIGH POWER. That's very exclamatory and interjective!

Maybe I am caught between abrupt expediencies of radio communication and the great literary potentials I have savored. I still shrink from using the comma for exclamation but I am not against all borrowings.

We have "understand" as di-di-di-dah-dit. It could be used declaratively and exclamatorily as in underscoring and italicizing. As in "How about THAT!" and "What do you know!"

How about "underline" itself, at the close of a sentence? di-di-dah-dah-di-dah has a great sound to it! Diddy-dum-dum-di-dum proclaims the emphasis of underlining.

The telegraphic laugh, also believed to have landline origin, may have been serving as somewhat of an exclamation all along. But often in context it sounds more like polite, even embarrassed tittering than chuckles and guffaws. Not interjectory.

Already suggested, I notice, is which would write as I I I and appear to suggest !!! That should be a strong candidate for regularizing. But it sounds even more tittery than HI and H E E. I incline to DIDDY-DUM-DUM-DE-DUM. Or at least until someone comes along with comradely objections and new suggestions.

From Jan **SM5GNN**: The exclamation sign used in Sweden is dididahdhit. I have not heard it anywhere else and I have no idea of its origin. I thought it was the international exclamation point but..I see that it obviously is not so.

So, does dididahdhit have another meaning in other parts of this world?

Ham Radio and More

Len Winkler, host of Ham Radio and More, is calling it quits with his radio talk show after seven years. Len was the driving force behind the Written Only General movement. Altho I didn't agree with Len or the attitude he exhibited sometimes, I am appreciate that by letting me speak on his show, he gave us a forum in which to promote FISTS and CW. I had been a guest on his show three or four times, and Len was fundamental in having The Debate between **W5YI** and myself at Dayton last May.

Len is focusing his attention on his new table tennis business and I wish him every success in his new endeavour.

Mac gives FISTS a preview of a couple pages from a book he's writing. It sounds it will be quite a book with lots of adventures. Good luck, Mac and keep up posted on your progress!

Captain Griffiths had sailed the Caribbean as a lad aboard schooners out of his home on Barbados. He knew all of the islands of the Windward and Leeward chains, their harbors, customs, their politics and histories. As we would run along the Venezuelan coast or head northward along the island chain Griffiths would delight in taking our tanker in close to shore dodging between the islets and avoiding the shoals that he knew so well. My Andrews, our chief mate would shake his head and mutter, "Someday he'll run this tub aground." Griffiths never did!

I can recall standing on the bridge with the captain and as we passed a particular island he would relate stories about the island, it's peoples or tales of pirates that had frequented the area. For instance he told me of Saba Island., a small Dutch island in the antilles that rose from the clear blue waters like a single volcano cone. Lacking suitable harbor facilities it never developed a tourist trade and by 1940 it remained unspoiled by progress. The few hundreds inhabitants of questionable Dutch ancestry were 80% females as most males would leave the homeland on schooners and often never return. The island inhabitants survived by fishing and raising garden produce and goats. The principal surname of the island was Hassell. According to Griffiths, if you meet a seafarer with that name hi in all probability is a Saba Islander. (Later, I had a second mate by that name -- and he was!)

One evening on a later trip and on a different tanker we were passing Saba when I was called to the bridge by the mate on watch. High on the slope of the mountain we could make out a blinking light trying to get our attention. "Talk to him, Sparks" said the mate, "it is probably the old man of the mountain who delights in talking to passing ships if he can get an answer." "Ham radio by blinker" I thought to myself as I engaged him in a QSO.

I contacted my unknown friend and we carried on quite a lengthy conversation at about 5 words per minuter (blinker operation is much slower than telegraph or radio as we used incandescent bulbs that have a delay in igniting and in extinguishing with the result that if you do not slow down your transmission will be all run-together) The QSL lasted until our ship progressed to a point where we could no longer see each other. What did we talk about? The usual things: Names, Ages, Name of the shop, Our cargo, Our destination, etc.

I have since wondered how many other ships might have had the experience of a QSO with a Saba Islander? No, I never received a QSL card from the gentleman, but I do have one for radio contact in my DXCC file!

As for blinker light QSO's during these same years when the war was underway in Europe and I was working aboard tankers I was often called to the bridge in the middle of the night to respond to an identification inquiry from a man-of-war. Such QSO's were on-way -- they asked the questions and we supplied the answers. I do know that I "worked" a French submarine on several occasions (same one, or at least in the same channel) and on another occasion I "worked" the British cruiser Prince of Wales on her maiden voyage down the African coast and on her way to Australian waters where she was later sunk in a battle with the Japanese! By John McKinney "Mac"

Morse Still Is A Thrill

John KQ6ES, #2406, passes along this nice letter he received after a QSO. Just goes to prove (once again) that anyone who thinks the magic is gone from ham radio is as wrong as he can be. The letter says: "Thank you for your patience during our contact. As I said before you are #4 in my CW contacts. I was sending on a key I made myself and it was it's maiden voyage. It is a brass and plexiglass paddle into a Ramsey Key Kit CW-7. I have run packet, UHF, VHF, and a repeater, but the excitement of CW and it's magic have won my heart.

"After the thrill of running a repeater had passed and the chore set in, I set about for new thrills. HF is fantastic. I run the repeater as a service to other hams and will be adding HF and six meter link radios in the future.

"Your code was very clear and it's pacing was perfect. Although I had recently passed my 20 WPM test I can only solid copy 10-13 WPM. It was 4 months of study, two hours a day, to do that and only a true act of God helped me get 20. With my daughter's note in my pocket to help my nerves and nothing to lose, I passed. I will keep that note till I die. 73 Steve KB7NKB"

Need Tiawan in your log book?

FISTS member Tony BV2TA is 47 years old. Since 1970, he has been approved by the Ministry of Communications ROC and qualified to operate professional ship radio stations. He tells me that he has completed a set of amateur radio equipment in his home. He likes to DX and is QRV looking for FISTS on 14.010 Mhz at 11 to 12:00 Z.

Thoughts on the Century Award and Other Things...

Sure, the Century and Worked All States Awards are fun to work toward, but I hope we aren't forgetting why the FISTS awards program was invented in the first place. *It is supposed to Encourage Rag Chewing.* The idea behind it isn't just to get on the air, get a number and say 73 - - take the time to say hello, exchange some information, make friends on the air!

If it helps, keep a note pad near your rig with things to talk about. Jot down the weather in case you run into some DX, some activities you or your family are involved with, some info about your family, maybe a (clean!) joke you heard. Try to end the QSO exchange with a question. This gives the other operator something to say when he comes back to you. Pretty soon, you'll be having a real conversation! I bet you'll find that to be more fun than just number-chasing and your Century Award will be even more special to you because you'll remember all the pleasant QSO's you made to earn it.

I hope that you don't ignore someone's "CQ FISTS" just because you already "have" their number in your log. Take a moment to go back to them and say hello again. FISTS has a reputation as a friendly group - let's keep it that way, please! Sure, work for your Centuries - but remember the philosophy behind the wallpaper.

Any suggestions for this situation? Chuck W8LQ makes a good point with this comment: I know that many of our members can operate QRQ, but as a matter of courtesy call CQ on the X.058 frequencies at slow speeds. Would be nice if we had a prosign "Go ahead and send faster if you wish... I'll tell you when to stop!" Of course the guy that wants to go faster can ask permission, but maybe doesn't want to embarrass the slower operator. Many times I've pounded out a QSO at 10 to 15 wpm and later heard the other guy swinging along at QRQ level!

There is still time to write to your ARRL Director about your opinions on the upcoming WRC-99 and the code requirement. They have asked for input, so let's give it to them! If you haven't done so, please write a letter to your Division Director. Their mailing address is in QST or the callbook - here are their Email addresses, compiled by Buddy WB4M. And be sure you've mailed in your ARRL ballot!!

Atlantic Division, Kay C. Craigie, WT3P, EMAIL wt3p@arrl.org

Central Division, Edmond A. Metzger, W9PRN, EMAIL w9prn@arrl.org

Dakota Division, Tod Olson, K0TO, EMAIL k0to@arrl.org

Delta Division, Rick Roderick, K5UR, EMAIL k5ur@arrl.org

Great Lakes Division, George E. Race, WB8BGY, EMAIL wb8bgy@arrl.org

Hudson Division, Frank Fallon, N2FF, EMAIL n2ff@arrl.org

Midwest Division, Lew Gordon, K4VX, EMAIL k4vx@arrl.org

New England Division, Tom Frenaye, K1KI, EMAIL k1ki@arrl.org

Northwestern Division, Mary Lou Brown, NM7N, EMAIL nm7n@arrl.org

Pacific Division, Brad Wyatt, K6WR, EMAIL k6wr@arrl.org

Roanoke Division, John C. Kanode, N4MM, EMAIL n4mm@arrl.org

Rocky Mountain Division, Marshall Quiat, AG)X, EMAIL ag0x@arrl.org

Southeastern Division, Frank M. Butler, W4RH, EMAIL w4rh@arrl.org

Southwestern Division, Fried Heyn, WA6WZO, EMAIL wa6wzo@arrl.org

West Gulf Division, Jim Haynie, WB5JBP, EMAIL wb5jbp@arrl.org

WANTED

Info on an old Morse code trainer. The name reads: Instructo Graph, Chicago Morse Code Trainer. It's a paper tape driven contact that sends CW to headphones and includes a key and sounder unit in a nice wooden box. Contact Art Walsh, 69 Sleigh Rd, Westford MA 01886.

Email aa1ho@juno.com

I saw this on the Internet: You Know You're Addicted to Morse code When:

- 1) When you go shopping and the clerk says "have a nice day", you reply with "Fine Business!"
- 2) Your wife calls you at work and says "I found a bug in the house. I smashed it to pieces before I flushed it down the toilet" and you go into cardiac arrest.
- 3) Your insurance agent calls and says "Now let me get this straight... YOU WANT TO INSURE *JUST* YOUR THUMB AND INDEX FINGER?"

Hope to CU on the air! 73 88 de Nancy WZ8C



KEY NOTE



Sec: E. (Geo) Longden, G3ZQS. 119 Cemetery Rd., DARWEN, BB3 2LZ, England. 01254-703948

E-Mail: fist1@compuserve.com

OFFICES

QSL Manager: G0FRL. Bob Lowe
PO Box 190. BOLTON. BL1 4UL.
U.S. Rep: WZ8C. Ms. Nancy Kott.
5450 Diehl Rd., METAMORA, MI48455

PRO: G4YLB. J.A. Welsh
3 Minster Cresc. DARWEN, BB3 3PY

CONTEST MANAGER: GM4BAE
Northbrac, Brookfield Cresc, STRANRAER, DG9 0HY

NETS

Sunday QRS 0900 (loc) 3.575 2E0AJS
US 0100Z on 14058

Tues: G0IPX/P 1930 ON 3 558 (+/-)

Wed: US Net 0100z on 14058

Thurs: QRS 1900 (loc) on 3575. 2E0AJS

DX 14/21/28.058 on the hour for 15mins

Pse keep watch all Novice allocations

UK Net Controls use GX0IPX/P

Up-dated listings may be obtained from HQ. Full or US listing 3 2nd class stamps, EU 2 stamps. No envelope necessary. **Lapel Badges**, £1.50 incl. **Fabric patches** £2.50 incl. **QSL Cards** £5.00 per 100 or £8.00 per 200 (UK and EU pse add 50p for p/p. DX members - on advice. Personalised stickers £1.00 per sheet (65), max order 5 sheets.

SUBS: UK £5.00, EEC £6.00, Non-EECEU, £7.00. Others £10.00. Your renewal date appears on the mailing label. Your anticipation would be much appreciated.

GREETINGS

Hi People. Been a very busy month here at I19. GB0FCW demanded a lot of my time but I still had to attend to the normal day-to-day business and here I am assembling this Keynote.

Please note the info on the banner. I have quit my account with Airtime for a much better deal from BT and the Packet set up was a waste of time. I have received not one single communication via that avenue for over 4 months so it has been kicked into touch. I am now left with a Kantronics KAMPLUS which is simply sitting here glaring and making me feel guilty so, if anyone is interested, give me a bell and we can talk shop. Hi.

In his report for the LS Ladder, Gerry, GM4BAE, noted that the solar flux index for 14 September was registered 109 but at this time, the Geomagnetic readings indicated storm conditions. This could point to better conditions and hopefully, we will have a few of the US gang joining in with the ladder. Like to see a few more of the EU gang taking part as well so, you have a great opportunity here with a new start and improving conditions.

I shall still be running GB0FCW after this letter has been printed and posted so I will update you next month. Lousy conditions and chores sort of held me back but I have been on the air with the call as frequently as possible from 80m through 15m including the WARC bands. Lots and lots of members worked including some very late numbers from across the pond and much interest expressed from non-members.

Boy, was I ever blessed with some lousy luck. A local beer bibber was chatting with me about nothing in particular (you know the way it goes when you get 'deep whumph' from your pint) and in the course of conversation, I mentioned that I was keen on Morse. He showed some interest here and described a gadget that he had seen on sale for a fiver at a car boot sale. I could have killed him. It was the RN key I have been chasing for so long. Ocooh.

Articles for inclusion in Keynote. Most of the material comes as you may guess, from letters but nowadays an increasing amount of data is clipped from e-mail messages which is very convenient. The DTP used is very much up-to-date and can cope with a variety of formats but remember that it is not always possible or even desirable to reproduce with the native attributes which you may feel should be there. Material has to flow into preset columns which rules out any formatting on a line-by-line basis and even though the programme will recognise typographical attributes such as bold, italics and even font information, this can rarely be applied. Everyone with access to a computer should have an ASCII editor. Text processed in a very sophisticated Word Processor can also be saved as straight ASCII which is the preferred format as far as the Keynote is concerned. Given plain ASCII text, I can simply 'pour' it into the preset columns and then do any

necessary editing once it is there. Be prepared to sacrifice the floppy disc. Their value these days is frequently less than the cost of postage in returning. Also note that I no longer have a 5.25" drive so 3.5" discs are a must. In all cases, a measure of editing is invariably required due to the format of the news letter.

Photographs. If you wish the photograph to be returned, add necessary information on the back by means of a sticky label or write VERY lightly with a soft pencil. Writing in a normal manner directly onto the back results in a mirrored highlight which is not always easy to eradicate after scanning. With head/shoulder images, try to choose a photograph which has a moderately large image, good photographic quality and no intrusive shadows. The information on a photograph is converted to grey-scale and whilst the junction between hair and background may be easily seen on the original, conversion to grey-scale invariably results in a seamless blob.

These days, I tend to leave the computer sleeping rather than switch it off which permits me to have it monitor the telephone for incoming calls. It will differentiate between a voice or data message and in the former case give you the opportunity to leave a 60 second message for attention.

THE LADDER

With the lead that he had, I guess it was inevitable that the winner should turn out to be G4LHI closely followed (last minute dash) by GW0SGG. Congratulations to both and also the third placed member, G0MGD. The rest of the field as below:

CALL	Mem	Total	Non-mem	Prev	Total
G0MRH	19	38	0	175	213
G0FVS 10	20	1	1	148	169
G4PTE	8	16	1	151	168
G4RBE	7	14	0	87	101
GW4PXQ	11	22	0	47	69
G0VBH	2	4	0	66	64
G0VCY	2	4	0	40	44
G0WAS	5	10	0	31	41
G4CBG	4	8	0	28	36
G0PEH	2	4	3	10	17
PA3AFF	8	16	0	0	16
G0IFX	8	16	0	0	16
G0ATR	4	8	0	0	8

From the response received here it has been a most popular event which has kept Bob (G0FRL) rather busy with QSLs and the last Sunday in October sees the start of another session. A few late entrants here and it is nice to see PA3AFF in the field. Gerry asks me to remind you that the times quoted are utc as there seems to be some confusion betwixt local and zulu time.

1400 - 1530 and 1900 to 2030 are the times you should be watching out for and you will doubtless find a number of members kind of warming up before the green light goes on.

MERCHANT MARINE AND CW

An item in the RNARS newsletter by VE3FAB sheds some very interesting light on the current use of CW by the Maritime services. CW is emphatically not dead. The US Coast Guard has phased it out and military ships do not use it but there are about

150,000 ships worldwide that still use CW. Within this group, 11% are of US registry and the remaining 89% represent other nations of the world. The business of providing shore based CW communications for these is still a viable one but many former owners of shore stations have decided that HF communications is finished and satellite communications are the future so they bailed out. Other entrepreneurs see the vast number of ships out there who run on 'low budgets' and the expense of retrofitting these vessels with satellite facilities is prohibitive so, some of these defunct shore stations are purchased and operated expressly for this market.

Commercial station KFS, owned by Globe Wireless, has a receiver site in Half Moon Bay, California while the transmitter site is situated in Palo Alto. Another site housing a receiver and transmitter facility is located in Slidell Louisiana and operated by remote control. A competing company is in the same business with sites in Bolinas and Point Reyes, California. There is a third company situated in the State of Washington and manned by five operators. There are perhaps fifty shore based CW stations on the US West Coast and another much smaller number on the East Coast.

One of the leading shore stations in the US is now situated in Mobile Alabama and this originally started communicating in the 2MHz AM radiotelephone band using home-brew or modified surplus equipment. It later expanded into CW, HF and VHF radiotelephone. In later years, the owner of this station was first off the mark with SITOR telex. Everyone thought he was foolish and SITOR would not last but he certainly proved everyone wrong. Another company which used to have relay stations all over the world was Portishead Radio based in the UK. What used to be a thriving business in New Orleans in the 1970's with Lykes Lines, Waterman Steamship, Central Gulf Steamship, Delta Lines and others has withered away to almost zero. In that era, Lykes had about 40 ships bearing the US flag, in 1995 they had five and those may disappear this year. Delta and Waterman are gone, Central Gulf has almost ceased to exist and although Marine CW may not go on forever, the end is not in sight.

F/G0DJ/A/P

From his location in Nevez, Brittany, Dave ran his Kenwood TS850S to an end-fed wire on 1.8, 3.5 and 14MHz with nested dipoles for 10, 1 and 28 MHz.

The only listed FIST was G0VGF on 80m but there were many G-QRP members logged.

I note a couple of contacts on 10m but the bulk of his work took place on 80 and 30m.

FORSALE

HI-MOUND HK-702 straight key. Not original knob but very nice item. £30+pp.

G0NTR. Jim Harrison. 43 Churchfield Court, Walton, PETERBOROUGH, PE4 6GB.

CLIPPINGS

From G5WW, a copy of his local rag, Eastern Daily Press, in which a letter calling into question the Admiralty decision to dispense with the requirement of officers to have a knowledge of the code was given a prominent three column spot. "*Perhaps their Lordships could explain to us who is supposed to benefit by their decision?*"

This was followed up by a letter from G3DEP (Senior instructor, Novice Radio Amateurs, Norfolk) "*Happily, Morse is not quite dead: the code is being regularly used by many Radio Amateurs who would not consider any other mode.*"

Also, from G3TUX, a clipping from the Guardian relating the story of a very nervous person whose habit of breaking into explosive stammers when under stress, earned him the nickname of Inspector Morse. Di di dee di dee di di di should more correctly have read dididi deedi didee deedidee di dididi when presented with prospect of snakes but the picture of someone afflicted with a stammer breaking out into readable Morse was one which tickled me no end. Hi.

I recall the tale of a reporter stuck out in the middle of Africa trying to get a message to his editor. The only communications link; indeed the only telephone, was at the office of the local telegraph office and, having written out a brief resume of his requirements, the operator picked up the phone, gave the ancient handle a quick

whirl and started to relay the message with "DahDahDeeDah". Verbal Morse code would you believe. Hi.

This was almost akin to the situation in which G3HZZ and myself found ourselves in 2m FM mobile/mobile communication on the Isle of Man. To qualify a 2m cw contact, we resorted to DahDahDit DitDitDitDahDah etc. on the mic. I initiated a QSL card with a report of 597 since his state of sobriety was somewhat in doubt at the time.

THAT FALLING FEELING

G1NBX and G0KWD left at 0730 on 9 Sept for Netheravon where we arrived at 0900. After clearing security we made our way to the hangars to meet Corp Mike Danby my Jump instructor and I had a quick refresher of what we would be doing and sat down to wait for the mist and cloud to clear. At 1415 Mike said "*we will give it until 1500, if it doesn't clear up by then you will have to come back tomorrow*". At last (1435) the sun broke through and they started loading up the first plane. 4 hours later, I got ready to get on board the skyvan they had brought in from another airfield to cope with the backlog. We took off at 1850 and climbed to our jump height of 12,000 feet. The rear door opened like a Hercules Transport and we walked out into nothingness. Exhilarating does not quite cover the feeling but suffice to say that I enjoyed it despite the wait. I have raised about £350 this time, not as much as last year but I didn't expect to really.

Say Keef... Does a blind man close his eyes during the jump?

BANGERS AND BIG DX

Many of you will remember that Paul, G0FUS, following the death of his Wife, befriended an OT (Jim). This worthy gent (G3BRR) was seeking sufficient DX for his DXCC award and was bending Paul's ear about a 5H3 who was seemingly deaf to his calls so Paul tried whilst Jim went off to cook some bangers (links to our cousins) for his dinner. After the 10th attempt at calling the 5H3 on split operation, Paul succeeded in grabbing his attention and called Jim who then sat down and made the important QSO. They were filling in the log to mark the conquest when the fire alarm sounded and Jim dashed to the kitchen to find his forgotten bangers burned to a crisp and the house rapidly filling with smoke. Says Paul; "*that rare DX cost Jim his dinner but laugh... we both nearly had to go and change our clothes*". Those of you who work the Hampshire Constabulary with GXOLA W may well receive a sample of the QSL that Paul sent me showing the Pilatus Britten Norman BN2-20 which, fitted with Nightseek (a thermal imaging camera for night surveillance), is the latest acquisition of the force.

The Hampshire Police ARS are working on an award scheme which will be based on the 'spy' technique. Basically, they will advertise details of when they will be on and on what bands etc., but with only restricted time slots in which certificate hunters can find them. Outside of these specific periods, they can only be worked on a non-award basis.

THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

*DL1DRA. Sehr viele Danke Aci mein Freund. Mein Deutsch ist sehr arm aber alle ist verstanden. *G0DJ/A. Keith moved QTH in December - a fact which I had failed to note - but only a couple streets away. The old QTH is occupied by another ham, G6SPH, who has been delivering his Keynotes by hand. He met a "wonderful girl, Jeanette" who made an honest man of him. They jumped the broomstick on the very last day of 1996. Fine start to '97 Keith. *G3WP. Hope you had a nice holiday Jack and yes band condx have been the pits of late though what you mention about bad manners on the bottom end would apply just as much to the more "gentlemanly" end if the rare DX stuff turned up there. Believe me I have experienced this on 140575 with GB0FCW. *G0IOF. Graham and his Wife successfully vied for custody of their grand daughter following the death of his son-in-law some two years ago. I realise that this must demand much of your time mate but what price can you put on sheer joy? *AE4VT. Our QSO on 40m whilst I was /W8 but we hit a lump of QSB and it was only later that Garland realised who was on the t' other end. My pleasure. *G0UPU. Our Roger is taking liberties with his G5RV by building a coil (2ft diam and 4ft high) to get the antenna to bounce on 73KHz. The coil is variable (after reading this, I had a queer dream about a giant roller coaster) and 73KHz brings his span of available bands to no less than 17. *E15FY. Bill reminds me that

the IRTS transmit news bulletins at 15wpm on 3535KHz around 1030 local time. Content may be of little interest but should be good for practice and also an indicator of condx. *G01YZ. Being interested in CW, Chris enquired about FISTS on packet and found answers via Ken, G4YRF. He is just getting back into the mode again and enjoying UK/EU contacts on 80m. *G3KEF. Hi Tom. Good grief.. I have never heard anyone calling FISTS FISTS FISTS ONLY and quite agree that it is not the best of publicity. Makes us sound like a secret Society so whoever is doing this, pse don't. He reports DL8FX with a badly suppressed carrier on 14058 capable of causing much concern to at least two CW QSOs at once. Hope you do get some joy from the RSGB Tom because many will be interested. *GW4PXQ. Hi George. You were not the only one who was konfuzed so I have tried to update as requested. I can only do this periodically however or the whole of the newsletter will be taken up with lists and amendments.

CALLCHANGES

In response to a number of requests, I take the delimited list from Br.an, W8BL, and convert it to the format you see. Note that the list is NOT columnised. Read left/right from the top:

OldCall	Call	OldCall	Call
AA0X1	AA0X1	AA1FC	N1NIM
AA2HR	K2VT	AA2LK	N2UB
AA2YH	N2WF	AA3EQ	W3LEN
AA6IH	K5HSS	AA8HV	N8TI
AA8TU	K8EZ	AA8VK	N8GA
AA9BO	W9ATE	AA9DK	K9GC
AA9PI	N9TA	AB0I	W0FU
AB2AC	K2VS	AB2AU	WA2AHH
AB7VV	AB7VZ	AC4XT	N3XT
AC5GP	N5VC	AC6NV	K7PU
AD4KX	N4HO	K8MPF	W8DO
K9ZCH	W9QR	KA1ZVX	N1WC
KA8FGP	AA8YY	KA8OUT	W8FDV
KL5RMY	K0QR	KB1AXF	K1WD
KB2QLK	KN2GSJ	KB2UNT	W2QU
KB2VIT	KG2JM	KB2WIK	KG2LO
KB2ZSF	W2GR	KB3BKJ	W3DV
KB5WKX	AC5FI	KB5ZP	AA9SE
KB7AU	N4BM	KB7SVB	W6NCK
KB8HUK	N8CWG	KB8MBJ	W8WC
KB8WOL	AA8YL	KB9KWL	W9ISC
KL9MNU	KG9JD	KC5NGS	KM5JX
KC5VGQ	AC5NF	KC7BHU	K10FM
KD3AO	N3AO	KD4BXI	KU4DF
KD5EL	W7MIO	KE3NV	W3CV
KE4AGT	KE4AGT	KE4UAQ	KM5DT
KE6UQK	W6VL	KE8QT	K8JV
KF4EF	K4ND	KF4IYS	KU4EA
KF6CR	AD6CW	KF7AY	K7WX
KF9IQ	K9IQ	KG8ON	N8GI
KG8QT	N8MG	KG8UM	W8XP
KG9HB	K9AI	KI7YO	KR7X
KJ6GR	W6QR	KK5SQ	K5HLR
KM4DY	AF4NC	KQ4XF	W4MA
KR4FC	N5BI	N0ZHB	N0TR
N1OSL	N1PT	N1WGM	N1WGM
N2JBZ	W2NTS	N2LDK	K1SZK
N2PLE	N2FX	N2USK	N3NY
N2VNR	K2WP	N2XHY	KG2LL
N3AN	N2TTL	N6HCS	N6EV
N8IAG	W8BL	N9AKE	N4SI
N9ROR	N9WC	N9URB	AA9SS
NA8G	N8FF	NU2G	N2SV
WA0FAX	W8FAX	WA0UCQ	W0GV
WA4OSR	W4OA	WA8MEM	K8ME
WB3KMX	K3QA	WB3LUI	K3LU
WB3SLU	W8FYO	WB9PIL	KG9KK
WD8BHP	N8ZP	WK1H	W1TT
WN5TEN	W5TEN	WR2F	K3LT
W30W	W1FA	WU6Q	W6LEE
WY6F	K6AP		

Morsum Magnificat



Samuel F.B. Morse
1791-1872

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NEW MEMBERS

2884	GSWL5	Guy	2885	M0AOB	John
2886	G3ZFZ	Gordon	2887	G0VOW	Joan
2888	M0APB	Ken	2889	G0IYZ	Chris
2890	VU2TS	Ganesh	2891	G0SDD	Chris
2892	M0AMF	Ron	2893	2E0AGB	Joe
2894	G0RGP	Alan	2895	G0UTH	Tom
2896	M0AVV	Chuck	2897	M0AQQ	Ken
2898	M0AVP	Tony	2899	G4PWM	David
3700	G0MDZ	Tony	3701	G4ALL	Aif
3702	G0WVG	Alan			

You will note the jump from 2899 to 3700. Nancy and I both continue the same 100 block until it is full and then adopt the next available block. Thus, the US contingent gobbled up the 2900 to 3600 series whilst we were still on the 2800 block.

CENTURY HOLDERS

For those hunting their platinum, here is an up-to-date list in alphabetical order of those members who hold century awards. Remember that this award begins as and from 1 June, 1997. You will ask the contact for his century number and he/she will respond with the FIRST century number held.

AA0WZ, AA3LM, AA5EA, AA9KH, AB5EQ, AC4DT, AC4ZH, AC5JH, AC6QO, AC6TO, AE2L, AE4AZ, AE4P, AE4QS, AF9H, AI9L, F5JUD, G0FIP, G0FOD, G0FRL, G0FVS, G0GGU, G0GHA, G0IJE, G0ILN, G0JWB, G0LJB, G0MGD, G0NKO, G0ONS, G0SWU, G0SZE, G0TBD, G0TFC, G0TGU, G0TUE, G0UOE, G0UQF, G0VQA, G0WAS, G3ASG, G3GXQ, G3KEF, G3LPS, G3VQQ, G3YLL, G4EIB, G4JRE, G4LHI, G4OOS, G4RBE, G4WBN, G4ZIB, G10PCU, GM4BAE, GW0SGG, GW0UHI, GW3VLU, GW4PXQ, K2SWZ, K2VT, K3WVP, K4UK, K7WF, K7ZR, K8FN, K8LJG, KA3UXU, KA4IFF, KA80QF, KA8ZDL, KB2SWI, KB2UZY, KB8KRD, KB8OOM, KB8ZVD, KC5NRB, KC5VJU, KC8BSC, KD1XA, KF6DCU, KG8DA, KG9HE, KJ7OX, KQ4VH, KS4UV, KT4QD, LA1IE, LY3BY, LZ1JZ, N1DNM, N1VWD, N2SLB, N2ZHF, N3NY, N3PM, N3RSD, N4VEF, N4ZMP, N5DCF, N5VC, N7CFA, N8NLE, N8UJZ, NB2T, NP2GP, NP4FW, NS2G, NS2H, NW3N, OZ7KDJ, PA3AFF, PA3BJD, SP6JOE, VA3KEW, VE1ZAC, VE3FMC, VE3MIQ, VE5RD, VY2RB, W3ERU, W3RMD, W4IUI, W4JCH, W4MA, W4OGZ, W6DDB, W8BL, W8LFI, WA0FGV, WA2BQI, WA3WEE, WA4KQL, WA7YYY, WB2EXI, WB2FXK, WB2HEK, WO8E, WP4LNY

G4ZPY

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Boy... that was some chore. Splitting this (continuous) list with tabs etc., to the form you now have was real hairy. Hi.

ODDS N' ENDS

From Chris, G3TUX: *Here's one I plucked from the QRP-L this morning:*

Another month ends... All targets met, all systems working, all customers satisfied, all staff eager and enthusiastic. All pigs fed and ready to fly.

Please note that the submarine station K6DF mentioned as a club station last month has changed callign to NJ6VT. The QRA is USS PAMPANITO. *The W.W.II radio call sign of the USS Pampanito SS-383 submarine was, NJVT so now you understand why I got the call, NJ6VT from the FCC under the vanity call sign system last November and why that call is so significant to this submarine.*

The station is generally active Wednesdays and Sundays at 1600 to 2100 utc and can be found on 14058. May also be found on 7.144 but this applies principally to US members as this QRG is beyond the UK span.

Dennis Franklin K6DF

4658 Capitan Dr. Fremont, CA 94536-5448 USA.
INTERNET: k6df@wco.com

Would appreciate similar info from other US Club stns.

An Invite from across the pond:

The FISTS Slow Speed Group meets on 3720 khz (in the US 80m Novice Band) every Wednesday evening at 8pm eastern time (0000 UTC Thursday US daylight savings time/ 0100 UTC Thursday US standard time). NCS is (usually) club station W8B1 (with KA8OQF at the key). The nightowls amongst the faithful with the antenna amperage and the courage to give it a try (now that fall/winter is upon us with the long-awaited drop in noise levels) are cordially invited to drop in. KA8OQF.

Affiliations.

It is quite some time since I ran a synopsis so here is an up-dated list:

RNARS	61	
RSARS	50	
G-QRP		162
RSGB	502	

This information is extracted from UK/EU/DX members. I do not have similar data for the US contingent but in any case, I doubt if Nancy does indeed keep such details. I know that a handful of them are RSGB members and you do get the odd RNARS or RSARS amongst them.

Also amongst our members, there is an assortment of affiliations ranging from UFT to some strictly local organisations. Interests vary from re-building veteran motorcycles and cars to top level computer programming and scanning the application forms often leaves me dumbfounded at the variety.

MARCONI STAMP

I received this some time ago from DLIADV but it has lain forgotten in the scrap box until recently discovered. The scan and conversion to grey-scale I regret has done little for the

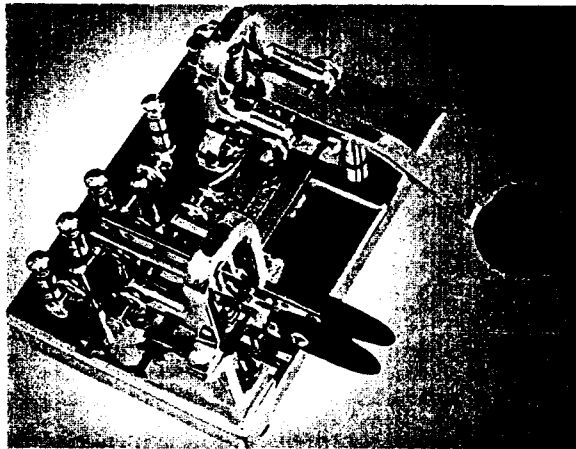


image but as you can see, it is a photograph of Marchoni in a thoughtful pose. There is much detail on the stamp which has been denegated by the process but what you see bottom left appears to be the business end of an ancient spark transmitter. A reading glass discloses what appears to be a solenoid and a few stray wires in a loose coil on the box but the detail fails dismally when I try to blow this up - just amass of pixels. Any of our members able to shed further light on this?

FISTS CW CLUB NEWSLETTER.

VIBROPLEX COMBO

At last I have found space to include the photographs in Key-note. It comprises as you can see, the traditional Vibroplex bug key complete with ruby bearings and there is also a numbered plate on the base. The straight key is something new in the Vibroplex stable and has been included in previous Keynotes. It is odd that they chose to follow the old "J" series keys when it came to bearings when just about everyone else is going with roller type but when you come to consider the actual movement of the key, you wonder if roller bearings can really be justified any way.



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FINALE

The weather has turned distinctly colder up here in West Lancs and I suspect that Winter is perhaps somewhat closer than we imagined. Ivy returns home on the last Sunday from the residential home where she has been having a few weeks rest from my ministrations so it will be back to the business again. Can't say I did not appreciate the break but in truth I miss her very much and will be glad of a return to 'normality'. Tammy is aware that she is not far away because each time I return from a visit, his nose goes into overdrive especially on my hands. The poor lass had her hair fixed last week and the shampoo that the hairdresser used caused a real problem with a galloping rash on her neck so it's cream and anti-biotics three times a day now. Hi. Take care my friends, have fun and I hope to see you on the bands especially now that Autumn is peering round the door. 73/88 es stay sober

de Geo

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