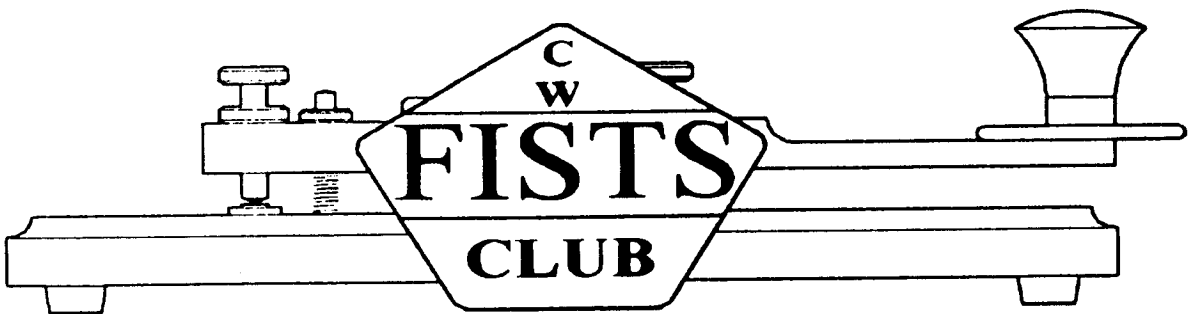


The Keynote

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...?

Info on How to do just about anything related to FISTS

HOW DO I JOIN? Membership is open to all interested in Morse code, irrespective of their speed and ability. Subscriptions are **\$15.00/year**; Under 17= **FREE**; College students = **\$10**. Family members may join FISTS at no extra charge-only one newsletter is mailed per household. **Send to FISTS, P. O. Box 47, Hadley, MI 48440 or via PAYPAL <http://www.paypal.com> North American members send Paypal funds to the address FISTS@TIR.COM**

NOTE: Checks can take 6-8 weeks to clear from the day received. **THIS APPLIES TO CLEARING THE CHECKS ONLY - it doesn't take this long to get your number.** Applications are processed as they come in, we don't wait for the checks to clear. Nancy processes them, updating the database, then takes the checks to the bookkeeper. The bookkeeper enters them into the "official books", then takes them to the bank. Depending on schedules that month, it can take 6-8 weeks. **REPEAT: Applications are processed as they come in, not held until checks clear - it doesn't take 6-8 weeks to get your number, it just may take that long for your check to clear.**

HOW DO I GET AN APPLICATION? You can download a North American membership application or an application for North American FISTS on the FISTS web page <http://www.fists.org>. Information and an application can also be mailed to you. Write to Nancy Kott WZ8C with your name, call sign, and postal address, and mail the request to PO Box 47 Hadley MI 48440

WHERE DO I MAIL MY APPLICATION? North American applications are to be mailed to Nancy, WZ8C at P. O. Box 47, Hadley, MI 48440-0047. "FISTS Down Under" applications are to be mailed to Ralph Sutton, ZL2AOH at 12C Herbert Gardens, 186 The Terrace, Wellington 6001, New Zealand **All other applications are to be mailed to Geo, G3ZQS at 119 Cemetery Rd, Darwen Lancs, BB3 2LZ.**

HOW DO I GET A NUMBER FOR MY LOCAL CLUB? Clubs with FCC call signs may be assigned a FISTS number at no charge providing there is at least one FISTS member in good standing in the local club. These clubs are not legally affiliated with FISTS, nor does FISTS have anything to do with how the club is run, etc. It just means the club has a FISTS number worth three points toward awards. If the club wants a newsletter, there is a \$15 a year charge.

HOW DO I KNOW WHEN TO RENEW? Your renewal date is on your mailing label - please look at it! ONE renewal postcard is mailed out when your renewal time is near. *If you've sent in your renewal but get a reminder postcard within a few weeks, please don't be concerned, the card probably crossed with your renewal.*

HOW DO I RENEW? Send \$15/year or \$10/year for college students (under 17 and family members are free) to FISTS, P. O. Box 47, Hadley, MI 48440. or to Paypal using the email address fists@tir.com. Put RENEWAL in the comments section.

HOW DO I UPDATE MY ADDRESS or CALL SIGN ON THE FISTS DATABASE? Send corrections or changes to Nancy Kott, WZ8C, at FISTS, P. O. Box 47, Hadley, MI 48440. Please send labels with your new address to the FISTS QSL Bureau so the bureau workers don't have to change all your SASEs by hand.

HOW DO I GET AN UP-TO-DATE MEMBER LIST? Send a SASE with \$2.00 (US) to [Ed N7CFA](mailto:Ed.N7CFA) 2628 Lilac Street, Longview, WA 98632. Lists are available on the FISTS Web page.

HOW DO I GET ON THE FISTS EMAIL LIST? For periodic Email updates send your Email address, call sign and FISTS number to Kathi Hilton. fistelist@comcast.net. If you put your email address on your application, it is automatically added to the list. Due to potential spam problems, the list is NOT given out to the membership and is NOT published on the web page. It is ONLY used to notify you of FISTS items of interest. If you want people to know your e-mail address, we recommend you include it in your listing on QRZ.com or Buckmaster lookup service.

HOW DO I ORDER FISTS CLUB QSL CARDS? Send SASE to WX9X or visit his web page at www.qth.com/star/. A scan of the card is on our web page <http://www.fists.org>

CONTINUED ON INSIDE BACK COVER

NORTH AMERICAN MEMO

Nancy Kott WZ8C Editor
nancy@tir.com

PO Box 47, Hadley MI 48440
810-797-2033

Hi FISTS! It looks like it's shaping up to be a busy spring for Ham radio. There are several petitions up for comment with the FCC. I sent out a mass emailing about this to the FISTS on our email list. If you are not on the list please email our Elist Manager, Kathi, at fistelist@comcast.net. We do not distribute/sell/publish the list anywhere, so your privacy is as secure as it can be.

Note that this is for working people ACTUALLY OPERATING FROM the call area, not the call area in their callsign. For example, if you worked K4UK while he was operating KN0WCW mobile from Dayton Ohio (8-land), that would count as a contact from the 8th Call Area.

We will have a Call Area map and application form on the FISTS web site as soon as we can.

Just because these new petitions have an RM (rule making) number, it doesn't mean the FISTS petition is out of the running. The FCC is merely putting these up for comment, like they did the FISTS petition and numerous others that were submitted. They will probably take a compilation of the comments and form their own petition, so it's important to let them know what you like or don't like about the ARRL petition and the others up for comment. RM-10867 by the ARRL

RM-10868 by Radio Amateur Foundation

RM-10869 by Ronald Lowrance

RM-10870 by NCVEC To read the petitions go to: http://gullfoss2.fcc.gov/prod/ecfs/comsrch_v2.cgi and click on the highlighted word "PROCEEDING" then type in the RM-number above (upper case RM with a dash).

NEW OPERATING AWARDS!

We are now offering a Worked All Call Areas KN0WCW certificate. To qualify, work KN0WCW activated from each of the US Call Areas (0-9). Send a log of your 10 contacts to Dennis K6DF with a note stating you are applying for the KN0WCW WACA Award and that the contacts were 2-way CW, and sign your name.

Contacts made any time, on any band with an authorized KN0WCW Operator can be counted.

There will also be a KN0WCW Worked All States Award. We haven't had enough operators to do this yet, but I wanted to let you know, so you can think ahead and start keeping your log. These awards mean we NEED more KN0WCW operators. Especially if you operate from a less populated state - please volunteer. Don't be shy! You don't have to be a fast operator to activate KN0WCW; slow and steady sending is appreciated by many on the bands. Very few of us, if any, have perfect fists. But, PLEASE pay attention to the SPACING between sending your letters and words. Often, lack of spacing is more of a problem that sloppy sending.

Late Breaking News! EAST ASIA CHAPTER We have a new East Asia Chapter now! FISTS is truly 'going global'. Jun K6KF/JM1JOT was very instrumental in setting this up. So far they have 20 members in Taiwan and Japan. They will translate the KN into their languages and distribute it there, as well as their own QSL bureau and printing their own membership certificates, etc. This should go a long way to creating more FISTS/CW interest in East Asia, and we look forward to having many more East Asian FISTS members. The folks who were already FISTS members retain their original number, but new members receive numbers starting with 15XXX.

ACK! I'm outta room...more next Issue...WZ8C

QRP with K3WWP Column #62.

This column I'll discuss QRP portable operation. I haven't done all that much operating away from my home shack so it was a novelty for me to be able to setup and operate a portable station at my cousin's house for the 2003 CQWW DX contest. Her house is located pretty much on top of one of the hills that surround my own location down in the valley. I had always wanted to see how much better conditions would be outside of the valley and now I had the chance.

My story started back around the beginning of November when my cousin Virginia asked me if I could stay with her for a few days after Thanksgiving while her husband was off on a hunting trip. I immediately thought to myself that was the weekend of the CQWW DX test, but family comes first so I said I would.

At first I had no plans to put in a serious effort in the DX contest but thought at least I should be able to get my daily streak QSO without having to run into town each day. Maybe I could also get a few DX QSO's in the contest. My friend Eric, KB3BFQ left his QRP+ rig with me a while ago since he wasn't going to be active for some time so I decided to use that since it is more portable than my TS-570D.

I threw everything together a couple of days before Thanksgiving. I grabbed a couple of coils of hookup wire from my wire box to use as an antenna. I took the QRP+ and a power-supply plus a very crude paddle that Eric and I constructed several years ago. Then I got out my old homebrew antenna tuner and SWR meter to couple the rig to the wire.

I set up the station Friday afternoon on a little round table about 20 inches in diameter. My seat was the bed most of the time until I got a folding chair on Sunday afternoon.

I spliced the ends of the coils of wire together (no soldering), tossed it out the window and attached the end of it to a grapevine that my cousin has in the backyard. I had no idea how long it

was at that time. I did measure it after I got home out of curiosity. It was a little less than 72 feet long. It was about 15 feet high coming out the window, and sloped down to about 4 feet high or less at the grapevine.

Without my computer, I'd be logging on paper. I should have made a paper dupe sheet, but I didn't think I'd be getting all that many QSO's and could dupe check in my head.

The paddle I used is made out of wood, some printed circuit board stock and a few bolts. The PC stock mounted on the wood acts as the paddle levers and the bolts attached to the wood base and the PC stock are the contacts. The springiness of the PC stock serves as the springs for the paddle. Very crude, but it did work with the built in QRP+ keyer. However it did give me problems. I just wasn't used to the different feel of it and often when I started to send K3WWP, I'd send an N instead of a K, then I'd usually wait through another QSO to avoid having anyone hearing me thinking I was NK3WWP. I made other errors with the paddle also.

My tuner has a coil with fixed taps wired to a rotary switch that works with my antennas at home, but I had no idea how it would work with my portable antenna. I never bothered to find the settings on the tuner for 20M and up until I was well into the contest. Even after I did find the settings, it was not all that easy changing bands quickly so I tended to stay on one band for a long while unlike at home where I can change instantly and often do a lot of band hopping. With the QRP+ and the homebrew tuner, there was a lot involved in changing bands.

The tuning of the antenna seemed to change at random so I thought I'd try some kind of a ground. I checked to see if the wall plug was grounded and it was so I connected my station ground to that. Now my tuning seemed more stable. With the grounding and at times opening the tuner and using jumpers on the coil, I got close to a stable 1:1 SWR on all the

contest bands. 20M was the one band I had the most trouble with. It seemed every time I went back there, the tuning was different for some reason, and often I couldn't get it below 1.4:1 or so.

I was annoyed by the offset frequency in the QRP+. I'm used to the setting of 550 Hz in the TS-570D, and the QRP+ is quite a bit higher than that. I'm very used to zero beating by just tuning in a station till I get a beat note close to 550 Hz with the 570 and then I'm zero beat or very close. If I did that with the QRP+, I'd be off a couple hundred Hz and I often forgot to allow for the difference so I'd be slightly off frequency when I called a station.

Also I found out that the battery in the QRP+ was dead and that meant I had to practically reprogram the memories each time I turned the rig on. It wasn't too much of a chore because all you do is turn on the rig with the MEM button pushed in to restore the frequencies to their defaults, but still the rig had to be changed to CW and the bandwidth set each time. Oh, and the keyer speed as well. Sometimes it would default to 45 WPM, other times 10 WPM, etc.

I think from what I have said so far that you can see I was not all that organized and the setup was indeed truly minimal. Let's start now to describe the results I got.

I tried the station out Friday afternoon, and was impressed with the reception I was getting. It seemed much superior to what I was hearing back home. The signals were crisp and loud and the noise level was lower than at home. I guess that's when I decided I'd try to put in somewhat of a serious effort in the DX test. I made a couple contacts on 40M and 30M to see how I was getting out. I got only a 539 on 40M, but the 30M reports were 589 and 579.

This is turning into a longer story than I thought so I'll continue it in the next column with a blow by blow description of the actual contest operation. As you read part 2, keep in mind the setup I was using and I think it will demonstrate just how well even a very simple QRP portable setup

works.

Till next time, I hope you'll think about perhaps doing some portable operating yourself. Visit me at my web site - <http://home.alltel.net/johnshan/> or send me email at jsk3wwp@alltel.net or regular mail at John Shannon, 478 E. High St., Kittanning, PA 16201-1304. For now 73. -30-

KN0WCW CONFIRMING QSO QSL'S

Cards come to the KN0WCW QSL Mgr direct, via the FB folks at the FISTS QSL Buro or the W0 Incoming Buro. These cards are sorted by their actual call area of origin, put in chronological order and placed in their respective albums. Two-sided cards are displayed with the front showing with a stick-on label showing the contact date. The count of QSL cards received and placed in albums through the end of February 2004 is nearly 1,150.

The albums will not be placed on a shelf to gather dust at my QTH. My XYL will not allow it! They were put together so they may travel to Ham Fests where FISTS has a booth or maybe to special event stations of the Club call or other functions of the FISTS USA Club where other hams and the general public might view contacts the club call operators have made.

The albums can be requested as a partial or complete set. You may want the ones for your and adjacent call area and the DX album. Requests will be handled on a first come, first served basis. **The recipient will be responsible to immediately return them after their event or possibly forward directly to the next requestor, depending on demand.** FISTS will cover the cost of postage/shipping of the albums.

To request albums please provide the following: Your Name and Call, Full mailing address and Home phone number/Email address. Please include the name and date of the event and Albums requested.

Please also feel to contact me with any questions. 73 Karl, KB1DSB, KN0WCW QSL MGR
2176 Drake Road Bomoseen, VT 05732
802-468-5444 kb1dsb@sover.net

Operating CW at speeds over 60 wpm.

written by Fred Ryan, W3NJZ, FISTS # 10202

Greetings! Although I have been a CW only operator for almost 60 years, I just joined the FISTS club, realizing that it was probably the sole remaining organization active in promoting CW operating. Sorry to be so tardy in recognizing that.

Upon joining FISTS, I asked Nancy Kott if an article on high speed CW might be of interest to the FISTS members. She encouraged me to write this article, as many had inquired about how CW operating at high speeds is accomplished. The following is about how I accomplished that. In discussions with other high speed operators, it appears that similar techniques were used by them. Their approaches differ in some respects however, and if you will obtain a copy of Bill Pierpont's latest printing of his book, "The Art and Skill of Radio-Telegraphy", third revised edition, it contains an appendix on high speed code with the viewpoints of others included. Bill was a great teacher, and I hope to explain things about high speed code operating that will be a fraction as good as his excellent text. CW operators lost a good friend last year when Bill passed away.

My article will be broken into two sections; comprehending high speed code, the second, sending high speed code.

COMPREHENDING HIGH SPEED CODE.

Let me first define some of the terms that I will be using.

"*High speed*" means rates over 60 wpm, and up to well over 100 wpm.

"*Comprehension*, means understanding the code "by ear" without the use of computers. It differs from code where a hard copy is required, such as in the old copying contests or in the relaying of messages. It is of a conversational nature, and is frankly, the most enjoyable form of CW in that the information exchange is greatly enhanced and approaches normal conversational

speeds. It requires work to achieve, but in my opinion, is not all that difficult to master. If you have average CW skills and sufficient desire, it can be accomplished.

When many of us first learned code, it was by memorizing the combinations of dots and dashes and relating them to the various letters and numbers. As pointed out by Bill Pierpont in his book, that is a terrible way to learn code.

One should learn the sounds of the letters and not dwell on the dots and dashes. Once one learns the sounds of the letters and constructs words from them, letter by letter, and puts down the pencil, speed increases up to around 55 wpm are just a matter of practice to achieve. One then runs into a brick wall and further improvement becomes more and more difficult. Many hams have run into that barrier and just thought that they had reached their personal limit. That simply is not so.

At about 55 wpm it becomes difficult to chain the letters together to form words as the letters are just arriving too quickly to accomplish that. Another style of comprehending code then starts making sense. You must learn to stop concentrating on the individual letters and let your brain do the work of generating the word. You are, of course, still aware of the individual letters, but you let the brain tell you what the word is. It's exactly like learning a new language. Most of you already do that subconsciously on common words like "the", "and", etc. That process must be extended to all words. It can only be accomplished over about 60 wpm, as the letters are arriving too slowly at lower speeds to allow one to recognize the "sound" of the words.

The barrier at 55 wpm can be difficult to overcome if you have had years of practice sticking to the comprehension of individual letters. For me, it took about two years to go from 55 wpm to over 70 wpm. Others have done it much quicker than that. The surprising thing is that, using this technique, one can comprehend code much easier over 60 wpm than below. In fact, the comprehension becomes easier and easier as

the speed increases beyond 60 wpm, not harder, as the "sound" of the words becomes easier to grasp because of the higher speed of the arriving letters. That is exactly the way we learn to talk. The words are spoken and we learn to recognize the word's "sound". If we had to figure out words by having someone say them slowly, letter by letter, we would be largely illiterate. The spelling of the words comes at a later time in order to allow writing and reading. It is not important for speech, however. Shortly after learning to comprehend words in learning to speak, the words are put into a flow of thought, such as a sentence. The application of this process to comprehending CW well over 100 wpm will be discussed later.

Making the transition from constructing words, letter by letter, to comprehending them directly takes effort. I can't suggest that you listen in on other high speed operators to improve that skill, as there are few still active on the bands.

George Hart, W1NJM has ceased operating his high speed code practice sessions. When I made the transition there were more high speed groups active than presently, and I would tape their sessions and play them back over and over.

Some of us are still active a few times a week close to 7.032 MHz, or during the winter, close to 3.532 MHz. That is the FOG, or fast operator's group, and typically operates between 55 and 70 wpm. Another group that is currently inactive, but will hopefully resume activity, is the SOB group, or the speed operator's bunch.. When in operation, their speeds vary from 70 wpm to over 100 wpm. They operate on frequencies close to the FOG frequencies.

In the absence of many active high speed groups, I have a couple of suggestions for breaking that "brick wall" at 55 wpm. Make up some tapes or computer documents with your own messages and play them back, over and over. When they become too well known, make up new ones. One thing I recommend is to create a list of words commonly used in conversations. Instead of just making up a text of them at, say 60 wpm, use an analogy of the Farnsworth method and send the

words at 70 wpm, but allow large spacings between the words. This can be done using a memory keyer such as made by MFJ, or one of the computer CW programs for sale that allow for that. Repeat the same word over again two or three times before moving on to the next word.. It is impossible to comprehend words at that speed by constructing them from the individual letters. That forces you to grasp the entire word instead. It is not an easy transition to make, but stick with it.

After you feel that you can comprehend code over 60 wpm, try joining into one of the active high speed groups. When you feel ready to take that step, another problem comes into play. In order to comprehend the words directly you must be completely relaxed. It is easy to become intimidated by the other operators. Once you cease to be relaxed, all is lost. You will miss comprehending an important word, tighten up, and drop back to comprehending letters. All you can hope for is to run into some understanding high speed operators who have gone through the same learning experience, and who really want you to become one of them. I was very fortunate to have had some very patient high speed operators to help me along, Tom, W4BQF, Larry, N8LN, and Ken, W9LRV. Hopefully there are some such people within your reception area.

I would like to make a few final comments about high speed code comprehension. I know of no high speed code operator who uses a computer program to comprehend the code for them and display it on a screen. There are two reasons for that. The very most important reason is that it would remove all of the enjoyment of operating CW. I love the CW language, and using it gives me great pleasure. Reducing it to a computer generated copy would bring no joy to any CW operator. It would be just like operating RTTY or digital modes. The second reason, completely subservient to the first, is that the comprehension programs that are on the market are completely outclassed by the human brain in understanding CW, through the typical band conditions of heavy QRM and QRN. Anyone who uses a computer to comprehend the code

soon loses interest and drops out.

Finally, a few comments on what I think the ultimate speed of comprehension of CW is. In my opinion it is from 200 to 300 wpm, similar to our limits of speech. That limit, of course, is greatly reduced if we are trying to explain something very complicated and technical. One must drop down in speed considerably to form your thoughts on such subjects, and for the other operator to understand what you are saying. That is also true when speaking.

Learning to comprehend words will get you up to around 100 wpm. To get faster than that you have to stop paying attention to the individual words, and just follow the flow of thought, just as we do in ordinary conversation. I have not yet accomplished that, probably due to the absence of operators who can send quickly enough. One person who has is Tom, W4BQF. He can follow the flow of thought up to 140 wpm. You have to realize that we spent many years learning to speak quickly. Speaking quickly is much easier than sending CW quickly, so that comparable amounts of time would be required to get to over 200 wpm, and with nobody capable of operating a keyboard that quickly, you get no practice. In the subsequent sending section, one suggestion for achieving that will be discussed.

One might ask, "why bother mastering CW at speeds over 60 wpm?". In addition to its being much more enjoyable than low speed CW, I have always found that achieving something new is one way of keeping young. It always bothered me to find that others could do something that I couldn't do. Learning to do new things, like high speed CW, keeps the brain from atrophying. Another reason is that CW is a superior language, compared to speaking. It is digital in format and, if proper spelling is used, comprehension is unaffected by things like bad pronunciation, dialects, or just poor speech. If it is sent perfectly, it is comprehended perfectly. Try that with speaking to some people in the English language!

SENDING HIGH SPEED CODE written by Fred Ryan, W3NJZ, FISTS #10202

In my previous article on operating high speed code, the comprehension of it was described. Now the sending part will be covered. It is the harder task to master in high speed CW operating. Like many, I started out using a straight key and reached a top speed of under 30 wpm. Moving on to using a bug, the top speed peaked out a little over 40 wpm. Next came the paddles, where my maximum sending speed peaked out around 60 wpm.

The instrument presently useful for sending over 60 wpm is the keyboard, and it can be used successfully to send well over 100 wpm. Having gone through this succession of sending means and getting proficient in all of them, I have to tell you that sending high speed code on a keyboard over 70 wpm is BY FAR the most difficult of them all. It is not just about having the fingers type quickly, but you must organize your thoughts, get the spelling right, tell the fingers what to send, and do this with perfect cadence with no gaps between words longer than the standard spacing.

Some CW operators look down on using a keyboard to send code. All I can say to them is to show me that they can master its use over 70 wpm. They will soon find that using paddles at 55 wpm is child's play compared to that. An expert typist capable of transcribing text at over 100 wpm, would be totally unable to accomplish the other skills required in sending a high speed QSO without extensive practice.

One should also recognize that even when some are using a keyboard at low speeds, you don't know the physical limitations of the operators sending. It may be all that they are capable of doing at that time. We can't afford to lose any CW operators, and no one should look down on, and possibly discourage, an operator for using whatever is within their capabilities for sending.

EQUIPMENT USED FOR SENDING HIGH SPEED CODE.

One must obtain a high quality keyboard. There are a lot of junk keyboards floating around. They exhibit large variations in the mechanical precision of their actions, with lots of wobble in the keys and variations in operating pressure from key to key, and often an excessively low operating pressure.

My favorites are the older IBM keyboards, obtainable at computer or ham flea markets for next to nothing. They have very good precision in the action, with real springs under the keys instead of air filled plastic bubble springs. Most of them can have the tops of the keys removed for non essential keys, reducing the number of inadvertent errors produced when a finger brushes against them. The IBM model M allows you to completely remove those keys, making errors with them impossible. It also raises the level of the number keys, reducing the possibility of hitting a number while going for a letter in the upper row of letters. I use a Model M. This error problem goes back to the original spacing chosen for the keys back in the 1800s, when women with small fingers were the typical typist. That spacing is far too small for use by men with large fingers, and since a source of wider key spacing keyboards is to my knowledge, not available, modifying a keyboard by reducing the chance of errors is all that is left.

There are two choices in the arrangements of the keys on the keyboard, the common "qwerty" arrangement, and the Dvorak. If you are just starting to use a keyboard you should consider learning its use with the Dvorak arrangement. If you are already a competent typist, stick with the common letter arrangement. Your top sending speed will be limited by factors other than the ease of finger movement.

Various pieces of code generating equipment are available. One can use an MFJ unit, or a computer running one of the software programs for generating code, such as CWTERM (CW 500) or YPLOG*. The advantage of the computer

programs is that they will display the code as you type it. That allows you to pick up sending errors when your fingers tell you that you might have made one. If you are typing much faster than the text going out, you have time to correct the error.

Not all rigs are capable of operating at high speeds. The later Ten Tec rigs are one example of rigs that will not key over 70 wpm, although their earlier, non phase lock loop frequency controlled rigs, are. Look into the manufacturer's claims before buying a high speed rig. At high speeds it is important to put out a strong signal, or the comprehension becomes difficult. A combination of QRO and antenna system is often necessary.

HOW TO TYPE HIGH SPEED CODE.

If you are fortunate, you already type by the "touch typing" method. That means that you don't look at the keys to see which one to hit next. If you are like many, you just picked up a keyboard that came along with a computer and started typing by looking at the letters, to see which one to poke. That is not an approach that you can use to send high speed code, and you are going to have to learn "touch typing". In typing classes, they force you into learning the location of the proper keys by eliminating the symbols on top of each key. Taking a typing class is a good way to learn the proper way to use a keyboard, but many will find that they can teach that to themselves. In addition to enabling you to send high speed code, you will find it coming in handy when typing an E-mail or creating a document.

You should be capable of typing at least 10 wpm faster than the text you are sending out, keeping the buffer filled ahead of the transmitting text. That allows you to have perfect cadence in the code. It also allows you some short time to correct sending errors if your message appears on a screen. The space bar must be used rigorously so that words are not run together. Once you have practiced sufficiently to get your typing speed over 60 wpm, try making up imaginary conver-

sations at progressively higher and higher speeds. That teaches you to get your thought train going fast enough to make up the message, get the spelling correct, and type it without the buffer going empty. There is no simple way to accomplish this and considerable practice will be necessary to achieve high speed sending.

Unfortunately, the side tone that you like to listen to when you are sending is now a distraction, as you hear the side tone of letters that you typed earlier, not the ones that you are presently sending. As mentioned before, you should be typing at least 10 wpm faster than the text being transmitted, so that the side tone is sending you irrelevant information on whether or not you are typing the correct letter in real time. A side tone that corresponds to your real time typing and not the buffer delayed transmission could be used, but I don't think it would be of much use at very high speeds (over 70 wpm). It is best to turn off the side tone completely over 70 wpm as it can actually prevent you from sending the higher speeds.

One can get some on-the-air practice with high speed sending by using it even at low speeds like 40 wpm. If I am sending at 40 wpm, I will type in bursts of over 70 wpm just to get typing practice. The buffer and code program will slow those 70+ wpm bursts to the proper speed. Getting from sending at 70 wpm to over 100 wpm is just a matter of more and more practice, but progress will continue. From my experience, for typing over 70 wpm you should; A, turn off the side tone completely, B. stop looking at the screen except maybe a glance now and then when your fingers tell you that you might have made a sending error, C. spend all of your energy on organizing your thoughts, getting the spelling correctly, and especially, constantly visualizing where the fingers are going to go next.

THE FUTURE OF HIGH SPEED CODE.

Continued activity in high speed code depends on getting new operators on board. The number of high speed operators in this country is down to a handful, and will disappear before long un-

less new members will join in. That is the principal purpose for my writing this article. I make the following offer; if anyone reaches that "brick wall" near 55 wpm and can also touch type over 55 wpm, contact me at QRZ.com and I will work with you to break that "brick wall". Once you have achieved that, you will quickly see how much more enjoyable high speed CW operating is, compared to QRS.

It was mentioned earlier that it was my opinion that high speed CW operating could be extended beyond 200 wpm, if a quicker way than using a keyboard to send it could be found. The logical candidate to replace the keyboard is computer voice recognition. These programs get better every year, and could be used to convert your speech into CW, with the upper speed limit being limited by how fast you can talk I'm sure that some would reject that as not being "true CW". Those same might say that using a keyboard, paddles, or a bug, is not "true CW". To me, the heart of CW is the comprehension of it, and will use any means possible to achieve higher QSO speeds.

I hope that you found these two articles of interest.73-Fred, W3NJZ

Note: There are several CW software programs available. One that is familiar to me is called CW500. It was developed by W1HKJ, but its present availability is unknown. It operates on the DOS system.

Another is YPLOG, developed by VE6YP. Information on that program can be obtained from him. It will operate on Windows systems. Others are advertised in ham journals. All contain many other features in addition to CW sending. - Fred W2NJZ

Advice For Newbies?

I received this nice letter from Tony, a new ham and FISTS member, and thought I would share it with you because it covers a lot of the bases of questions that new hams ask.

If you have any advice you'd like to share with Tony and other readers, please send them in to me (Nancy WZ8C) and I'll put them in an upcoming Keynote.

Hello Nancy,

I came across FISTS site while searching for anything I could find on CW. I currently hold a Technician license and I'm studying for my General. I've only had my license since November 3, 2003 and I'm still working on getting a station up and running at home.

I'm very interested in CW because it takes away a lot of the barriers you encounter with phone such as languages, accents and local slang plus it's just pleasurable to listen to. I belong to two local clubs here in Escondido, CA and Carlsbad, CA but there doesn't seem to be a lot of interest in CW aside from the straight key contest I heard about on New Years Eve.

Unfortunately, I don't have an HF antenna selected yet. I have a Yaesu FT-897 radio and a triband (144/220/440) vertical sitting in my garage and I'm still trying to decide between a half sloper and a sloped OmniLoop for my backyard for 10 meters to 40 meters before I crawl through the attic to string coax.

The biggest problem I've run into is figuring out what to do after I pass my element 1 and element 3 exams around mid March. There are just too many options to choose from for keys versus bugs versus iambic paddles, etc. and everyone has their own opinion on what's best. Personally, I can see the advantage of knowing how to transmit with both a straight key and an iambic paddle and eventually I want to train myself to use an iambic paddle with my left hand so my right hand is free for copying. That's about

all the background about myself I can think of at the moment.

At what stage do people typically get involved with FISTS? Are there people who join that can copy CW but haven't transmitted a single character? I've read about the buddy program and it sounds great to have someone to keep you practicing and improving.

Best Regards, Tony May KG6SXY #10681

Congrats to our Awards Manager, Dennis K6DF and his wife Pam on the birth of their first grandchild.

It's a boy - Thomas Wilhelm - 8 lbs 1 oz, 21 3/4 long. He was born in Germany. Dennis's daughter is married to a serviceman stationed there. Dennis and Pam are in Germany now to meet their grandson, so if your membership or award certificate has been delayed - that's the reason!

Dennis says he is taking code tapes and a pillow speaker to Thomas, so he's sure the baby's first words will be "dah dah"!

Dennis and Roger K1TG were having some fun the other day: In a time frame of 7.5 hours, Roger K1TG, and Dennis K6DF worked each other on six different amateur bands using CW mode. The bands used for the 6 contacts were; 10, 12, 17, 20, 30 and 40 meters."

Dennis said, "Roger and I sure had lots of fun doing it. We should have tried 15 meters, but neither of us needed each others state on that band! hi hi"

**SPRING SPRINT
SECOND SAT-
URDAY IN MAY
1700Z - 2100Z**

FISTS CW CLUB "DOWN UNDER" Newsletter - April 2004

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QTHR. QSL Manager for VK2FDU: Chris Thompson, VK2MQX via FISTS Bureau or QTHR. Visit our Web
Site: <http://fistsdownunder.morsekeys.com>

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members:

VK3JY - Steve Phillips # 9630, lives in Canterbury, Victoria. Canterbury is a suburb of Melbourne and is not to be confused with Bulldogs' territory in NSW, or the New Zealand province! His personal profile is: - I was first licensed in 1977 with a Limited call VK3YEZ - then followed a difficult process (for me!) of learning CW for the then required speed of 10 wpm. I succeeded a year later - sitting my test at a country Post Office with the examiner being one of the last telegraphy qualified Postmasters. I have held my current call since that time.

The usual 'excuses' of family and work, meant that I was not very active in either CW or SSB for many years and, not having worked in a technical environment, advances in amateur radio passed me by. Having recently retired, I have returned to my amateur 'roots' and find much enjoyment from CW - even if it is slow speed at this stage!!

I am receiving lots of encouragement from another new FISTS member - Drew VK3XU # 9629.

With a local Council not very sympathetic to towers (what's new?) I am currently restricted to dipoles on 80/40/30 metres, but dipoles on other HF bands may follow. I look forward to what can be achieved with QRP and simple antennas.

I am a member of the WIA (Victorian Division) the Eastern and Mountain District Radio Club and the Radio Amateurs Old Timers Club of Australia.

I am looking forward to some home brewing of QRP gear, particularly for CW.

ZL1BOP - Nick Emery # 9631 comes from Torbay, one of the East Coast Bays on Auckland's North Shore. Nick writes about himself - I am 67 years old, retired and married with 6 children and 8 grandchildren. I have been away from amateur radio for a few years, but renewed my licence a couple of years ago with my original call sign ZL1BOP. I am mainly interested in CW operation and am at present trying to get my speed up. I prefer straight keys, although I own a homebrew simple electronic key. I am also interested in QRP, home brewing and experimenting with antennas.

DOWN UNDER MEMBERS' NEWS

Thanks to **ZL1AYQ - Jim # 9602** who forwarded a generous donation for which we are very grateful!

ZL4PO - Lester # 9044 is conducting a DX session at the NZART annual conference in Blenheim over the coming Queen's Birthday weekend. This promises to be a very worthwhile session as Lester has much experience to offer especially to our newcomers. He was one of the operators in both the recent MELLISH REEF (VK9ML) and PRATAS ISLAND (BV9P) Expeditions. If you are attending, make yourself known to him.

ZL3CED - Charlie # 9039 took part in the NZ Field Day and reported to the NZDX Reflector - Thanks to all the CW operators who I made contact with over the 2 days. It was a real joy to hear so much CW on the bands; the bencher was fair humming away on 40m and the straight key was kept busy on 80m until, I found another electronic key to hook up to the 80m rig, signals got a bit chirpy there for a while, the old batteries were taking a hammering, wonder why...Being the only CW operator for ZL3VV at Rime Park on the outskirts of Christchurch with Branch 56, I was kept rather busy sending & logging and swapping between 80 & 40. It is the first time in many years that Branch 56, has been active on CW so expect to hear us again. I only missed a couple of hours on 40m, when the batteries needed a charge (and so did I for some food) and a couple on 80m when the conditions were dead. A great two days out, tiring but at least we were blessed with some good weather. Thanks again to the guys & gals on CW - see you again next year. Hopefully we might be able to scrape up a couple more CW operators, so I can stop for some of the brown stuff next year.

ZL2AGI - Frank # 9002 recently underwent triple bypass heart surgery, at Wellington Hospital. We are pleased to report that the operation was a success and Frank is well on the way to a full recovery. During

his time in hospital he received a visitor, none other than Ralph, ZL2AOH. (You'll feel like a new man Frank! Hope to catch you on the air soon! - Ed)

ZL1CDX - Turner # 9048 writes - On the weekend of the 6/7th March 2004 the British Airborne Forces (N.Z.) Inc held our annual reunion at Rotorua. Having been a member for many years, I knew that there were a few that held amateur calls or had, in the past. On the Saturday afternoon we had a BBQ and I had my baseball hat with the Fists Club badge sewn on, when one of our members approached me and said he was also a member!

Bob ZL2MUI and I had a good chat and he said he was stationed in the middle east with the Para Royal Signals Regiment and that the suffix letters of his call MUI should ring a bell with any other Para Royal Signals who served in that area. Bobs Fists No is 9090.

CENTURY CLUB AWARDS

Congratulations to **ZL1BDG - Frank # 9014** on achieving Century Club status. Our **New Zealand FISTS Club Station ZL6FF** has also joined the Century Club. Thanks to all who operated the call, making this possible. Want to find out what the new numbers are? Work Frank and ZL6FF on the air!

SILENT KEY

We have recently received notice of the passing of Frank, W5YSM FISTS # 2139. Frank also held the call VK2AIX, so he may have been known to some of our Australian members.

FISTS EAST ASIA

There have been a few FISTS members from Japan, Taiwan and South Korea, but not nearly as many as there could be. On the initiative of **JM1JOT/K6KF - Jun # 9117**, they are in the process of establishing a FISTS chapter for East Asia which will operate in a similar manner to FISTS in the Americas and Down Under; part of worldwide FISTS but administered locally with, hopefully, their own national language newsletters and national club call. They have already appointed a new QSL manager **JM6FMK - Naka # 5545** for Japan and Taiwan. Cards from Down Under members will now be sent to the above, instead of via the U.K. **STOP PRESS: - The FISTS EAST ASIA Chapter** has now been formed with 20 members. We wish this new chapter of FISTS all the best with their new venture. When working BV and JA stations encourage them to join FISTS East Asia.

FISTS DOWN UNDER NATIONAL CLUB STATIONS

VK2FDU - will be activated, by Chris VK3CGB and David VK3DBD over the Easter weekend. They will be sharing the call sign and operating on most bands on or near Fists frequencies. Proposed operating times will be around 0800-1130z as well as at other times, depending on band conditions and family activities. **ZL6FF** - will also be activated by Nigel, ZL2TX and others over this period, so now will be your chance to grab those five points and also the new CC numbers. Don't forget to tune around the band you are listening on, as these stations, to ease congestion, will probably not be on the designated FISTS calling frequency.

GACW CLUB - ARGENTINA WARNING

Viruses are being sent out that may claim to be from gacw@lan.no-ip.org <mailto:gacw@lan.no-ip.org> or gacw@gacw.no-ip.org <mailto:gacw@gacw.no-ip.org>, If you receive an attachment in an e-mail that claimsto be from us - **DO NOT - OPEN IT**. We do not send attachments.

BOOK REVIEW

"RSGB Prefix Guide" - Edition 6. ISBN 1-872-30985-2 A-4 64pp
Compiled and maintained by Fred Handscombe G4BWP
Reviewed by **ZL2AOH - Ralph # 1073**

It was a pleasant surprise to receive the gift of a copy of the "RSGB Prefix Guide" from **G3KMG-David-#0124**. It describes itself as "The complete guide to prefix identification and information." It is just that.

I had previously had a copy of the ARRL DXCC prefix list that was strictly limited in scope. This publication is more useful and user friendly.

It contains not only a list of the basic DXCC countries (entities) but it covers the multitude of other unusual prefixes under ITU allocation that are often encountered in contests.

The prefix list includes latitude and longitude, which is useful in determining approximate bearings/distances. There are limiting dates of operation for both old and new countries. Tables help solve the

conundrum of the reallocation of prefixes in the old Soviet Union. These give the names of cities and oblasts depending on call sign beginnings. A table relates old country names to their modern names. The prefixes within each ITU zone are also tabulated.

Award hunters are catered for by details the requirements of some awards including IOTA (including continent island listings) and CQ WAZ. There are sample charts for entering country/bands worked for DXCC and copies of application forms for ARRL, CQ and RSGB awards.

This is a very useful reference book that has already been consulted frequently. It occupies a handy place in the bookshelf above my operating desk.

New Zealand Floods By Des O'Brien, ZL2OB

(February 2004 - will go down in history as the worst summer since records began. The southern half of the North Island, especially the Manawatu area - took the brunt of the bad weather, which meteorologists claimed to be a once in one hundred year event. Torrential rain almost daily, made us feel as though we were in the tropics experiencing a monsoon. Widespread damage from flooding was incredible, causing devastation in the millions of dollars. Here is a story of how one Radio Amateur suffered. Des takes up the story - Ed)

We have one local Ham, from Kopane near Palmerston North - Bruce, ZL2BLK.

Severe flooding caused water to rise to 6 feet inside the house. Bruce lost the lot! All his radio equipment, Hi-Fidelity gear, and a lifetime of treasures!

We started in there last Monday, after the ok from the assessors. I bought the lot home after wading through a foot of mud like Glue and I got started on what could be salvaged. Antenna tuners, power supplies, SWR meters etc - as for the transceivers forget it! I hosed out what items one could salvage and worked on them.

It's a mammoth task getting it clean and dry and there still remains this film of dirt. We waxed all the metalwork we could get at, cleaned the meter movements with alcohol and cross fingers, they will still be OK in a years time!

He had several Morse keys. Had to strip them right down to the last screw to clean them properly. They are OK now, not that Bruce did a lot of CW.

Bruce will be moving into another house close by, after the insurance company settles. We will rally round and get him back on the air from the new QTH. That will be some weeks, if not months away!

Apart from his radio equipment, there are his cars, tractors, tools and of course furniture from the house. One has to see it to believe it. Take a look at the government web site, which gives some indication of the destruction. Go to: - www.mdc.govt.nz <<http://www.mdc.govt.nz>>

Disappointing that Civil Defence is no longer interested in using radio amateurs, the day may come when we are needed? Pleased to say that all is well with ZL2OB, except for not having any H2O out of the taps for a week! Could have solved that one! We did at Wairoa, during Cyclone Bola, very quickly. Sadly there is a lack of experience in local authorities, today! Enough for now! - Regards Des.

FISTS DOWN UNDER QUESTIONNAIRE

To those of you who responded to the FISTS Down Under Questionnaire - a big thank you! I have tried to acknowledge the e-mail replies with a personal e-mail. Postal replies have been acknowledged with a personal letter accompanying this newsletter.

Postal replies from Australia were received in mid March, the response being much larger than anticipated. It was my intention to have some answers in this newsletter. However, with over 40 replies to wade through and correlate, I have decided to postpone this article until I find time to give the subject full justice.

I now propose that a separate article be enclosed with the next newsletter, once all your replies have been carefully studied. In the meantime, please accept my apologies - Ed

PROFILE

BILL HAMER Q.S.M. - ZL2CD # FIST 9004

(Short Form Biography)

Born Foxton 1924. Educated Foxton District High School. Interest in Ham Radio aroused when I heard Brian ZL2RI calling CQ on my crystal set and then in a subsequent contact with another Radio Inspector. Wondering where the two Radio Inspectors' would be in my small town, eventually led me to Brian's shack. Pity we don't have Amplitude Modulation these days or co-operative shack visiting invitations.

Progressed through crystal sets to Hiker's Ones and Twos, until one of my high school teachers, Bernie - ZL2SE gave me a Short Wave Converter which aroused my interest in DX. Always interested in Radio I applied for a job in Broadcasting, when I left school with University Entrance. It was wartime however and jobs were scarce, so I settled for a position with the Health Department in Palmerston North. Eventually after two years, a position came up in Radio Station 2YH (later 2YZ) Napier as a technical trainee. There I met my late wife Nita, who was receptionist at the station. Whilst there, I received my Technical Certificate in Broadcasting.

Thus followed a two - year spell with the New Zealand Broadcasting Unit in Japan, where I helped operate two Radio Stations for the Occupation troops, AKAA Yamaguchi and WLKY Chofu. Another chore was recording documentaries and messages from the troops for broadcasting over the New Zealand National network. My amateur call there was J4AAZ.

Back home my call in Napier was ZL2BJ, which I acquired in 1946. I well remember my first contact, which was on six metres with ZL2PD (Two Puppy Dogs) about 100 yards along the road. This was the start of my obsession with VHF where I eventually worked 52 countries and obtained the coveted VHFCC for working 100 grid squares (later to be extended to 200). Many of these would be on CW.

In 1954, I was appointed Technician in Charge of Station 1XN, Whangarei, where I had further studio experience

As well as maintaining the 2 Kilowatt AWA broadcast transmitter. Studied for and obtained the New Zealand Certificate in Engineering (Telecommunications) in 1960. Whilst there, I took part in some Field Strength testing throughout Northland to determine suitable sites for the two repeater stations for 1XN. My call sign in Whangarei was ZL1BJ.

In 1960, I was appointed Senior Technician at Station 2YZ at Opapa in Hawkes Bay. This was a 5 Kilowatt water - cooled transmitter. Whilst there, the transmitter was upgraded to a 20 Kilowatt solid - state unit and a further commercial station for Hastings was installed. A staff of four maintained the transmitters and made modular units for the N.Z. Broadcasting Service. The stations are now remote controlled from Napier and the staff houses have long disappeared. My call sign was now ZL2CD, my present call.

In 1962, I transferred to the Wellington Head Office with the title of Engineering Officer. I was in charge of the installation of Broadcasting House, which was the first completely solid - state complex in the world. The equipment - was made by Toshiba in Japan. Subsequently, I was involved in the design and installation of many radio stations throughout the country, including the design of studio equipment for the N.Z.B.S.

I again travelled to Japan, this time to oversee the construction and installation of technical equipment for the New Zealand Pavilion at EXPO 70 in Osaka. Once again, the equipment was by Toshiba.

I retired in 1980 with the rank of Principal Engineering Officer.

My outside interests have included music, particularly jazz and I have and still do arrange broadcast programmes on this subject. I inaugurated the Wellington Jazz Club and was its President for 12 years. I have written many articles on the subject for newspapers and magazines. In 1986, I was awarded the Queen's Service Medal (Q.S.M.) for services to music.

In Amateur Radio, my main interests are CW and contesting. Since 24 hour TV, my enthusiasm for six metre VHF has dwindled due to the high level of QRM. I wrote the N.Z.A.R.T. VHF page for Break - In for many years and am active in the Civil Defence being Communication Officer for the local centre. I was President of the New Zealand Association of Radio Transmitters in 1969 - 1970.

Another hobby of mine is clarinet playing and I still play in various local groups.
73 Bill, ZL2CD.

DX MARCH KEYNOTE by Geo Longden, G3ZQS

OFFICES

QSL Manager: M0AVW
32 Woodford Walk, Harewood Park, TS17 0LT

PRO: G4YLB. J.A. Welsh
3 Minster Cresc, DARWEN, BB3 3PY
CONTEST MANAGER: M5AGL
15a Buckden Rd., BRAMPTON, PE18 4PR
<http://www.asel.demon.co.uk/fists-hq/> <http://www.fistsdownunder.morsekeys.com>
E-Mail HQ: fist1@btinternet.com webmaster:
webmaster@asel.demon.co.uk

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

Pse keep watch on all Novice allocations Recommended calling QRGs: 3.558, 7028, 14.058, 21.058, 28.058

SUBS: e-mail Keynote £4.00, UK mail £5.00, EEC mail £7.00. Others £10.00. Your renewal date appears on the mailing label and your anticipation would be much appreciated. Cheques should be made payable to just FISTS.

Up-dated listings may be obtained from HQ. Please include 3 2nd class stamps to cover return and running costs

Lapel Badges, £1.50 incl. **Fabric patches** £1.50 incl.

QSL Cards £7.00 per 100 or £10.00 per 200 (UK and EU pse add £1.00 for p/p. DX members - on advice.

Personalised stickers £1.00 per sheet of 65. Max order 5 sheets.

Please include your CALLSIGN on all correspondence.

Useful contacts:

M0AVW01642-9619<spence5@ntlworld.com>

M0AYI Glenn@m0ayi.freemove.co.uk

M5AGL bobm5agl@btopenworld.com

M0ZAK jim.steel@ntlworld.com

QSL BUREAU INFO

All outgoing QSLs to M0AVW (address on banner).

All UK/EU members send stamps and labels (no envelopes necessary) to the appropriate sub-manager as below:

M or 2 Prefixes (Except for Wales) M0AYI. 7 Tynedale Terrace, Annfield Plain, STANLEY, DH9 7TZ.

G0, GM0 etc (Except GW0). G3JRY. 3 Rochford Cresc, BOSTON, PE21 9AE St, Darfield, BARNSELY, S73 9AE.

G4, GM4 etc (Except GW4). M0ZAK. 6 Central Ave, SHEPSHED, LE12 9HP.

G2, G5, G6, G8 (Except for Wales) and **ALL special** (GB etc) calls to M0BPT. 38 Wheatley St, WEST BROMWICH, B70 9TJ.

All members in Wales. GW0SGG. 14 Heather Cresc, Sketty, SWANSEA, SA2 8HE

Pre-paid postal subscriptions

EU/DX Members: IRCs, UK Banknotes or US dollars to M0AVW. The Club will provide envelopes. Any excess over subs from non-UK members will be regarded as QSL postage unless otherwise advised.

COMMITTEE

Chairman
Vice Chairman
P.R.O.

G4XHZ
G4YLB
G4YLB

Secretary G3ZQS

AWARDS

e-mail apps/logs to Dennis, K6DF:
<fistsawards@comcast.net>
written logs to HQ.

GREETINGS

Heck! How long is it gonna take for old Sol to settle down a bit? The bands have been all but useless of late and S8 noise levels certainly don't help. There is activity however on 40m during the day and of course 80m during the evening but generally it is rough going. Couple the weather conditions with the state of the bands and you get a pretty dismal outlook and it is largely due to this that I have begun to develop square eyes these days.

Chuck, M0AVW, has asked me to thank those of you who send in used postage stamps and to assure you that this is an ongoing project. Also, a request from what I assume to be his Ma in-law in the form of an email; signed 'Elaine' with an animated caricature of a witch and broomstick in flight:

I am hoping that some of your colleagues on the radio may be able to help me.

As you know, I am doing a course on Women's History at the university, and at present, I am in the middle of a project on the wives of prisoners of war during WW2, and the effect that this had

upon the lives of the wives and children, whilst their husbands were POW's. I am having quite a tough time gathering information, as sadly, so many of these women are no longer with us. I would be so grateful if anyone (female) would share with me, some of their experiences during this period of our history.

I must confess to being intrigued by the logo - looks like we have someone here with a sense of humour. Hi. Hope some of you folks can contribute the desired information.

SUBS VIA EMAIL

I know many of you have asked if it is possible to pay your subs via the web but hitherto I knew of no such procedure..However, a chance note from Nancy indicating that one of our Italian members erroneously submitted his subs to her by way of PAYPAL led me into a search.

It would seem that the scheme has been operating for some time though since I am far from being a 'browser' it is no surprise that it was missed. It was swallowed up by the ubiquitous E-Bay people since it offered a way for clients to pay for items in their auctions. The site is secure so there are no problems.

It is understood that all you need to do is join PayPal, enter the site and opt to make a payment. You will be asked for the email address of the recipient (in this case it is my own email address (fist1@btinternet.com), specify the amount in Sterling and that is it. I will be advised that payment has been made. There is a small charge levied against the club for the service.

This costs the you (the subscriber) nothing compared with the high penalty incurred when transferring funds from one account to another (especially when it involves a non-UK bank) but I also get immediate advice of the payment together with a history of payments in the form of an invoice page. Can't be bad!

THE MYSTERY KEY

The subject from last month remains a mystery since thus far, no-one has come up with an answer. This one (via Andy, G0JLX) at least has some ID since a brass plaque is in evidence on the front of the unit inscribed: A. Robinson & Co Ltd. Contractors to the British Admiralty and it strikes me as being a shame that such care has

been taken on the engineering side with a design lacking in imagination.

I also found a number of keys on the e-bay website though none of 'em could be described as inspirational and remain convinced that aside from some recent offerings from Russia, the original Swedish key and my favourite RN (NATO) key top the list and of course with his current state of health, Zippy (G4ZPY) has a rather daunting backlog to contemplate.

MORSE PROFICIENCY TESTS

G4BUO reported that Mary, G0BQU, has just dumped some 139 callsigns of ex-MTS volunteers into a spread sheet. He is currently checking the distribution and is hoping that some will be within striking range of Blackpool.

139 is an encouraging figure of course but there is no reason why a pool of available examiners could not exceed this by a magnitude of 10 or even more and, as G4KJJ pointed out, why stick at rallies. Local clubs could also do their part.

Currently there is a little uncertainty about whether tapes or computer generated text will be used - reckon it could be either one - but the certificates seem to be decided as 5, 10, 15 and 20 , or even 25 wpm.

I am sure that a large number of the MTS volunteers will be drawn from the ranks of FISTS and when the scheme gets properly under way will prove a super flag-waving exercise for the club.

RAOTA

Our David, G3ZPF, is webmaster for the Radio Amateur Old Timers Association and points the web aware to the website:

<www.raota.supanet.com>. Sympathises with G4OWS since he also has 'floaters' in both eyes. Finds that driving more or less settles the swarm low in the field of vision whilst side-side head movements simply slosh 'em around horizontally but still low and out of harms way. He would have expected that vibrations from the fiddle under the chin would have the same effect but concludes that there must be some vertical element to his head movements. Strikes me that those thus afflicted should take care always to disagree since a sign of affirmation could produce a swarm and for heavens sake, stay off trampolines!

He also warns that the report last month re pas-

sive cameras on road signs turned out to be a spoof but I am sure that the simple idea of timing the point of recognition on one camera with that of the next is surely one which will not be long ignored. Watch out - Big Brother will soon be timing you.

FURTHER RE PROFICIENCY TESTS

Among other correspondents, a note from G4KJJ who was kind enough to email me piccies of a QRP setup. The loop is about 33 inches per side and seemingly tuned with toroid and cap I am afraid the full details are not available but it comes from the G-QRP club's SPRAT. The source is W9SCH, it is described as "The Rockloop" and it is intended to bounce on 30,15 and 20m. If you need any further info on it I'm afraid you must dig into the SPRAT archives.

As you can well imagine, it has extremely low resistance and will demand a very slo-mo drive but John increased the cap to one of around 1200 pF for 40m and was delighted to complete a QSO with a very persistent German station.

He normally ran around 4 watts since the RX type cap started to arc at much higher power than this and although he is happier with his mag-loop (also low resistance but much higher 'Q') I suspect he has abandoned it.

Because of its size however, I think he had ideas of using a pair of such setups at rallies etc to demonstrate the potential of CW to the uninitiated. Worth a thought!

The Key incidentally comprises relay contacts and a trouser button amongst other things and cost him less than 50p. He declares it is virtually silent, smooth and a delight to use.

LADDER JAN/04	
CALL	Points.
G4LHI	36
M5ABN	25
M0RHB	17
M5BRY	16
M3GBT	14
M0DRK	12
M5AGL	12
OH7QR	10
M0CMQ	8
G8XGQ	8
GU4HUY	4

2E0EUK 3

Another start to the ladder for 2004 and G4LHI tops the points for Jan. Its nice to see the 2 new participants GU4HUY and 2E0EUK, Lets hope the new format will encourage more of you to join in the ladder.

Don't forget the MIXED KEY WEEK 7 March 0001 utc to 2359 utc on 13th MARCH 04.

73's for now de Bob M5AGL.

Just to remind you of course that the 'mixed key week' is effectively the Straight Key Week but includes ALL non-electronic keying. I know at least a couple of members who will be delighted to activate their captive hacksaw blades and of course there are many others who revere their vibros.

AND THE CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE

Call.	POINTS.
G4LHI	568
M5ABN	258
G0MRH	242
OH7QR	126
M5BRY	90
M0DRK	68
M5AGL	67

THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

G4FAI. Tony submits Officers for for the Norfolk Amateur Radio Group (GB2MC) at the Muckleburgh Collection these being *Chairman* M3BFU, *Secretary*, G4FAI and *Treasurer* G3MJX.

Email contact is now g4fai@connectfree.co.uk. **PA3AFF.** This year, Piet represented FISTS in the EUCW 160m contest He found no others offering a FISTS club multiplier so maybe he was alone. Thanks for the entry Piet. He also did a cross check and found 40 calls that appear on both the HSC list and FISTS. **G4ZGP.** Geoff is still limited to his Capco 80cm mag-loop for 10-20m but sometimes uses his Vectronix tuner to match a random wire to 40m. Always a pleasure to QSO Geoff. **GM3JUD.** Chas was tickled to find Chuck M0AVW with 500mW with that rockbound package from Stan K4UK. Meanwhile he has been delving into the realms of QRP himself with a single band TXCVR from Small Wonder Labs. With the wick turned down on his

TS930, he worked OK1NR with 5 watts. **PA0HPV**. The last official CW exam took place in Holland on 16 Dec 2003 whilst the first was on 19 Aug 1929 - 74 years ago. After this final exam, a reception was held where speakers remembered historic moments and club officials presented the examination committee with trophies to mark the occasion. They even got a short (2.5 min) coverage on the TV news including video footage taken in the shack of PA0DIN explaining that Din prefers to "talk with his fingers". Finally, the equipment used for the exams was donated to the Jan Corver amateur radio museum in Bordel and he invites you to visit this site at <www.jancorver.org>. **G4HVM**. Mike is amongst those who submitted their call to G4BUO as an ex member of the MTS. I agree that it is a shame that the usual MTS special event will not be running now - surely with the current list of folks such as Mike it would be no hardship for the RSGB to re-activate the event? **G4KJJ**. Further to the earlier item, the QRP TX shown was donated to G4LHI in acknowledgment of the 140+ bodies that he coaxed through the CW exam over the years. Nice gesture John.

M0CMQ	47
M5ENM	18
G8XGQ	4

Congratulations to Peter G4LHI who tops the list. Peter was able to catch the UK, USA and Australian HQ club stations, the only three to count as 5 points.

My thanks to all those who took part and especially Chris VK3CGB and Dave VK3DBD who kindly Operated the Australian HQ club call, most mornings during the challenge. I have as yet not included the challenge in this years contest list as I did not want to over extend it, but if you would like it to be included then please let me know. 73's de Bob M5AGL.

NEW MEMBERS

09876	G3ZOH Brian	09877	IZ3ESV
Tony		Henry	09879
09878	MW3RPK		
G4TPV	George	09881	G4MSQ
09880	9A6NKN Milan		
Frnk		09882	M0KEY
09888	G4MTQ Tony		
Barry			

G4MTQ specifically requested 09888 so for the moment is out of sequence.

No! G4MSQ and G4MTQ is not an error. It is the first time such a coincidence has happened.

THE MAG-LOOP REVISITED

I was unaware of the connection until G4KJJ sent me paperwork and included was an article (presumably from a local club newsletter, linking Tom GM3HBT with it.

The construction as you can see is quite straightforward but instead of the Faraday loop, it is fed with a gamma match. I had noticed this before on some of the sites I visited on the web but forgot to mention it.

Tom intimates that it may be a little difficult to set up - it's all a matter of moving a croc clip and tuning the variable to get minimum vswr and the gamma feed point can then be permanently soldered.

A 3ft diameter may appear a little generous but remember that it is intended to bounce on 40m with a 250pF variable cap.

FROM THE IN BOX

Josh 6Y5WJ has been busy revamping his property out there in Jamaica and should be finished by April when he can accept more FISTS guests. Dave G3KMG spent some time with Jackie 3B8CF in Mauritius following his escapades in ZL. Some nice piccies included but as always, embedde graphics are a lousy 75dpi and not suitable for printing in Keynote.

Paul NG7Z says that Bob Doherty K1VV has made available a fascinating video of the C2C contest as experienced on the USS Salem K1USN. This is a heavy cruiser brought to pasture as a museum ship in Quincy MA which is also the home of the US Ship building museum. Paul says he can burn a CD (runs on Windows Media player) for anyone interested though his anticipated costs of \$1.00 will be based on US mail. He can be contacted at ng7z@arrl.com and is OK for paypal.

160M EUCW CONTEST

the UFT claimed great success for this event 21 EUCW Societies took part: YLCWG, IQRP, OKQRP, GQRP, CTC, EACW, FISTS, FOC, GTC, HACWG, HSC, HTC, INORC, ITC, MCWG, RTC, SHSC, SPCWC, UCWC, VHSC, UFT. Also included was N. America (N2NT) and

Asiatic Russia. There were 21 non-affiliated entrants also and they hope to see these again next year with a flag to fly. These are not the final figures as they were compiled before the Feb 15 deadline. Thanks to Maurice F5NQL for the QSP. Much other info also received from Maurice during February but the bulk of it alas was short term and immediate and would therefore have been out of date for Keynote.

IT'S ALL HAPPENING

Nancy has got herself into something of a flap recently with the code/no-code debate raging over there in the colonies. T'would seem new members are coming in by droves causing the aspirin consumption to rise quite steeply. Many of these have already been logged at the time of writing and the published listings from our website have been up-dated accordingly. There is also a steady flood of lapsed members from the NA list returning so all we need now are decent band condx with some txatlantic tfc. Now that would be nice!

HMMMM!

From the web page of W5WWW:
In the days of old, when ops were bold,
And sidebands not invented,
The word would pass by pounding brass,
And all were well contented.
Take care Jim Steel (m0zak)

CHANGE OF CALL (UP-GRADE)

09801 SWL5 now becomes M0RSY. OK Andy but t'was very naughty of you not to LMK before this.

EXTENDED MEMBERSHIP

Hello Geo,

My name is Jun, JM1JOT. I live in CA USA and operate K6KF now. So I belong to the US FISTS and #9117.

Here I came up an idea and let me give you a question: What is the criteria (if exists) for establishing a new FISTS division, such as FISTS ASIA or FISTS JAPAN?

I just think of it because there are lots of CW operators in JA and they could potentially become part of us. However, why are there only 20 FISTS members now in JA? I guess quite a few JA hams feel that it's not easy to join because the process must go in English. Another reason

would be the currency, the fee must be paid in GBP not JPY.

Currently some JA FISTS members have set up a web site to introduce our activities and encourage JA CW operators to join us. So I personally think that if they, the JA FISTS could have some sort of responsibility to take over the membership paperwork for JAs, that would prompt them to join us.

I would be happy if you could tell me what you think of this. Thank you. 73, Jun Matsuya, JM1JOT/K6KF

I have sent copies of this to both Nancy and Ralph asking for their views.

For some years I toyed with the idea of dedicated EU chapters for the various languages (German, French, Italian Spanish, Swedish etc.,) which alas came to nothing despite a lot of correspondence with potential 'hits'. At one point the ZL chapter gave me hope that an autonomous JA chapter could be formed tapping a **huge** resource of JA amateurs. Unfortunately, this also failed to surface.

The main problem is of course language and the translation of Keynote and other information from English to various languages. This is not a problem without a solution but that solution would require the cooperation of a bi-lingual individual or individuals with the necessary equipment (not quite so demanding nowadays with the widespread availability of computers) who would be prepared to put in the necessary work. Autonomous chapters such as this would also ease the growing problem of currency conversion to maintain subs. As I pointed out earlier, paypal may well help to solve this difficulty though to be honest, I would be much happier without the problem and certainly such chapters collecting their own subs in their native currency would go a long way not only to easing this situation but also expanding membership.

To be sure, the JA website is a good start in this direction and such promotions are to be encouraged in other countries.

Your thoughts on these points would be appreciated.

These communications have stirred up lots of enthusiasm an example of which is Ralph

ZL2AOH reply to Jun:

Dear Jun,

The only real problem in establishing a JA Fists would be getting somebody with the time to organise it. In the early stages, (less than, say, 50 members, it would be possible for one person to do it, apart from translating the UK Key Note. When we started FISTS Down Under (for ZL and VK) I received a huge amount of support from Geo G3ZQS and others in the UK.

I edited and distributed the local newsletter (FISTS Down Under), maintained membership records, ran the local FISTS QSL bureau and communicated with the other chapters of FISTS. (Thank goodness for e-mail!) A local subscription was determined that was about half of that required when serviced from the UK - (postage difference.) When we reached 50 members I sent out an SOS for assistance and was fortunate to get a volunteer (Nigel ZL2TX) who now edits the newsletter and runs the ZL QSL bureau. I also have a volunteer in Australia (Chris VK2MQX) who arranges the printing and distribution of the newsletters there and runs the QSL bureau there. Our web site is managed by George VK2DLF.

As the number of VK members increases, it might be possible for them become independent and manage their own affairs.

One of our members is Makoto Kamada JE1CLH, a personal friend, who joined when he visited ZL a few years ago. He is in touch with the other members in JA and they occasionally meet socially in Tokyo. I have always believed that there is great potential for membership in JA and even in east Asia generally. I tried to interest Nobu Takahashi JF3KNW in doing something about it. (He was in Wellington for a few months for JA/ZL teacher liaison.) Unfortunately family and work responsibilities prevented his doing anything about it, although he wrote an article for CQ JA publicising FISTS. - Managing a JA chapter would be an ideal task for a retired ham who has good command of written English. I would be delighted to assist with guidance to anyone who is prepared to start a JA FISTS Chapter. Obviously the major task would be to translate Key Note, although it might be wise initially to just translate the major points

of interest. It might be possible to get the co-operation of a high school or university English department to do it as part of their studies.

I am circulating this reply to others who may like to add something to the discussion.

As a matter of interest, I took a shufti at the JA website but aside from links to the US and EU sites, I rather suspected that the computer was malfunctioning and I was looking at machine code. Certainly lots of weird symbols. Hi.

FINALE

Bob M5AGL got an email from M0K WV whose activity is somewhat restricted. He is looking for a regular sked from (as he describes it) an insomniac member to help increase his working speed. Not sure if Bob found anyone but the location is Sale in Cheshire and his QRV period is 0640-0710. LMK if you would like to help. Better cuit 'n run because I want to catch the printer in time to get this issue in the mail before the end of the month so for now people, enjoy what little time you have left of the month and a reminder that this is a leap year so many of you will be stuck indoors with all windows and doors securely locked on the 29th Feb.

73/88 and stay sober.

Geo

HOW DO I ORDER CLUB SUPPLIES? Irene W08E - ikott@compuserve.com - 44609 N. Bunker Hill Dr., Clinton Twp, MI 48038 is our Supply Manager. Our supplies are sold as close to cost as possible **Metallic Gold logo stickers, 200 for \$3.50 **I "red heart graphic" CW Stickers, 3/4 inch round stickers, \$3.50 for 200 ***"I Support KNOW Code" buttons for .50 **Blue enamel cloisonne/gold metal "FISTS CW CLUB" logo pin, with tie-tack type pin back 1" x 1 1/8" octagon \$1.50 **White enamel cloisonne pin "I (red heart graphic) CW" "FISTS CW CLUB" along edge. 3/4" diameter circle tie-tack type pin on back \$1.50 **Embroidered Cloth patch of our key logo, \$1.00 each. Can be sewn or ironed on ***The Art & Skill of Telegraphy* book, 4th Edition \$11.50 ***** **PAYPAL orders to FISTS@TIR.COM ONLY** *****
*****Please make checks out to FISTS*****ALL PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE.*****

*****PLEASE DO NOT ADD POSTAGE TO YOUR TOTAL*****

HOW DO I GET FISTS SHIRTS? Show the world that you are proud to be a KNOW CODE Ham by wearing an "I'm PROUD to be a KNOW CODE Ham" T-shirt and sweatshirt. or a FISTS logo polo shirt. The front of the t-shirts and sweatshirts are printed in silver with "I'M PROUD TO BE A KNOW CODE HAM" and the backs of the shirts are printed in light blue with the FISTS key logo graphic and "Join the Code Crusade <http://www.fists.org> "

The T-shirts are available in two solid colors: black or royal blue (a medium blue, not navy)

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The polo/golf shirts are sky blue with the FISTS key tastefully EMBROIDERED on the top left side. They are short sleeved and have a knit collar and a couple buttons at the neck.

Sizes are small, medium, large, XL, XXL, and XXXL. All shirts are 50/50 blend. The T's are "Best" Fruit of the Loom. Sweats are 5.8 oz Jerzee and Polos are Fruit of the Loom. Price are:

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PLUS POSTAGE

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For example:

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NOTE: As with all FISTS supplies, please contact Irene ikott@compuserve.com to find out the amount of postage necessary to ship items to Canada and other non-USA addresses.

You may order using Paypal. The email address to use for Paypal is fists@tir.com. Do NOT use nancy@tir.com. In the "comments" box of the Paypal form, please be specific about what you are ordering, this info will be used to fill your order. To order by mail, send your order (don't forget to include what color tshirt you want, and the size!) to Nancy Kott, PO Box 47, Hadley MI 48440. Checks payable to ISTS.

This is a limited time opportunity. When the shirts are gone - they're GONE, so get yours now!

HOW DO I GET/SEND FISTS QSL CARDS Via BURO? Keep SASEs in stock with the FISTS QSL Bureau. Stan Reas K4UK runs the Bureau. Send envelopes to 1020 Long Island Drive Moneta. Va 24121

HOW DO I IMPROVE MY CODE SPEED and MEET LOTS OF NEW FRIENDS? Join FISTS! Get involved in the nets and activities! Volunteer to be a Code Buddy! Write an article for the Keynote about your interests!

HOW DO I SEND APPLICATION OR SAMPLE NEWSLETTER TO A FRIEND? For a brochure, email Joe W5OS with their name, call sign, and postal address. For a sample Keynote, please send \$1 to defray postage. SASEs are appreciated. Joe's postal address is Joe Pardue, 29 Melrose Dr, Marrero LA, 70072. An application is available for downloading, in text format, on this web page.

HOW DO I SEND FISTS INFO TO A DX FISTS? DX FISTS have a separate block of numbers; their Keynote is mailed from the UK. Send their info to Geo Longden, G3ZQS at 119 Cemetery Rd, Darwin Lancs, BB32LZ; he will get in touch with them and send them a DX application.

PAY FOR THE SUBSCRIPTION OF A DX FISTS MEMBER? Subs for European FISTS, paid from the USA, are \$10/year American Cash. Non-European (Africa, Japan, etc.) FISTS are \$15/year in US CASH. No International Money Orders, postal money orders or personal checks, cash only. Send it to Geo Longden, 119 Cemetery Rd, Darwin Lancs BB3 2LZ U.K. CASH ONLY. Don't forget to include the name and address of the DX ham you want to sponsor. They will receive the DX version of the Keynote, which is written and mailed by Geo.

APPLY FOR AN OPERATING AWARD? Dennis Franklin K6DF is the Awards Manager. We have many different operating awards. Details are on our web page or in the Keynotes. Dennis's contact information is fistsawards@comcast.net or 4658 Capitan Drive Fremont, CA 94536-5448

HOW DO I OPERATE KN0WCW? KN0WCW is the USA FISTS Callsign. Members in good standing (meaning, paid up dues) can operate KN0WCW from their home station after getting PERMISSION. To get permission, contact Dennis Franklin K6DF at fistsawards@comcast.net or 4658 Capitan Drive Fremont, CA 94536-5448 A schedule of operators can be found on the FISTS Web page. Remember, when you're using KN0WCW, you're flying the flag for FISTS, so please operate responsibly.

HOW DO I VOLUNTEER FOR or GET A CODE BUDDY? W3GR, The Historical Electronics Museum Amateur Radio Club members are the volunteers handling the Code Buddy Program. Contact them at Box 746 MS 4015, Baltimore, MD 21203 or Email W3GR@arrl.net. We need ELMERS, please volunteer to be a Code Buddy!! You don't have to be a speed demon to be a Code Buddy, lots of people just want someone to practice with, just like YOU! Code Buddy applications are available on line or from W3GR.

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HOW DO I RECEIVE THE KEYNOTE ON TAPE? The keynote is available on tape, free, to legally blind members. Contact Ken Kott, W8ROG, 44609 N. Bunker Hill Dr., Clinton Twp, MI 48038. The tapes are read by Roger Cameron, N8KV and copied and distributed by Ken.

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HOW DO I SUGGEST IDEAS FOR THE WEB PAGE? Contact Bill KK4KF at kk4kf@cox.net

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HOW DO I 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 \$8.20 postpaid from The Sign man of Baton Rouge, 879 Castle Kirk Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

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