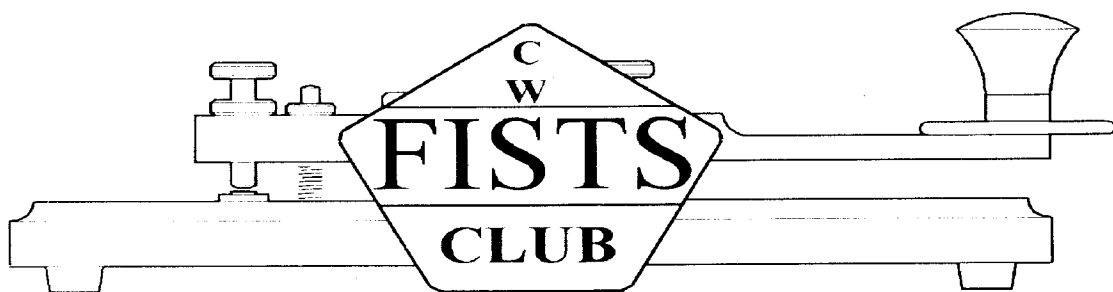


The Keynote

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”

NORTH KEYNOTE *AMERICAN*

Slow Traffic Net: Tuesday & Thursday 9pm EST on 3.682
Century Award Net: Sunday 2000Z on 14.058MHz

Slow Ragchewing Group: W8BI 8pm EST 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

Happy Holidays, FISTS!! I have some good news about the Century Award program. Some of you may already know this, because I sent out a mass Emailing with the news and asked those with Email to help spread the word to those FISTS who aren't on-line.

Let me apologize in advance for the confusion all this vascillating has caused and I hope there won't be any lingering ill will toward our HQ in England over this. The latest (and FINAL, as far as I'm concerned) word is that ALL previously claimed Century Points count toward the Gold and Diamond Awards. Apparently it was a communication problem - imagine that, hams having problems communicating! Here is the official word from Geo G3ZQS, FISTS founder...

"I simply to not know what all the fuss is about. As from Jan 1, 1998, we intend to discontinue the practice of PRINTING supplementary Century Awards and Gold Awards. That is all.

The requirements for Gold will still be 500 points and those points claimed on the first or subsequent Century awards are still valid. People are mis-interpreting the rules.

The problem is that people are beginning to treat their Century certificates like stamps and think that the Gold will not be issued unless they can provide the previous 4 Century certificates. This is what we are trying to stop.

Prior to issuing the Gold, we freely printed Century after Century whereas now, those four additional bits of paper are replaced by one more bit - the Gold award.

Bob was rapidly being inundated with Century applications which meant absolutely nothing because the Century is becoming so easy to obtain. I have always regarded the Century as a sort of 'Entry Level' award for those who perhaps never had an award before - it encourages them - but the tendency to paper the shack wall with them is of no value to the member and serves only to create unnecessary work for Bob or Lee..

New members from 1998 will be able to work towards ONE Century, ONE Gold or one of whatever other awards we see a need for.

We would like to recognise the achievements of those who have managed to work (say) 5,000 FISTS members and when we percieve the likelihood of this being attainable, we will issue a further (as yet unnamed) award for just this.

Please try to make this clear to all members. We are not trying to deny them the value of the points they have already achieved with their previous Century (or centuries), only to curtail the pointless practice of collecting a whole stack of awards which represent only 100 points each."

Next month, I will be printing a roster of all the FISTS members. This issue will have the roster from the photopages, as well as two more photopages. We need 36 photos to make a photopage so please start off the New Year by sending yours in to **W8ROG** (info on the How Do I... page). Now, on with your KeyNote!

Welcome to the New FISTS

4108 Rusty N2XTA in NY (N9JTY)
4109 Jack WB2KUT in NY (K6DF)
4110 Aron N1ODL in NH (Webpage)
4111 James KC7YWD in AZ (AI9L)
4112 Quentin AA9IK in WI (AI9L)
4113 Joaquin P43JK in Aruba (N3RSD)
4114 Dave N3NFL in PA (WB2FXK)
4115 Lee KB9DHF in IL (K6DF)
4116 Dick K5PU in TX (Webpage)
4117 Steve N0TU in CO (AC6TO)
4118 Allan W0SC in KS (K0BXF)
4119 Pat N8PD in OH (KE1AF)
4120 Bill K0KGS in MN
4121 Stan N2GLH in NY (K3CJQ)
4122 George KC5RED in AR (KC5AFL)
4123 John N6ANQ in VA (N4GHI)
4124 Ed AE4HW in AL (W7MXQ)
4125 Paul KW7D in VA (WA8BIJ)
4126 Neil KE2SV in NY
4127 John W9EM in IL
4128 Gail N2WFH in NY (NX2D)
4129 Jeff AE4UK in KY (K4YKI)
4130 Tim KB9LGJ in IN
4131 Bob KB9NCY in WI (W9ISC)
4132 Scott W3EB in PA (N4ZMP)
4133 Keith N0OMX in KS (K5HLR)
4134 John KC2AHE in NJ (W6DDB)
4135 Phil W1RFX in MA (N1WL)
4136 Jon KF6OLA in CA (KC7QOP)
4137 Dennis KA8TQR in OH (N8WPX)
4138 David WD6V in CA (KF6GUH)
4139 Mike KE4HLU in KY (W4JCH)
4140 Rich NT2W in NY (NX2D)
4141 George K5MXQ in TX
4142 Joe KT4PM in FL (AI9L)
4143 Winston N1WNB in MA (N0HQN)
4144 John WA5KOI in TX (Webpage)
4145 Chuck WA3OTC in PA (KN2GSJ)
4146 Trish KB0OUT in MO (KB0QZ)
4147 Tim KB0OUV in MO (KB0QZ)
4148 Gregory WB3GRE in PA (W9LUY)
4149 Dave KZ4G in KY (N4GD)
4150 Bob W8ERD in OH (K8EHE)
4151 Mike KB8AZS in OH (N3XJQ)
4152 Gene N9IGE in TX (N0ZNC)
4153 Carmine KB8WVW in MI
4154 Mark N0PFY in MN
4155 Dan K2IUC in NJ (AA0YY)
4156 Ed K8SZN in MI (W4JTU)
4157 Dean N0SIZ in ND (W3CV)
4158 Roy W7NES in OR
4159 James KC7QGC in AZ (KC7QGE)

4160 Paul KB8MOU in OH (N3ZOC)
4161 Malcolm W9MAL in IN (K5HLR)
4162 Bev KFF6HDQ in CA (KO6RU)
4163 Paul W9HMR in IN (K8LEN)
4164 Bruce KG2IC in NY (Webpage)
4165 Ken KO6VD in CA (AF9H)
4166 Gerald K6QR in CA (W6DDB)
4167 Marshall N7PIP in WA
4168 Dom WA1AYY in MA (WB2HEK)
4169 Bob W2VX in NJ (KT4YY)
4170 Chris WL7KY in AK (N1VWD)
4171 Larry N9LGG in IL (W6DDB & N4GD)
4172 Roy KK5ED in MS (N5VC)
4173 Ray K9XE in IL (AC5JH)
4174 Rafael CO6BR in Cuba (K4PTU)
4175 KC7WNV DCJOTA (club) - WB7QBC trustee
4176 Gaye KA7SKN in UT (WB7QBC)
4177 Jeri KA7SKN in UT (WB7QBC)
4178 Brenda KB7BIC in UT (WB7QBC)
4179 Ralph KM5MG in TX (K8EHE)
4180 Tom WB1FLA in MA (NJ1M)
4181 Jeffrey KC0BZN in MN
4182 Bill KA0VXK in NE (N3NY)
4183 Bill KB0LAO in MN (webpage)
4184 Eli TG9ANS in Guatemala (webpage)

Call Changes

Terry, KC7FWZ, #3204, is now **K7ASU**
Bob, KA4YTV, #3161, is now **WN4BOT**
Bob, KA0TYB, #2141, is now **KI0KM**
Dave, WN6NW, #3966, is now **W6NUC**
Ron, WA3WEE, #2324, is now **W5WWW**
Chuck, AA9DF, #4075, is now **K0XJ**
Chip, N3XJQ, #2645, is now **N3EU**
Dave, K8LUX, #2648, is now **K8UX**
Jim, KD5KP, #3220, is now **WW5XX**
Chuck KB2SWI #1964 is now **KB2E**

Congratulations!

*To Dan, **KA1ZYH**, on his upgrade to General!*
*To Rich, **KG2HG**, on his upgrade to Extra!*
*To Chuck **KB2E** on his upgrade to Extra!*
*To David, **KF4HAW**, on his upgrade to General!*
*To Brian **W8BL** for being made an Official
ARRL A-1 Operator!*

Quit Yapping Start Tapping!

-- Robert KB7AQD

Corrections

Vic, **KB0QGX**, #3810 was incorrectly listed as **KB0WGX**

Orin **N4ZMP**'s erroneously gave out #222 instead of 271 for his Century number, so please change your logs if you worked him. He also has Gold #3.

PLEASE NOTE that there is a new address for ordering club supplies and sending in your photo for the photopages. Ken **W8ROG** and Irene **WO8E** have moved into a condo. Their address is now 44609 N. Bunker Hill Dr. Clinton Twp, MI 48038. We wish them the best of luck with their new QTH! Look for them QRP on the bands after Ken puts up some sort of attic antenna. They're thinking about trying that new MFJ loop? Anyone try that one or have any suggestions for them?

Gene Autry was never a "radio Operator" at a railroad station, he was a "station agent/telegrapher. Tnx for the correction Mac, **W0AP**

FISTS QSL Bureau

We're pleased to be getting many SASE's - it sure makes the sorting job easier. There are still quite a few who have only one or two cards in the Bureau with no SASE. We have been holding these until a minimum of 5 cards show up. Then if we still don't have an SASE, I have written a "Here are your cards, we need SASE's to continue sending cards to you" letter.

Please don't be offended by the letter and you won't be alone - a station with the call sign **WZ8C** got one of these letters. If the station has an Email address, we've sent a message to the same effect via Email.

A word about envelope size. The #10 business size envelope (4-1/8" x 9-1/2") works better than the smaller personal size envelope (3-5/8" x 6-1/2") since quite a few QSL cards are bigger than 3-5/8" high - especially some of the DX cards. The 6" x 9" kraft envelope also works OK for all size cards. There are some few stations whose QSL card is even more than 4-1/8" high - so the 6" x 9" works best for them.

Please remember to put your call in large letters in the upper left hand corner of the envelope. Some fellows have forgotten to put their call either on the SASE or on the envelope enclosing the SASE's. This creates a mystery for us and requires a "table lookup" job to find out who the envelopes are for. These stations shall go unnamed - Hi!

Please, if you use mailing labels for your address,

check how you put the label on your SASE. Some we have received have the label upside down relative to the stamp. These stations also shall go unnamed. (That was NOT me! - Nancy **WZ8C**)

We are putting a sequential number in the bottom left hand corner of each envelope, so if you keep a record of how many you have sent in, you'll know when you about to run out of envelopes at the Bureau. Also, we will mark "Last Envelope in Bureau" on the rear flap of that envelope, or include a note to that effect in the envelope.

If you put 55 cents postage on your SASE's we will wait until you have approximately 15 cards before mailing. Some have put 2-32 cent stamps on the SASE. We are a bit at a loss as to what to do, but will generally also wait until you have approximately 15 cards before mailing. It would probably be a good idea to tell us how many cards you want us to send in any one SASE. You could so indicate by a number in parentheses after your call sign.

Also, if you want us to mail your cards each month regardless of the number, include a note to that effect and we'll comply with your wishes.

The club has found this is a major project, but they are having fun doing it. If you have questions or want to know how many cards we have for you, drop me a note or an Email.

Oh yes, one more thing, please write the call of the station you are sending the card to legibly. We've had quite a few where we had to guess, or track the station down by his FISTS number or name if you wrote it on your card somewhere. Some cards have a different call on the "Confirming QSO" line than elsewhere on the card. We've let the FISTS member call take precedence unless we can't find the member in Nancy' FISTS mailing list. Then we just put the card in the "dead letter" file.

Keep those cards and envelopes coming. 73, Stan - **K4UK** for the Franklin County ARC

SILENT KEY

I'm sorry to have to share this note I received from Sandra McLean via Email. I don't have any other details. Bill, as you can tell from his FISTS number, #1209, was one of our original NA FISTS.

"Mr. William McLean, ham-**KB8JIY**, passed away on November 21, 1997, after a heroic battle with cancer."

QRP with John Shannon

This month my column consists of information from Phil, KE3FL. Thanks, Phil. I appreciate it.

Phil got his Novice in 6/1992 and upgraded to Extra that December. He says: I never got to work Novice round-up as a Novice. Still, I had fun doing so as an Extra. Then they dropped the contest altogether. Anyway, good column, keep it up.

John, I am not strictly a QRP'er, but I find that more & more I'm operating QRP. (I love to hear that, Phil. It seems more and more FISTS, and hams in general are discovering the joys of QRP. - js) I've even adjusted my TS-50 to run 4/20/100W so I have about 6 dB intervals and a QRP level. My present rig of choice, for QRP, is an OHR-400. There are two operations with this rig I'm thrilled about.

The first took place on field day 1997. I took the rig and a solar panel/battery and helped my local club earn 100 natural power points. I worked both 20 and 80 meters (I had not yet made QSO's on those bands with the OHR so it served double duty.) The thrill came when I couldn't raise anyone via calling CQ on 20 meters. I heard OK1FFU calling CQ and went back to him. I received a 559 running about 5 W to a ladder-line fed dipole up about 40' to his 599 using 100W (?) and an FT 440. (I had a rag chew with OK1FFU recently. He was using a KW on 15M to a 4 element beam up 45 meters. Copied me fine. - js)

The second took place during the QRP ARCI contest on October 18 of this year. I started the contest at 4 W, and made three QSO's, too easy so I went to 700 mW and made another three, again too easy, so I went to 125 mW and made one QSO after about 30 min. That was more difficult, but I received a 559 from WZ2T. He's located in up-state NY and was about 400 miles away. At a rate of about 3000 mi/W I earned my 1000mi/W award. Using an un-tuned 40-meter dipole at 25' tuned with an ATU in the shack.

Last, I'll write more about this, but whenever I go camping or on vacation I take my little MFJ 9040 along. It's running about 3 W and even in the doldrums of 1996/97 I have managed an average of one QSO a day during the vacations. I

use a tuned 40-meter dipole and tree sky-hooks and get the antenna up about 20 to 25'.

Phil adds a review of his equipment: I have had my 9040 since 1993 and I have used it at home, but mostly on the road. I like this rig because of its size and low power consumption. For a week camping trip I use a 7.5 AHR GelCell and have more than enough power left over when I get home to do more operating.

I do not like the side tone. It does funny things and sounds strange on my rig. It is a nice sine wave, but it changes depending on the SWR too. Now, there's an idea! If I could just teach myself what an SWR of 1:1 sounds like!

I was thinking of buying a kit to replace the MFJ but decided against it since I could not find a 5 watt kit in as nice a package. I like to listen to a speaker, not to headphones and I find that the MFJ has enough power to supply the speaker.

My travel kit fits in an old briefcase, I take the rig, antenna, coax, key + cable, battery + cable, extra fuses, small SWR meter, and the log book along with labels that have the basic QSO information printed on them. I then buy postcards, stick my label on & fill-out the needed information. Then I only have to look someone up to mail him/her a traveling KE3FL QSL card.

Phil continues in another Email about kit building: I've built four QRP radios in the last 12 months- two NE4040's (40 meters & 30 meters), an OHR-400 (80/40/30/20 meters), and an 80 meter kit from a fellow ham in California, K6LMN. His was a two board project.

All kits went together with ease. The 80 meter kit had no cores to wind since he did the "difficult" parts himself. All kits worked the first time. I had two questions about the instructions on the OHR-400, but received quick answers via e-mail.

The OHR-400, as can be expected, was the most complex to align. It took me a number of tries before I was convinced I was doing it correctly. I found the use of my MFJ antenna analyzer to be of great help. I transmitted into a dummy load at very low power and took some of the output to the MFJ's counter input. What a breeze to align!

For the OHR, I found that not unboxing/unbagging all the parts at the same time to be a

great benefit. I worked on one board at a time and unboxed/unbagged the parts I was going to use. First I did resistors, then capacitors, etc. I did all of one type per board until I was done with that type of part. I think this kit took me almost a month to complete, working a bit almost every day.

With the NE4040's, there were so few parts that unboxing and verifying them all at the same time was no problem. In fact, these kits took me less than 4 hours each. They tuned up easily and I was on the air and had QSO's the same day, minutes after completing the kits. These did not come with pots and connectors or a case. I built a case from scrap aluminum and bought the other parts from Radio Shack. I put both NE4040's in the same case and I modified the 40 meter kit with a switchable capacitor.

With this arrangement, I can now operate around 7.04, 7.12, and 70.12 MHz. The 40-meter mod added the ability to operate in the Novice section of the band. I use the same key input, the same antenna, and the same power connector, though I do have to switch between 40 and 30 meters using a power switch that supplies power to either the 40 or 30 meter boards.

There was one schematic error on my version of the 80-meter kit but I figured that out before I committed the part. This rig took me about four hours total, but over a few months since I received the receiver board months before the transmitter board arrived.

Any questions/ comments, contact Phil, **KE3FL** at ke3fl@juno.com.73 - visit my web site at <http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/3852/> Thanks. - 30-

Nebraska Slow Net

Mac **W0AP** has been Net Control for a slow speed net in Nebraska for the last two years or so. They meet on 3540 kHz at 6:45 CST Monday thru Friday. Call up is "NCW" (Nebraska CW). They try to keep the speed down so as to encourage newcomers - or sidebanders who have forgotten what Morse is all about - to join them. They seldom have more than 8 or 10 QNI (check-ins) but they have had 67 different hams call in. Check-ins from everywhere are welcome so look them up. I hear Nebraskans are a friendly bunch!

QSL BURO Hint

If you've changed your callsign, send envelopes to the FISTS bureau with BOTH your new and your old callsigns on them. And putting your FISTS number on your QSL cards makes it easier for the card recipient if they're working for an Award.

The Cheapest Bug

From June 1927 QST, written by 9CBJ. Sent in by Jim **N8NLE**

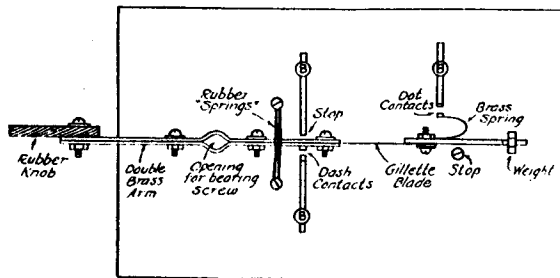
Other homemade bugs have been written up in QST but I doubt if any of them could be made much more cheaply than this one. Of course it did cost a dime, because a dime had to be cut up to make the contacts, and there seems to be very little demand for the leftover parts of a cut-up dime.

The best thing about the bug is the vibrator which is a Gillette razor blade-- really fine for the purpose. The main arm is of two pieces of brass strips laid together. A thru bolt at one end holds the handle -- a piece of an old rubber panel -- and another thru-bolt at the other end holds the Gillette spring. Between these are two thru-bolts close together and between them the two strips are sprung apart so that the long wood screw can be put thru into the base, with enough washers under the arm to provide clearance.

This isn't beautiful and probably something like the bearings and staff of an alarm-clock balance wheel might do better work but the present arrangement does very well. As to the "springs," they too are not quite standard, being rubber bands, but they work quite well after once being adjusted.

The dot arm is made of a short piece of heavy copper wire screwed to the free end of the Gillette blade and carrying both the dot contact and a weight (a nut or small coil of wire solder) to get down to the proper speed.

The bug has been in use at this station for some time and is quite satisfactory.



Although we hams can pretty much choose which reference to follow (within reason) for telegraphy, there are probably two importance references: One is "Telegraph Regulations" published by the General Secretariat of the ITU. My "Manual for Use by the Maritime Mobile and Maritime Mobile-Satellite Service" (1976), published by the ITU, does not mention the exclamation point and it does not mention the inverted question mark used in Spanish. My experience in copying a great deal of press wireless years ago (including Prensa Latina and Peking Press) is that neither is used. However, the six "auxiliary" characters used in several non-English languages are mentioned in this manual.

The other reference is one of the U.S. Navy's NTP (Naval Telecommunications Procedures) series of publications, Chapter Six of NTP8 does not mention the exclamation point. It does list two characters, the semicolon and dollar sign that the ITU documents do not recognize. In my four years as a Navy radiotelegraph operator I don't recall seeing either of these used and they were not included in any of our proficiency examinations. Our references were the Allied Communications Procedures (ACPs) which are the grandfathers of the NTPs.

There are some other rather interesting aspects of this subject and if anyone is interested they should drop me an E-Mail or letter. 73 John K5DL k5dl@worldnet.att.net

Mobile Morse

I would like to remark on the well intentioned comments on mobile CW by Marty, NC2B. I am afraid it might it might discourage some of our CW brethren from joining us /M.

I first became mobile when the Collins KWM2 was announced. Then, all mobile was SSB because of the difficulty in keying. But as soon as Waters brought out a battery operated electronic keyer, mobile CW came into its own..

During my years as president of Electro-Voice, I did a great deal of driving between our three plants, several trips to the West Coast and one extended trip in Europe. Never a problem. Mobile CW is safer than SSB as with the electronic keyer along side, you will have both hands ready to grab the wheel.

Code speed is about the same as a fixed station from about 20-30 wpm and frequently get reports of 4/5-7-9. I hope I have made a case for mobile CW relieves boredom, is safe and a lot of fun.73, Albert Kahn, K4FW/8

The photopage winner this month is **WX3L** #1256. You, too, can be a lucky winner of FISTS stickers and a patch - just for sending in your photo for our Photopages! We do a computer generated random drawing each month. Everyone who has sent in a photo is eligible, but you can only win once. With the holidays, there is bound to be someone around with a camera. Just a regular snapshot will do, about the size of the photos you see in the photopages, with your head about the size of a quarter. We cannot resize them and they cannot be returned after they are used. Be a winner, send in your photo to Ken **W8ROG** today!

VLF/FL

Any FISTS interested in VLF and LF communications? The "lowfer@qsl.net" reflector covers the 1750M one watt band, experimental 100mw transmissions in the 515-1705 kHz range, VLF monitoring for geomagnetic disturbances, and DXing the many worldwide non-directional beacons in the 190-535 kHz range before they go QRT to make way for the GPS navigation system.

Many of these stations run less than 100 watts into a shortened antenna, but can be logged thousands of miles distant. My best catch, and QSL letter verified was "RG" on 352 kHz, from Rarotonga in the South Cook Islands, over 5000 miles away. That was with my Radio Shack DX400 receiver and a homemade magnetic loop. 73 Robert **KB7AQD**

What To Talk About?

Bill **W8ZNH** offers some suggestions to help with that age old question...what do we talk about after the name, QTH, RST and the ever popular rig info exchange? Bill suggests you ask questions, such as:

1. What do you do for a living?
2. What is your hometown famous for?
3. What are your other hobbies?

You might be surprised at some of the answers he has gotten over the years and the interesting people he has met; like the ex-airline pilot who was editor of a small town paper or the guy in New Orleans who was a crop-dusting pilot or the DX QSO on Malta who was a commercial radio op there and who Bill still keeps in touch with.

In addition to making your chats more interesting, it improves your copying skill when you go beyond the 'formula' QSO.

My QSO with John, **8P9HT** in Barbados (**K4BAI**, FISTS # 2158), gave me my DXCC country #100 worked while operating QRP with my HW-8 and an attic antenna. Thanks John ! 73, Corb, **K8UCL** # 2642

George **KN6GSJ** was feeling pretty lousy for a while until he got diagnosed with diabetes. He's back to almost 100% again and is listening for FISTS on the air. He sends along these comments:

"I enjoy the comments on copying in your head or writing it down. I do both. I sit back and listen to QSO's in my head, but when I am working someone I keep what we use to call in the Navy a "Chatter Log." It can be used for further reference. I've gone through my logs for calls that I've worked that I need for a new Prefix and missed. Sent a QSL off and commented on some of the things we talked about maybe as far back as a year. I get a QSL back and that someone will say, "You have a fabulous memory or keep notes" Just a good chatter sheet. Makes it all more interesting.

"I found John McKinney's story about sending code with the signal light very interesting. While I was at sea on the USS York County-LST-1175 back in 1961, I saw that work very well. The difference was there were no ships in sight this particular night. My friend was a Signal Man and I doing it all on radio. I stepped into the catwalk and he was slapping out Morse with the light.

"I asked him, "What are you doing? There's no one out there." He replied watch the sky." And I did.

"What I saw was very slow Morse flashing back from the clouds. It had to be sent VERY slowly or you could miss it. But the other ship, the Spiegel Grove, LSD - 32, was over the horizon. Great communications. While in port Naples on a carrier, the USS Saratoga, CVA 60 in 62, it was like watching fire works, all the Signal men would keep in touch by blinker light.

"One last short one before I hit the bands to see what is happening. Back in September of 1996—Sept 6th at 1805Z to be exact, I worked HGM5PJP. He had been testing on 14.045 and when he called CQ I went right back to him with my 80 watts. He came back with my signal report which so happened to be a 599 as he was with me. He was in Budapest, Hungary and that is all he sent except for "TNX FER THE QSO 73." I went back to him and asked his name and got the reply "ATC POPE JOHN PAUL—73 SK EE." That's all he would send and he did the same for the pile-up after me. So, the PJP made sense

if it was true and I guess the HGM must have meant HOLY GHOST MESSENGER as he was passing traffic for the Pope while in Hungary. (HI) Oh yes, he had said to QSL VIA BURO But I did not bother to, maybe I should have. (HI) I QSL to DX stations who have managers in the States. Maybe after I completely retire I will start. Nancy, take care, God Bless and keep up the good work. The club and the KEYNOTE are a big part of my life. Good to hear from you George! I'm glad your diabetes is under control, seems I'm hearing a lot about that disease from FISTS these days. I can't believe you didn't QSL the HGM station, hi! That would have been a neat one for the shack wall.

John **KG9HV** visited his brother over Thanksgiving - his brother lives so far out in the sticks he sez his zip code is EIEIO, hi! John took his homebrew portable telescopic antenna, his TS180S, straight key and battery and worked quite a few FISTS members. He returned home with an Underwood typewriter that belonged to his grandfather. His grandfather used the typewriter while working as a telegrapher for the old NA&S railroad. John writes:" I first saw it in an old photo of gramps at the depot. This was in the photo next to the key and sounder. Gramps would type out the messages as they came in on the telegraph. So, after some questions, I found that my mom had it stored in a barn at my brothers. It somewhat mysteriously ended up in the trunk of my car. After some cleaning and DE-40, after 75 years, this old boat anchor is off vacation and back in the telegraphy game again. Only now it is via radio waves instead of wires. The SFI has been over 100 lately, so let's hope this is the beginning of a sharp rise right into Cycle 23. All the best for the holidays to the FISTS, 73." FB John! I'm happy for you and the typewriter - I bet it's happy to be pounding out the letters again while you're pounding brass in the shack.

Don **W8DEA** lives in a second floor apartment with and runs 50 watts max to a random wire inside two rooms using an MFJ-971 portable tuner and MFJ-931 artificial ground. He worked **AC4DT** on 14.058 with much QRM/QRN, then moved up to 14.061 to call CQ FISTS. He was thrilled when Alan **G3RSP** came back to him with a 559 RST, then **G3KEF** called him. The next day he worked **DF9RIE** on 20. He wanted to let FISTS know that the DX FISTS are out there looking for us, so don't think your antenna or lower power keeps you from enjoying FISTS DX.

Norman **KC7SUI** would like to credit **WB0CFF** for sponsoring him into FISTS - he says not only did Carl send him information when they first QSOed, but again a few weeks later after they ran into each other again. Thanks for being so persistent Carl!

Moose **KC4GPJ** says he was fortunate on Sept 14 to work FISTS #0001, while Geo was using the special call **GB0FCW** - that's his most famous QSO. He hope to work me someday so he'll be top shelf, hi hi! I guess I am rare DX these days, Moose. FISTS takes up 99% of my ham time. It should get better tho now that Dennis **K6DF** volunteered to do the new member certificates for me. Look for me Straight Key Night and New Year's Day!

Jim **N8NLE** went to a birthday party for his 94 year old cousin and was the youngest one there at age 70! Among the guests at the party was Merle **W8ZC**, who has been a ham since the 30's. Jim says Merle hangs out on 40 meters - I would love to get that call in my log! The KeyNote takes priority over all other reading when it arrives at Jim's QTH (Thanks Jim!). His log is studded with FISTS members. He hears Don **WD8OCV** on the air once in a while but can't get back to him because Don is so popular. Jim notes that Gerald **N8GO** has a pipeline to Toledo. Gerald does a lot of antenna work and his signal sounds like he is in the backyard. Jims' log is studded with regular FISTS members.

Nate **WB4CAW** reports that 15 meter CW band has been open every afternoon with DX and stateside stations. I'm glad to hear that, back when I was a Novice (in the olden days of 1988, hi) 15 used to be my favorite band.

Another sign 15 meters is opening up: Bill **W4MA** worked Eric **ZS6ME** on 21.058 at 1330Z.

Barnaby **KQ6EX** recently joined the ranks of the QRP and built two kits, the OHR QRP wattmeter and the Norcal 40, which he reports is a gangbusters rig. Barnaby notes that the satisfaction one derives from building a quality instrument and especially troubleshooting it can only be described in terms of a warm personal glow. Isn't that the truth!

Send CW, not excuses.

-Randy **K8EZ**

Robert **KB7AQD** says: Gotta hand it to FISTS members. Received a pack of QSL requests from the FISTS buro. This is the first time in ten years on the air that so many operators sent me a QSL card first, instead of me having to bribe them with an SASE, postcards and extra postage.

Looking for Novices and Techs this morning...but hear SSB bootleggers mainly between 28100-28200 kHz. That's not good. If we abandon perfectly good spectrum, it's our fault the pirates take it over.

Pleased to see the VHF/UHF fans promoting FISTS and CW/MCW operation. The term "no-code" Technician misses the point. ALL radio amateurs can use Morse code, including Technicians. For DX fans on six meters, many DX countries use CW for DXpeditions and contests as opposed to SSB.

To spread the good word about our excellent organization, I'm not becoming a "Morse Hermit"...one of those Hams who has no microphone, no keyboard, and only a straight key or paddle. For me, that would make it impossible to recruit new members!

Met my college economics professor, Dr. Bromley. He married into an entire Ham family, so needs to get his Ham license to survive. His wife is a Technician, but agrees that the Morse Code makes Ham radio into amateur radio. We communicate via radio to find out how radio works as an end in itself, rather than use radio just to chat. Because of the narrowband weak-signal benefits of CW, we Hams can send an intelligible signal over paths that commercial, government and military communications people would find impractical and unusable.

Among those who are going to be happy to know the Century rules are reasonable again is Stan **AC6TO**. He writes: I have been putting in about 10 hours each day trying for new fists numbers for the Diamond Award. I checked the last 17 days and have added 24 new numbers. So that a long way from even 2 per day. After you get 500 QSO's the going almost stops because not many more are actively pursuing new numbers. I'm still trying for it and also the Platinum. Which won't be too hard to do.

Mac **W0AP**: Time was when one could scan the band and without hearing a single call sign, identify several of the "fists". Today there are no 'fists' - well hardly - only the din and clattering or mechanical keyers punching out monotonous diatribe. The romance is gone! Awww Mac, I can't agree with that. I'm a straight key/bug person myself and I know we're not alone! Hope to CU straight Key Night

Bill **K0KGS** is looking for anyplace he can get some practice material. He has a 30 wpm certificate and is inching toward 35, but feels he really needs some other, maybe faster places to listen on a regular basis. Any ideas of frequencies, etc. for him?

Earle **W6QGD** is a "new recruit" and will appreciate other members help in his effort to develop CW beyond his 10-15 wpm limitations. Hmmmm....both you guys sound like candidates for our Code Buddy program! Contact Ed **WA3WSJ**, the info is in the How Do I...? section of this issue.

Cindy **K06TQ** would like to say thanks to those who responded to her letter about keyboarding. She's really impressed with FISTS members - sez this is a terrific club! Yes, it is Cindy. FISTS members are indeed a special group of people

Chuck **WB2SWI** got the vanity call **KB2E** and now he says the real work begins. He has to change the tags on his 12-year old truck, print new QSL cards, and -- get a new hat!

Listen for Eric **KG8VQ** on the air with his new Yaesu FT-900AT. He didn't really NEED a new rig, but a friend upgraded from the 900 to a FT920, and Eric couldn't resist the automatic antenna tuner on that FT-900.

As an example of how many FISTS have cards waiting at the FISTS QSL Bureau, Stan **K4UK** sends along these statistics:

FISTS w/Cards Waiting		FISTS w/SASE's On Hand
4th Call District	240	52
8th Call District	180	30
Canadian	31	17
Mex, So. Amer	21	8

Do YOU have envelopes at the Bureau??

A Peaceful Solution

Roger **AA1DG** sends along a description of how he solved the dilemma of how to combine the hobby with the happy family.

It has occurred to me that for the past six years, I have worked out a set-up of my rig that has functioned remarkably well balancing my one room shared with my wife and TV and the fact that as a minister I do not own the house, etc... Her overstuffed chair and ottoman are actually adjacent to a drop-front desk

which houses my entire amateur station. She watches TV at the very same time I work the bands. There doesn't seem to be any interference problems and she seems to feel we're doing a "shared" activity though we are really engaged with very different things. Once in a while, I call out a new QTH, "...oil rig off the Louisiana coast." She'll actually manage to say "Really, that's great," without too much effort.

I run a low-profile station I guess you would call it: a Ten Tec Scout at 50 watts. Until recently, my antenna was a very simple double extended Zepp fed with 450 ohm ladder line. Now I have installed with equal success, a Carolina Beam 80 between the backyard trees. Maybe the low power helps things along but it's all I can afford at the moment and I make daily/nightly log entries and that's all I'm looking for.

I have heard many hams bemoan the fact that they do not have a separate room dedicated to their hobby. For me, keeping my spouse "connected" with the hobby in a way that does not insist she become a part of it has paid big dividends in good will.

When not in use the room cannot be seen as either "TV" or "ham radio" but as a library with bookshelves along on whole wall. We use the room for so many purposes including visiting with friends and church members. I just close up the drop front and my ham radio station disappears; later to appear in peaceful coexistence with my wife's TV. Naturally a good headset is a must!

Chuck **KB2E** has the same problem, but a lot more room! He writes, "My wife and daughter coughed up the TV room, a nice 8X10' room I now have for a shack instead of being crammed in a corner of the bedroom; my wife said that after she went to bed, even with the earphones on I squeaked the chair and rattled the paper, and slammed the pencil down! For the last we wrapped the pencil in rubber bands but she said it went boing-boing anyway, she has good ears. Now we just have the CW vs. TV "discussion" -- TV is just outside shack. I have room for two complete boatanchor rigs as well as Icom. BTW, that phrase "boatanchor" sends shivers down my spine, thinking of those gorgeous radios in the briny deep, zounds!

Anyone have any more suggestions for a peaceful coexistence they care to share?

Amateur Radio: A Family of Friends

A-1 Operators Club

I noticed in the last Keynote that Jim **K9JXW** wonders how many A-1 Operators Club is in our Fists Club? I know of 8. They are as follows listed by alphabetical order.

Tom **K5AX**; Brian **W8BL**; Bart **WB2HEK**; Claude **AA0IQ**; Maggie **WP2T**; Stan **AC6TO**; Jim **KC5VJU**; Everett **N8YJB**

I'm sure there are many more that I'm not aware of. There is a Roster of the A-1 Operators Club in the home pages of ARRL, But it would take a very long time to look up each one to see if they are on the Roster. 73 88 de Stan **AC6TO**

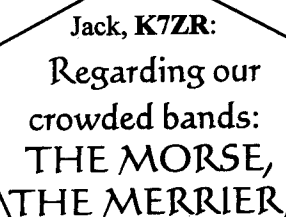
Thanks, Stan. It is a worthwhile ARRL project and I hope it generates some interest among the FISTS. We are proud to have A-1 Ops Club members in our ranks! Has anyone heard from Maggie **WP2T** lately? I have lost track of her since she moved to the Islands and don't have a forwarding address for her.

Mac W0AP's Book

I've had some requests for more from Mac W0AP's book. So, I wrote and asked him if it is available to the public yet. He replies "Wish I could oblige, but there is but one copy of "My Book", unorganized and within my desk drawer. I have been writing chapters of my sea experiences over the past several years and then rewritten some of them but I have run out of steam (and money!) and given up on ever having the book published.

"Many of the tales I have recounted in Programs at conventions and several chapters have been published as 'items' in the newsletters of SOWP, etc but at this point in time I need to find someone to organize this information into a fluid book and ready it for publication. I do not expect it to ever be a best seller, but might be of historical interest to radio bugs, especially.

"I've have used a mill for so many years, I cannot find the 'shift key' in a standard keyboard! "



Jack, **K7ZR**:
Regarding our
crowded bands:
THE MORSE,
THE MERRIER

BACKPACK QRP

by Marty **WD4AXJ**, professional mangler of Morse code
QRP is a lot of fun in itself but combine it with a backpacking trip to a wilderness area and you double your pleasure. There is nothing like ending a day of enjoying nature, cooking a meal over an open fire, then striking up a good conversation with old cronies (or new friends)!

One of the only rules for such a venture is to keep things as light as possible. You know the rig has to go but you can be creative with antennas and power supplies. I operate on many bands when in the field so a multiband antenna is a must. My present antenna is an extended zepp fed with twin lead TV cable. The entire antenna-feed system weighs less than 1 pound. My rig is a Ten-Tec Argo which is a fairly large QRP radio but I love the receiver and filtering which makes for a most pleasant experience on today's crowded bands. Yes, I know that CW is dead, but tell that to the guys lining up for a clear frequency on 40 meters every night! I also take along a small MFJ model 1901-b tuner. It has so far taken any condition I could dish out including some rather unorthodox ways to string antenna wire in thick brushy country.

Now, to the really big dilemma faced by backpackers, how much battery to lug up those steep slopes. If you choose to take the battery off the family wagon then you could wind up imitating a Hoover vacuum cleaner as you suck wind trying to climb up one of those steep slopes, and that strange crunching sound you hear is your knee joints trying to self-destruct under such a load. However, if you opt for too little battery power then you are going to be the proverbial unhappy camper when after finishing your first CQ, Your rig dies for lack of juice. I try to keep enough battery in my pack for the length of the trip I have planned. MY standard one to two day trip power supply is two six volt lantern batteries wired in series. I do a lot of cold weather camping so try to keep my batteries warm by placing them near the campfire. WARNING: notice I said NEAR the fire not in it, this could result in a small explosion of hot battery acid so try this at your own risk!

In the Tellico Mountains where I do most of my trips there is no such thing as old growth forest, most of the area has been logged off at one time or another so there are plenty of "tables" available for gear and paddles in the way of huge tree stumps cut smooth by loggers years ago.

So, in closing if you are into outdoor activities and hamming, then give yourself a treat and take your QRP rig along on your next trip to the great outdoors, I guarantee double the fun!



Elk or CW?

By Michael Brewer KG8UY, Fists #2721

The first 2 weeks of September found three of us in the mountains of Colorado chasing elk hours from the nearest town of Alamosa. At an elevation of 9800 ft., I was out of breath for the first three days. I was the Ham of the bunch, so I had to have my 50 watt Ten Tec Scout, MFJ tuner and paddles and Mic, don't forget a dipole with clip on extensions for 20-30-40. The dipole was about 15 ft. to the apex. On 40 mtrs the lower sides were abt 5 ft. off the ground, far from perfect, but it worked.

I had a schedule with KGBWF Vince, KBMEL Mel, N8GA Gary, and NK8V Bob. So the first meeting, I tuned on the rig, tuned to 7142 and low and behold my buddy Vince, I can hear him 559 Great! Now I know if we have any problems in the mountains, I can get help and also keep in touch with my family in Michigan, no cell phone here. And voice was not dependable, but we never missed a day with CW.

When the bands were in good shape we moved to voice on 20 mtrs and good ole Vince phone patched all of us through to our wives. The fellows with me were blown away, being only familiar with CB, they had no idea what happens in the Ham world. One of them says he is going to get a license.

About midway into our trip, one of the fella's bagged a nice 4x4 elk. We had to go up, up, up into the mountains and debone the animal right on the spot and carry the thing back to our ATV. What a job, walk about 50 ft. and stop and pant for air, but we got him. I was camp cook, so I had time to fish and goof around camp and make lots of contacts. Fishing was great, I would limit out in abt 30 minutes each day. We ate so many trout I got tired of them, which I thought impossible. We saw coyotes, bear, antelope.

Well, all good things come to an end and Sept. 18, we pulled down camp and Sept. 20, found me in my own bed (what a pleasure). Sept. 21, I invited a bunch of Ham friends over for elk, fish and "soft drinks", well ok, maybe KG8WF had some "hard drinks". So, when you hear someone calling CQ, you never know where you'll find them.

Thumb Dit vs Finger Dits

From John WB2EXI: Anyone who has ever used a Vibroplex bug real has no problem with this at all because we all know that the dots are on the thumb and the dashes are on the index finger, after all Vibroplex was made many many years ago and if anyone should know I am sure it would be them. Now when it comes to Iambic keying, that is an art in itself. With that kind of a paddle I would have to say, go with whatever it is that makes you comfortable. However if it were me using an Iambic type paddle I would still go with the thumb-dot, index finger-dash method, as it is the way that I learned to send Morse.

From Chuck KB2E: The right vs. left fer paddles tempest-in-a-teapot is certainly a worthwhile debate fer long winter months! When I bought my Vibro paddle there were no instructions or suggestions for right vs. left, so I reasoned as follows: The thumb is the stronger digit, dashes take more "strength," so dashes you push to the right, eh? Learned it that way. THEN got the big hots fer BUG keys, and, of course, you don't have a CHOICE with them -- dashes are to the left. Now -- and here's the kicker -- I tried to relearn the paddle so the two kinds would be consistent, and felt nauseous at the new way on the paddle, literally queasy in my stomach. Why not nauseous on the Bug? I don't know, I can switch back and forth with relative impunity, and if I had to guess I'd say it's cuz the tactile feel of the two is so different it's like two different things as opposed to the paddle one way or the other. I do start the wrong way sometimes, but once I get it right, I usually am OK the rest of the way. Gonna be a long winter on this topic! --Hi!

FOR SALE

Heathkit HW8 QRP Rig \$225.00

The rig is in very good shape. I have two of these rigs; I am selling one. Rig has no physical damage nor broken parts. Needs, however, some tuning - only trouble: "deafness". Sometimes you hear, sometimes you don't. **IMP: rig sale as it is.** If interested please contact for any details; Hector E Perez NP4FW FISTS #2531, Daily hours til 4PM (787) 858-2323 Ext 2132. Evening after 6PM (787) 283-6266 or write St. 12 L-12, Colinas de Cupey, San Juan PR 00926

Much has been said in the past few years about how the International Morse code is an antiquated mode of communication. Some suggesting that "A1A" should be done away with altogether and others saying it should be relegated to limited band allocations in order to make more room for SSB and other "more reliable" modes. Although I realize that mode realignment within the bands may, indeed, result in smaller allocations for Morse operation, and am willing to concede that such a realignment is needed, I am thoroughly against the move to remove the Morse requirement for licensing or to do away with the mode altogether. My arguments for this position are both sentimental and practical as follows.

As amateur operators today, we represent a proud history and tradition of the hobby. Good Morse operation is both a skill and an art form. Much practice is required in order to be recognized by your peers as an "A-1" operator, just the same way that a great deal of study is needed in order to acquire the depth of understanding in electronics needed to earn the Amateur Extra license. Both are highly valued and require lots of work. To use the old phrase, the harder you have to work for something, the more valuable it is.

Is the new generation of Ham operators just plain lazy? Well, some are, as the present generation seems to have been given most everything on a platter. Perhaps those of us that had to live through wars where our friends were being killed are the last to value this concept of hard work and dedication. This is not to say that everyone of the "Generation X" is lacking in a good work ethic but they do need to learn this behavior. Additionally, they will never learn it by having things handed to them simply because they demand it and are numerous. We also find that when we work hard to achieve something, it is of greater value to us. That's why so many OT operators are so adamant about code requirements.

Perhaps the high number of inactive hams is a result of disinterest in a hobby they didn't have to work very hard to come into. I take a great deal of pride in my achievement (admittedly ongoing) of Morse operation and, once I get my 20 WPM, I will be even prouder. What I find so neat about Morse operation is not only the achievement, but also the fun I am having while working to improve my ability. It did not, however, start out that way.

I gained entrance to the ranks of ham radio through the "no code tech process". As soon as I was in operation, and had seen HF operation, I knew that was where I wanted to go but I had to surmount the Morse requirement to get there. I forced myself to study and learn code to the 5WPM minimum and got my plus license.

Getting on the air was the next step and believe me, it wasn't easy. I had to take money I had saved for other reasons, and explain to my wife why I wanted to do so (that may have been the harder than passing the code test). My first cw contact was an absolute disaster, with me copying only about 50% of what was sent to me but I was lucky to have worked an operator at an ARC who was very gracious and understanding. At this point, it would have been easy to just wash my hands of the whole thing, but I had worked hard just to get there and wasn't ready to give up. I promised myself to have at least 2 QSO's everyday and slowly but surely my abilities improved.

I was still thinking that SSB operation was what I really wanted to do because the code was so difficult for me. I operated on 10 meter phone just enough to keep the carrot on the stick out in front of me. How was I ever going to get on the

coveted 20 meter band? I had to keep working cw in order to pass the 13 WPM and then I would put the key away forever. At least that was the plan, so I worked and worked, QSO after QSO, making new friends along the way and finding many helpful and supportive "Elmers" along the way.

I then went on a field day operation with a group of QRP operators working cw only. I believe this experience more than any other gave me the confidence and practice I needed in order to achieve my dream and the following month I passed my test for general. You would think I ran home and jumped on SSB 20 meters but the strangest thing happened along the way. I found cw operation so rewarding that I now lost most of my desire for phone operation.

I kept going back into my greatly expanded cw privileges and was having a ball with it. To this day I continue to work cw almost every day and hope to achieve the 20WPM level in the coming year. Now this is just my story, but you may find, if you are willing to work at it, that you will have a similar experience. So much for the sentimental arguments. Lets go on to the practical side of things.

I work almost every night in traffic handling on the 75 meter Emergency Phone and Traffic Net (almost the full extent of my SSB operation). As most of you know, 75 meters is a very crowded band and full of hams operating at, or above, legal limit for their Q's.

Recently, when the band was in the process of changing its style from summer to winter with an increase in readable skip distance, our net found it almost impossible to pass traffic at distances of only 120 miles. The net absolutely folded in the pressure of splatter and then regrouped on cw where we could reliably move traffic in the local area. The antiquated mode of operation could be relied upon to do the job where the modern methods had failed.

We read where MARS has done away with the mode and yet we also read stories where people lost at sea are located by the flashing of Morse signals by light. Little LEOS, the demise of the 2 meter "no code tech" actually keep track of one another by automated Morse signals. Perhaps the state of the art electronic engineers who have designed them know something about Morse that we do not. People often say who wants to drive a Model T when they can take a spin in the Acura. I used to have a 56 Ford that could get around in bad weather far better than my Pop's Cadillac, and when all else fails, you can rely on a horse to make it through the bad weather where cars do not run.

The point of all this is that cw operation is indeed viable in the picture of communications today and in the future. If we take the time to learn this mode of operation, we will have acquired a skill which was the only way, long ago, and has been part of our legacy to this day, by design. We need to maintain a knowledge of the basics in order to have a greater appreciation of the more modern modes of communication.

And lastly we will gain self esteem by working hard to achieve a goal we decide upon, and have a ball along the way. I SUPPORT KNOW CODE!

QRX - 74 Years

It was probably a cold, grey day in Dayton, Ohio and South Bend, Indiana when two high school boys had their first QSO. 74 years later, Bob Baird, now W9NN and Al Kahn, now K4FW had an historic QSO. Their QSL cards are on the next page.

RO10.8-CWR

UR CW SIGS WKO FB HR AT 12:46 CST

11/17/23 GET U VY QRK ON GREBE CR-3. 1 STEP AF
T.RANSMITTER - 10 WATTS ONLY RAD. 1.3 AMPS
AS ONLY C-T 400 VTS ON PLATES (WL HV 100 WATTS SET)
HARTLEY CIR. — DX HR LAST YR ON REAL 10 WATTS
REG.

HOPE WK U AGN.

TNX 4 CRD.

9BBI

—ARRL—
R.O.W.H.

QRR QSL PSC

CUL BEST 73s

ALBERT KAHN
109 RIVERSIDE
DRIVE
S. BEND

☐ K4FW

☒ K4FW/8

ALBERT KAHN - Old Cartertown Road
Gatlinburg, Tennessee 37738

Ex - W8DUS

CONFIRMING QSO WITH	DATE			UTC	MHz	RST	MODE 2-WAY
	DAY	MONTH	YEAR				
W9NN	17	11	97	1543	7040	599+	A1A

Transceiver OMNIV

Amplifier Hercules

Antenna Beam ☐ Vertical ☒ Dipole ☐

Please QSL ☐

73,

AL

Tnx for QSL ☒

A WIMPY QSL

ARRL

U8CWR

ARRL

ROBERT E. BAIRD, 34 West First St., Dayton, Ohio

Friend 9BBI

Date 17 Nov 1923

Your Signals VY ASA here 12:46 AM

and Tone P.D.C.

Remarks WL LOOK FR U AGN AL

Transmitter: 100 Watt; 1DH Circuit. Antenna Current 3 T. C. A.

Plate Voltage from: 1000 Volts, Advance Synchronous Rectifier.

Receiver: Carco Low-Loss Tuner. Detector 2 Step Audio.

Antenna: Six Wire, Cage Type. Counterpoise: 44 Wire, Fan.

Best 73's

R. O. W. H.

City Manager, O. R. S.

"R. B."

Robert Baird

CFM QSO WITH

DATE

CUT

MHZ

REPORT

MODE

K4FW/8

11-20-96

7.040

599

2x CW

Will be QRV for you mid-Nov of 2000!

W9NN

ROBERT E. BAIRD

Post Office Box 498

Plover, WI 54467-0498 U.S.A.

(Since 1970)

73
Bob

Retired from WGN Chicago after 36 years. My
secondary station, W9JJ, operated from 1959 to 1980.
Founder W9-DXCC. Charter member No. 52 National
OCWA OCT No. 462-ARRL-ROC No. 1162

Twas the day after Christmas
and Hams were abuzz
Checking new gear
To see what it does

Kit-builders obscured
by solder and smoke
cursing the transistor
and diode that broke

Some, new computers
were trying to load
addressing Bill Gates
and the horse that he rode

many strung wires
from chimney to tree
hoisting up dipoles
with SWR three

many fondled keyers
and paddles and such
trying to master
a mode out of touch

a few looked at circuits
and then understood
a few looked at circuits
and wished that they could

the repeater was cluttered
with questions and theories
seeking advice
to end all the worries

many were asking
all the steps that it took
to save them from looking
inside of a book

a few knew the answers
but none of the rest
even though given
in each FCC test

but each Ham was hopeful
that maybe by fall
QSLs from somewhere
would paper the wall

perhaps NEXT year
when the reindeer came flying
an antenna or two
on a tower he'd be tying

so on Yagi, on dipole,
on helix and quad
join up with sloper
and beam out past God
'cause out in the static
and crackle and hissing
a message exists
you shouldn't be missing

"Though each hears a different
rhythm and beat.
We all need to tune in
to feel complete"

CW FOREVER

You must have at times, thought into the past,
Where some things go out, while others last,
What comes to my mind is the old Morse Code,
That has weathered the storms from many abode.

To talk with ones fingers is surely an art,
Of any info you care to impart,
In most conditions the signals get through,
While the same about phone is simply not true.

Those dits and dahs cut through the trash,
Of nearby noise or lightning's crash,
To the sensitive ears of the ham receiver,
Who records this data with ardent fever.

He knows he's doing something unique,
(in such poor conditions, that's quite a feat!)
To roger the message that came off the air,
These brass pounders sure do have the flair.

They say Morse ops are a dying breed,
But don't despair, there's always that need,
That when conditions get rough for the new auto-
mation,
Be rest assured, there'll be need for your station.

CW is dying? Believe it, never.
This mode will be 'round, forever and ever.
But one thing is sure, what we really need,
Is to relay our knowledge to the younger breed.

To carry the torch long after we're gone,
To send Morse Code through the air, like a song.
When at last, Silent Keys pull that final lever,
We can rest in peace, it's CW forever.

Written by WATBY in 1985

'Twas the night before Christmas,
 And all through two-meters,
 Not a signal was keying up
 Any repeaters.
 The antennas reached up
 From the tower, quite high,
 To catch the weak signals
 That bounced from the sky.
 The children, Tech-Pluses,
 Took their HT's to bed,
 And dreamed of the day
 They'd be Extras, instead.
 Mom put on her headphones,
 I plugged in the key,
 And we tuned 40 meters
 For that rare ZK3.
 When the meter was pegged
 by a signal with power.
 It smoked a small diode,
 and, I swear, shook the tower.
 Mom yanked off her phones,
 And with all she could muster
 Logged a spot of the signal
 On the DX PacketCluster,
 While I ran to the window
 And peered up at the sky,
 To see what could generate
 RF that high.
 It was way in the distance,
 But the moon made it gleam -
 A flying sleigh, with an
 Eight element beam,
 And a little old driver
 who looked slightly mean.
 So I thought for a moment,
 That it might be Wayne Green.
 But no, it was Santa
 The Santa of Hams.
 On a mission, this Christmas
 To clean up the bands.
 He circled the tower,
 Then stopped in his track,
 And he slid down the coax
 Right into the shack.
 While Mom and I hid
 Behind stacks of CQ,
 This Santa of hamming
 Knew just what to do.
 He cleared off the shack desk
 Of paper and parts,
 And filled out all my late QSLs
 For a start.
 He ran copper braid,
 Took a steel rod and pounded
 It into the earth, till
 The station was grounded.
 He tightened loose fittings,
 Re soldered connections,

Cranked down modulation,
 Installed lightning protection.
 He neutralized tubes
 In my linear amp...
 (Never worked right before --
 Now it works like a champ).
 A new, low-pass filter
 Cleaned up the TV,
 He corrected the settings
 In my TNC.
 He repaired the computer
 That would not compute,
 And he backed up the hard drive
 And got it to boot.
 Then, he reached really deep
 In the bag that he brought,
 And he pulled out a big box,
 "A new rig?" I thought!
 "A new Kenwood? An Icom?
 A Yaesu, for me?!"
 (If he thought I'd been good
 it might be QRP!)
 Yes! The Ultimate Station!
 How could I deserve this?
 Could it be all those hours
 that I worked Public Service?
 He hooked it all up
 And in record time, quickly
 Worked 100 countries,
 All down on 160.
 I should have been happy,
 It was my call he sent,
 But the cards and the postage
 Will cost two month's rent!
 He made final adjustments,
 And left a card by the key:
 "To Gary, from Santa Claus.
 Seventy-Three."
 Then he grabbed his HT,
 Looked me straight in the eye,
 Punched a code on the pad,
 And was gone - no good bye.
 I ran back to the station,
 And the pile-up was big,
 But a card from St. Nick
 Would be worth my new rig.
 Oh, too late, for his final
 came over the air.
 It was copied all over.
 It was heard everywhere.
 The Ham's Santa exclaimed
 What a ham might expect,
 "Merry Christmas to all,
 And to all, good DX."

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Wonderful Memories!

by Bob W0EUT

Through the kindness and thoughtfulness of my friend W0AP, I am now a FISTS member. I have received several congratulatory messages from several members. I had never heard of FISTS, as to what it really was, but prior to being a member I heard stations from time to time CQing FISTS. Now that I am a member I have gone to 14058 and had several contacts with other FISTS members.

I am an old timer having received my license in 1927 One article in your recent edition by James A Brown struck a chord. How well I remember my first rig built on a board using phanstock clips for connections and square bus bar for RF connections. The rig was a TPTG rig with, at first, raw AC on the plate of a 210. My first antenna was an off center fed Hertz with the single wire lead coming in the shack and connecting directly to the plate tank. Plane tank was wound using small copper tubing. Even though it was the 20s, it wasn't easy to get the parts I needed, especially the 210. Most of the parts I was able to buy at Kresges dime store. I was living in Omaha at the time. Like Mr. Brown's article says, what was SWR and did we have it. The only way I could tell if the rig was working is, I had a large carpenter pencil and I would tune the rig until I got a fat spark from the plate coil. Later I hung a headlight bulb across the center of the antenna where there was a current maximum. At night it would glow and as I keyed the rig, it would go off and on as the dots and dashes were made. I had a neighbor call and say my back yard was on fire.

Anyway, wonderful memories and so glad we still have CW. Hope that FISTS will win the battle. CW for ever!

FINAL

Well, FISTS, that's all we have room for this month, and that wraps it up for 1997! I am looking forward to what 1998 will bring for Morse code. I am very optimistic. I see it as a victory that eliminating the requirement will not even be discussed at the WRC-99. And, in case you hadn't heard, Joe Falcone N8TI won the Great Lakes Directorship by a 2 to 1 margin over the Incumbent, and Kay Cragie WT3P (wife of FISTS N3AO) had an easy re-election victory. This shows that Pro-CW folks are making themselves heard to the ARRL. We need to protect our spectrum, clean up the bands and guard against further reducing of standards. If we stick together and make ourselves heard, there isn't anything we can't do! Support Know Code! I'll be looking for you Straight Key Night.

73 88 Nancy WZ8C

Century Award Holders

This list will normally be printed in the DX section of the Keynote, but there have been so many request for it lately that I acquired it from the Awards Manager at HQ to print here. Here are the FISTS who have Century Awards as of the end of November. I was not supplied with the accompanying Century number and Lee, N9NVV and I don't keep track of it, so pse don't ask us for it, hi!

AA0WZ	GI0PCU	KG8DA	VE1ZAC
AA3LM	GM4BAE	KG9HE	VE3FMC
AA5EA	GW0FJN	KJ7OX	VE3MIQ
AA8PJ	GW0SGG	KQ4VH	VE5RD
AA9KH	GW0UHI	KQ6ES	VY2RB
AA9KH	GW3VLU	KS4UV	W3ERU
AB5EQ	GW4PXQ	KT4QD	W3RMD
AC4DT	K2ACW	LA1IE	W4IUI
AC4NW	K2SWZ	LY3BY	W4JCH
G0GZN	K2VT	LZ1JZ	W4MA
G0HGA	K3AS	M0AVW	W4OGZ
G0IJE	K3CJG	N1DNM	W5HQL
G0ILN	K3WWP	N1VWD	W6DDB
G0JWB	K4MF	N1YLA	W6JEP
G0LJB	K4PTU	N2PLE	W7GB
G0MGD	K4UK	N2SLB	W8BL
G0MRH	K4YKI	N2ZHF	W8LFJ
G0NKO	K6DF	N3NY	W9LUT
G0ONS	K7WF	N3PM	WA0FAX
G0SWU	K7ZR	N3RSD	WA0FGV
G0SZE	K8FN	N4VEF	WA2BQI
G0TBD	K8LJG	N4ZMP	WA3WEE
G0TCF	K8VGL	N5DCF	WA4KQL
G0TGU	KA1SVX	N5VC	WA7YYY
G0TUE	KA2KDJ	N7CFA	WB2EXI
G0UEE	KA3UXU	N7HOK	WB2FXK
G0UKX	KA4IFF	N8FU	WB2HEK
G0UQF	KA8OQF	N8NLE	WD6CKT
G0VQA	KA8ZDL	N8UJZ	WD80CV
G0WAS	KB2SWI	NA8G	WO8E
G3ASG	KB2UZY	NB2T	WP4LNY
G3GXQ	KB8KRD	NP2GP	
G3KEF	KB8OOM	NP4FW	
G3LPS	KB8ZVD	NS2G	
G3VQO	KC4LHZ	NS2H	
G3YLL	KC5NRB	NW3N	
G4EIB	KC5VJU	OZ7KDJ	
G4JRE	KC8BSC	PA3AFF	
G4LHI	KD1XA	PA3BJD	
G4OOS	KE1AF	SM4ASI	
G4RBE	KE1AF	SP6JOE	
G4WBN	KE3NV	UU0JN	
G4ZIB	KF2G	VA3JEG	
G5LP	KF6DCU	VA3KEW	

Here as promised, are the November and December issues of the DX Keynote. Enjoy!

NETS Sunday QRS 0900 (loc) 3.575 2E0AJS

US 0100Z on 14058

Tues: GC0IPX/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

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International Morse Preservation Society

Up-dated listings and badges may be obtained from HQ. For listings, SAE plus current stamp. Badges, £1.50

Obtainable from HQ. £4.00 per 100 or £7.00 per 200. UK and European members add 50p p/p, others on advice.

Your renewal date is printed on your mailing label.

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-EEC EU, £7.00. Others £10.00.

Your renewal date appears on the mailing label and your anticipation would be much appreciated.

GREETINGS

Hello People. As mentioned last month, Autumn was peering round the door and she now seems to have planted at least one of her russet clad tootsies in the threshold. This coincided with an upturn in band conditions when 18 and 21 MHz opened and a few new members were logged. Sadly, the conditions were not quite so good for the GBOFCW station and combined

with some niggling health problems, I found myself restricted to some 700 contacts. Still, t'was a good flag waving exercise which will no doubt bear more fruit when the QSL cards are delivered.

I found my-self perched on the porcelain contemplating a blemish in the wall caused when the door handle met the surface on the odd occasion it was thrust open with some urgency. Was it some strange bug I ask or could it be that I had transgressed the guidelines layed down by the dietitian? Whatever it was, the nagging pain in the upper regions of the stomach suggested indigestion and after three days of regular pilgrimages to the throne room, nothing of note had occurred. I resorted to blasting powder. Two days of the recommended dosage produced no results and I was tempted into taking an extra tablet. A couple of hours later, the fly on the wall would have perceived my rapid ascent up the stairs like some jet propelled OrangUtan but I was alas, too late. This odd and infuriating chain of events continued for the rest of the month and to be honest, all is still not well though there is a barely perceptible improvement.

It pays to advertise I am told. Last month's reference to the RN key however was in no way cast in that manner but surprise surprise.. G0WMC found one in a box of bits n' pieces that he had acquired for virtually nothing and, not being at home with it, sent it my way. Thankee koind zur. This is beautiful piece of kit with the arm floating upon a captive spring. No bearings in sight. Trouble is that it appears to have been designed for great heavy chested mate lots but the answer is simply to shim out the upper spring housing until, without the adjusting screw in place, there is no tension at all. Replace the screw and it works like a dream. Sure takes me back a few years. Hi.

What FISTS is?" said my Japanese friend on 18 MHz. Despite running the GBO station, I spared some time to explain further and mentioned the wide distribution of our members including JA and ZL. Don't know if he knew Ralph personally but he came up with ZL2AOI[without prompting which causes me to wonder if our antipodean member has gained some notoriety there and if so what shade? I'm only kidding Ralph. Sure they speak kindly of you mate.

With the band conditions opening, I found a goodly number of new US members on 20m. This of course is most encouraging except that I have the dickens of a job to convince many of them that my FISTS number is 1. It is down there on the listing of course but under my own call of G3ZQS so in a way I can understand the confusion. I trust you will forgive me for reminding that GX0IPX is the club station and carries the number of the operator at the time. The same

goes for GXOIPX/P or GCOI PXIP (this being the club station operated from the land of the little red dragons). You may claim 3 points on working any of 'em but you may only claim once for your Century Keynote is a little late this month because Bob, GOFRL has been on his annual pilgrimage to VK with the paraplegics and is not due to return until the end of October. As a consequence, new members received only a current Keynote and a listing together with a note indicating that further documentation was to follow. I am hoping that the QSL cards for GBOFCW will be accompanying this news letter though at the time of writing, there was no sign of them. It is a two colour face on buff stock with info on the reverse together with a brief description of the club. My offset press is chute delivery and thus cannot be depended upon for the necessary point to point registration demanded so the job has been farmed out to G4BUE.

GOKLS- REFLECTIONS

The following e-mail received from Ron:

Mni Tnrfr latest "KEY NOTE" always much appreciated No Morse is not yet dead old man. Radio Navigation Beacons and Air Radio Navigation Beacons are even yet (or were 4 Years ago) recognised by their Morse code identification, and the Admiralty has seen fit to dispense with the requirement for Royal Naval Navigation Officers to no longer recognise the Tx of navigational aids it is a very sad day. My own introduction to Amateur Radio was sparked off by the requirement of the R. Y.A. Yachtmaster Certificate examination to read morse at 5 w.p. m. presumably for the sole purpose of identifying Radio Navigational Aid transmissions Now that G. P. S. technology has superseded other position finding techniques it is evidently deemed by the Admiralty that identification of morse R. D. F Beacons is no longer necessary. Perhaps their Lordships also advocate the dumping of the Sextant and the requirement for Deck Officers to have a proficiency in Astro Navigation. Best wishes to yourself and all other Fists who endeavour to maintain well proven communication traditions GOKLS

NEWS FROM A45ZN

Tonys' letter points out that without CW, it would not have been possible for Chris, AF5XL to have had the 1st ever QSO by EME from Masirah Island (IOTA AS-014) with W5UN (Dave) in Texas on I44.028Mhz on 1 October at 1200z. This was also a first for Oman. Chris is QRV until 17 October when he returns to the

UK after a tour of duty as BBC engineer at the British Eastern Relay Station.

Chris, A7ICW is now in Oman and holds the call A45XR being active QRP at the moment but will have his Delta loops bouncing in a few months time.

The Whitton group will be invading the A47RS (club Station) and the team will be operating in the SSB CQ WW contest (25/26 Oct) and includes Mary (GOBQV) Dave (G0MRH and Paul (G0ONA). This will be a first since they will be permitted to operate as A4/ (own call) from Oman outside the contest.

Hope there will be some CW operating on the FISTS QRGs prior to and following the contest.

Oman has applied for a reciprocal licensing arrangement with the UK and since their tickets are based on the UKs' "A" class licence, all should go OK.

I note the temp in Muscat at the time of writing this letter was a somewhat oppressive 40c (Cor!! take yer winter woolies).

G3TUX

I found Chris at the QRP convention in October and he has included the "DX PEEPER" amongst his wares. This little box of trix outputs info in CW from your local DX cluster and will report (de cal Isignifrequency) goodies entered into the cluster station. If you are shy of computers but still value the advantages of the cluster then a the Peeper with a 2m hand-held will be real handy. Speed and pitch of CW is adjustable and the last 6 spots are memorised for instant replay. Costs £175.00.

He is also stocking the CWare tee-shirts "I love CW" for the diehards and Bench er, DK I WE, Jones, Kent Schurr and Zuh like products.

He notes that GKE disappeared from 3543KHz towards the end of September. Someone suggested that it was silenced because of ongoing cost cutting by BT and while Chris may miss the flu juliar chirp-chirp-chirp GKE as a handy signal source when aligning radios in his surgery, I feel it will not be too sorely missed by most. Hi.

He had a report that the video of VK0IR Heard Island DXpedition revealed a couple of Schurr "Profi" paddle. Gerhard Schurr was unaware of this so he had obviously not donated them to the DXpedition but this unintentional publicity has evoked a few enquiries.

His trip to the FOC dinner at Lords unearthed a few odd facts. Seemingly 51% of their members use a single lever paddle as their main operating tool. Could it be that true iambic keying is not as widespread as we may be led to believe?

A reminder from Chris that the GB2RS news broad-

cast on 3518KHz on Sundays at 13 15 utc (per GM4HYF) runs at varying speeds between 18 and 30 wpm.

He has invested in a digital camera which although it may appear to be an expensive item, has saved him a goodly amount of brass by relieving him off 100.00 (plus) per visit to the photographic studio for publicity shots. Definition reproduces at 640x480 which whistnotexactly in the "photographic quality" range is adequate for blurbs and handouts. Yes I would appreciate a sample Chris. Also at the convention, one of our European friends with a tyrolean hat took some five minutes to erect a full size quad loop on 20m with aclever array ofcollapsible glass fibre tubing whose closed length was some 30 inches. There were three of these, a vertical and two horizontal elements forming an extended cross with a feed point at the centre. The same arrangement offered a I Sm antenna and a closed 40m dipole. I neglected to pick up the bump for th is one perhaps because the cost frightened me a little but what a set up for portable working. Hi. Bumped into many friends there including Klaus who is a regular visitor.

GRAND HAMBOREE

Gordon (G4ZPY) and Brenda are arrangmg a big get-together for Hams and their partners with an evening meal in Honolulu Hawaii.

This is pretty expensive but the pair have been there three times so far and indeed tied the knot in that delightful spot which they regard as paradise on earth. *"What nicer surroundings could you have for a such a special occasion"* he asks. Make your own holiday arrangements of course together with the cost of the evening meal.

More info on phone during normal hours (exclude 16.00 to 18.30 local please) on (44)-0 1704-894299).

BUTTER BUTTER FINGERS

I got a rather amusing letter from R.A. Coley being a copy ofthat sent to the RSGB.

"6e.... The ibeu.... idea of usiz... using a pab.... paddle cyer for molsi.... morse nstsisa zood od....one.6esuk.... succeh....damn. Those pho.... who pass will fim.... fit in very p11 w16 qny oberpab.... paddlers, sog.... somi are e4en firv clash ops. Sri prodlern wi6 cyer. My nag is Ray Coley".

Don't laugh friends. Ray sent this one to the RSGB wondering if they would publish it but the sad part is that you really do hear stuff like this on the bands. Perhaps one ofthe most commonly experienced is the guy who is so conversant with his own call sign that hejust plain forgets to put any spacing in at all result-

ing in one long cryptic string that listeners are expected to write down and then decypher by examining the structure of the characters ofwhich it is comprised.

The problem is always the same. Insufficient attention paid to spacing possibly due to trying to send faster than one is actually thinking.... or could it be the other way round?? By contrast, the 2M call I worked as GBOFCW was immaculate. He tried to apologize for the quality ofh is code which at some 10 wpm represented the latest stage in his self teaching. The odd dash was a mite shorter than ideal but he put spaces where they bleonged and will no doubt make a very fine operator indeed when speed comes.

SK WEEK LATE LOGS

There were a couple of delayed logs from the US.. N2FX and K0LWU which sadly weere not received in time for Gerrys' reckoning. This was largely due to their being routed via Pete, K8OUA on the assumption that there was a US version of the event. To be truthful, I also thought this would be the case but perhaps in February? N2FX who made a total of 91 QSO's on a straight key, including 11 DX QSOs, 79 Domestic QSOs for a total of27 states, conveyed the following to Pete:

"For an old straight key operator this was a fine opportunity to have a great time and meet many CW friends. Along the way I met quite a few familiar ops and calls also. How nice to hear 'don't be such a stranger' and 'plsd to cu agn ot'. I was sorry to see it end I put in an average of 8 hrs a day on both 20 and 40 meters and could not understand how with over 3,000 members I could make only 90 rag chew QSOs in a 7 day period. My antenna system is sparse an R7 and a homebrew 40 meter dipole, but I experienced many hours ofsilence to my cq fists calls on both bands. Not an admirable showing for 'a Morse Preservation Society'. Having also heard FISTS members using iambics, bugs and the terrible 2 k's (key-board and kilowatt), it puts me to wondering 'what straight key week?'

Knowing for sure that I'm just an old fart, I had fun, even if a few thousand of our Morse Preservation members missed out. Lets do it semi-annually and watch the sale ofstraight keys soar, HI." Wacko WillyCliffordN2FX.

K0LWV made 11 QSOs from 10 different states, on 20 and 40 meters.

Now with this enthusiastic note, I remind you that the winter SK week is timed for February 1998 and although we cannot offer a prize for FIST OF THE YEAR on this occasion, the bands should be open

with lots of fun for the taking.

ODDS N' ENDS

Being unable to do the job myself I was happy to employ the young man who was disgustingly fit to sort out my garden. Take all the random stone, level it out and terrace it to fit in with the sloping land on the gable, lay down a membrane and top with chippings (all I gotta do is poison the few weeds which fight their way through). He lifted a Broom which was self sown from about two years ago and beneath the roots a large stone. Beneath that was a nest of voles; Mum and six babies. After the Mother had fled to the other end of the garden, he dumped the nest contents complete with babies and moss into a plastic box which I topped up with toilet paper. Mum in the meantime was discovered scooting into a cavity below the stone step so he laid the box on its side within reach and we watched the action as she transferred all the babies into her new found den followed by the moss and then slowly, the paper was drawn into the cavity. I confess that I would have been more than a little disturbed had the episode ended any other way. what puzzles me though is just why she was raising a family at this time of the year (late October) and my helper told me that beneath a derelict shed floor the previous week he had found a family of hedgehogs. I remain puzzled.

Last months reproduction of the DL stamp showing a youthful Marconi brought two letters pointing out that the photograph had been reproduced by Radcomm. I had recognised the picture but for the life of me could not remember where I had seen it. My thanks to 2E0APD and G41ST. The young man has clearly posed for the picture but as for the equipment, it remains a mystery.

Somewhere out there is an JMJ mercilant who tail-ended half a dozen QSOs with GB0FCW. On completion of each QSO, an interrogatory jug handle was thrown at me to which I responded on the straight key with ever slower speed. I gave up on him after I had gone down to some 8 wpm and he still failed to respond. Takes all sorts!

For some time I have been running the DSP with 500 1600Hz centre frequency options having set the FT1000MP to either of those pitches, convinced that I was getting better copy. Recently however I put the jumpers back to the default 6001800 and found that I was getting easier copy than on the lower pitches. I do not think I will be returning to the earlier conditions though because despite my conviction that I was losing out on the upper end of my hearing range, I am copying weaker signals much easier this way. The IF

shift and bandwidth controls seem to be more effective now though it could be my imagination.

The Kantronics KamPlus has been idle now for months so I thought I would give it a whirl on the HF bands and set it up for CW just out of curiosity. It doesn't read code the way I do though. I could clearly distinguish spaces which the equipment seemingly ignored and apart from that, it failed to read a goodly percentage of the stuff that I was copying fully just above the noise level. The combination of human ears and the ready built processor situated between them is set to present a big challenge to electronic data processing. Hi.

I am tempted to send in a report to the RSGB since I switched on the FT290 for a visitor the other day and actually heard someone on the FM segment. Has anyone else heard this phenomenon I wonder or was what I was hearing a case of LDE (long delay echoes)?? G4XHZ returned from his Spanish holiday looking as if he had been dipped in chocolate. He had been having a whale of a time operating the local club station there though he had to scratch around to find a key. Frank confessed that he could have used another two weeks so must have been good. Hi.

NEW MEMBERS

3707	OZ1DW Nicolaj	3708	G0RIH Gordon
3709	G3KFG Bert	3710	OK1FPG George
3711	G4ARL Bob	3712	VK7LF Tom
3613	GOTYM Tim	3714	G4UIA Derek
3715	GOVZX Pete	3716	GOSAH Alan
3717	GODBX Dave	3718	GORVX Ken
3719	MOAXV Max	3720	IT9ULN Angelo
3721	GOVZZ David	3722	UA4PT Pol
3723	MMOAODavid	3724	G3TUH Jack
3724	SP6YGB Jurek	3725	SP6CES Jurek

We seem to have run into a steep upward curve last month people which rather surprises me because the GB0FCW cards have not yet been despatched so we cannot blame it on that. If it keeps up this way Bob is gonna be screaming out for help because when he returned from VK, he sorted out 650 cards whilst under the influence of jet lag. Hi.

THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

*UUOJN. Alex says 'Currently I'm busy with my little daughter. G3BSK. Max found a soulmate in a QRP QSO with KB1FK which has resulted in a measure of paper crossing the pond due to Al and his interest in old motorcycles. Al however is not a well man, struggling with a brain tumour and it must have cost him dearly to assemble the three pages of handwriting which he sent to Max. He still persists with the key but it is of course hard work for him. Hope

conditions become easier for Al. *G4GFQ. I have an affinity with Ron who, like my-self is head cook and bottle washer his wife having to rely on crutches and wheelchair for her mobility. She claims some success in her fight against the 'big C' but what little free time Ron snatches is usually spent relaxing in an easy chair and indulging himself with the odd drop of special stuff from GM land. Hi. *G3TVI. Hi Rod. "Why do you always end with 'stay sober'?" Apart from being the only excuse for my awful fist, beer is one of the few pleasures in life for the aged - well that and a new country. Judging from the attendance at the bar at the HF convention (where I met Rod, G0FBY and a few others) there is little likelihood of the average amateur taking much notice of your good advice". All tongue in cheek Rod. Rather like saying smoke in bed by all means but try not to raise too much steam. Hi. *G4UEW. Our Dave and his good lady enjoyed a two week cruise on the Lancaster canal courtesy of the family to mark their Golden Wedding. That sounds great Dave but I am not sure about the stipulation 'NO RADIO' which seemingly came with the tribute. Hi. *SV2AJX. Paco joined the MV Nea Doxa on 26th August in Sundsvall (SM) and the steel coils which were loaded in Riga (Latvia) took them to Montreal, Toronto and Windsor in Canada and thence to Chicago where they will be loading grain for Ireland. This being his second tour with the vessel, he is no longer RIO but 2nd Officer. Much of the RIOs' work has been replaced by the GMDSS system (and doubtless other short cuts to traffic handling) but he still manages the communications with INARSATC and SITOR for backup. Txcvr is a FURUNO (400W out) which happily can operate on the amateur bands. QRV time restricted and neglecting to pack his keyer makes things awkward but hope to hear him on the bands some time. *G0FVS. Jims' wife Isabella is finding it harder to get about and looking forward to admittance to hospital and the op that will make life easier. Hope the discs were what you wanted mate. *MOAQO. Ken notes with some dismay that some of his acquaintances object to having to learn to read the band coding on resistors etc., and why bother about such things as Ohms Law. Absence of CW for the HF bands is like driving a car with a Motorcycle license.

FINALE

Now that the HF bands are beginning to bottom out, we look forward to much more activity from our cousins on the other side of the pond to say nothing of the good folks down under and in other spots on the globe. Have fun people and given some spare time, I will be

seeing you on the bands. 73/88 and stay sober de Geo

December DX Keynote

GREETINGS

Well, it is that time of the year again, and we find ourselves drifting inexorably towards Christmas. Here on the penultimate month of 1997 with bare trees, the beginnings of the inevitable gales and (hopefully) more than the average rainfall to replenish dwindling reservoirs, the HF bands have already produced many opportunities for DX. It was my great pleasure to hark to a stumbling ZL station declaring to his contact that this was his first M0 and most certainly his first DX. Yet more flowers blossoming in the garden of CW.

I must apologise for the GB0FCW cards which have been distributed by Bob. It was not until later that I realised that the time of the QSO had not been included on the label. This error was of course corrected for the remaining cards which are now with the RSGB bureau so perhaps the recipients could just check their logs and add the appropriate information. As you will see later in this bulletin, we continue to attract new members which will I trust, offset the losses of those who failed to renew their modest subscriptions. They are few in number but have been something of a thorn in my side until I wrote a small programme which checks the dates and automatically carries out the deletion process. These calls are still retained in a holding file complete with all other information which facilitates renewal at the touch of a key should they desire to rejoin us. A very few fall into the trap because I have made a typo when updating their records. It is common practice for me to highlight the last figure in the date string and replace it with the appropriate value but I usually do this after entering the subs into the accounts package where I enter the value of their subs together with the call but I have been known to replace year with this same figure when a large number of subs have been entered at one session.

Down in the cellar, the washing machine had run through its cycles and I had dumped the wet laundry

into the drier. When I switched this on their was one helluva crack so the fuse was replaced and again the same bang came from the plug. I called number two son in and, following in the traditions I had long since established, he proceeded to strip the offending piece of machinery down only to discover that there was nothing wrong with it. The fuses in fact had not blown at all, it was the hash that I had made hurriedly wiring up a string of plugs in daisy chain fashion with inadequately rated cable. This was doubly embarrassing because my previous SOS when I found a puddle of water beneath the washing machine resulted in the same circus and was later traced to another example of my DIY (el-tempo) and it was in fact an ad hoc connection to the waste pipe of the sink which was the guilty party. Will I never learn? The consequence however was pleasing enough because he set to and did a complete re-wiring job of the whole cellar with a modern fuse box fixed within easy reach. Replacing the original four-fuse arrangement with one of eight fuses and switch. Oh bliss.

Moral: If you are gonna make rats nests, make sure your 'temporary' connections and terminations are man enough to do the job. Hi.

KEYS AND BEARINGS

From KB9GKX

"Dear Geo:

In the Keynote, you wondered about Vibroplex's use of "V" (or cup-and-pivot) bearings as opposed the far more common use of premade roller or ball bearings.

In the case of Mitch (W4OA, I think, and a FISTS member) at Vibroplex, he's using what he's got tooling for! Vibroplex bugs and keyer paddles have used V bearings from the start; they can turn them out all day long at reasonable cost. Much of the rest of the Vibroplex straight key makes clever use of standard parts from their other keys as well—the key lever proper and contacts are the only "new" parts on that key as near as I can tell!

On the other hand, a key maker without all the preexisting tooling available to Vibroplex faces a quite different problem; simplest is to purchase bearings ready made. Very good V bearings and spindles can be purchased, but they're quite expensive and the best of them use sapphire for the V block—good for bearings, not so good for a key as it requires a strap between the lever and the base for electrical continuity.

Small ball or roller "hoover bearings," (don't know if this is just an Americanism—they were first used here in early vacuum cleaners!) as found in Kent and other

fine keys of recent vintage, are inexpensive, conductive, rigid in all but the axis of rotation, and very low-friction. So they're a good choice for a "start up" key manufacturer.

There are other options; one of the best is the simple sleeveless sleeve-bearing as used in WW II British "W.T. 8. AMP." keys. With a long enough "sleeve" for the pivot rod, they're free of side motion and (as you suggest) the actual motion is so slight that even such a basic bearing is good enough. (In fact, I use a key of that sort by choice!) A recent tiny hand key from The American QRP Key Mfg. Co., about 1" by 3/4" or less, uses the very same method, and looks much like a W.T. 8 AMP key that's been shrunk! (Maybe he's washing them in *really* hot water? <grin>)

There are a few other ways to pivot the key arm; the old "Steiner" keys used a sort of leaf-spring setup for a combination pivot and tension spring, for instance. Knife-edge pivots were used on some early landline telegraph keys.

In re the stamp you received from DL1AVD, that's Marconi in 1896, having just arrived in Great Britain. The "black box" at the right (his left) is one of his very earliest receivers, a coherer-type detector with "tapper," a sensitive relay and a few square dry cells. Atop it is a conventional Morse sounder of the PostOffice/Western Union pattern common to most of the world. The gadgetry to the left (his right) appears to be an early spark gap, in which the spheres of the gap have a covering over the gap proper very likely filled with petroleum jelly (!), which is how he was building them at the time. I'm looking at a good print of the original photo, and there's no connection between the spark gap and the receiver, just a pair of 1" or so wide strips of copper strap extending left and right from the aerial and earth terminals of the "black box." It's a posed photo, not taken at an actual wireless setup. The Rhumkorff induction coil in use at that time is absent.

The "good print" of the picture is from a very fine book by Peter R. Jensen, VK2AQJ/G4GZT, "In Marconi's Footsteps Early Radio" published in 1994 by Kangaroo Press Pty Ltd, 3 Whitehall Rd., Kenthurst NSW 2156 Australia; PO Box 6125 Dural Delivery NSW 2158. Mr. Jensen covers Marconi (and others, including Capt. [later Admiral] Sir Henry Jackson of the Royal Navy, who was later President of RSGB) from the dawn of true "wireless" though at least the early days of Empire broadcasting from "Two Emma Toc" and later 2LO. He also covers his reproductions (with drawings, photos etc.) of early Marconi equipment! It's a fascinating and wonderful book.

The actual "black box" receiver shown in the photo and on your stamp still exists, or did in 1994. Another photo in the book shows that very receiver with the cover off in the GEC-Marconi archives at Great Badow, Chelmsford.

I purchased my copy of the book a few years ago, from a fellow who'd bought several. Suspect a note to Mr. Jensen or Kangaroo Press (perhaps a VK FISTS member could be enlisted to help?) would bring information about availability and price.

By the way, re your item about affiliations: I am a member of RSGB and find the Society and its publications very worthwhile; I'm also in ARRL and WIA (Queensland Div.). In my opinion, RSGB's "Radio Communication Handbook" is easily the *best* general hands-on radio & electronics text around!

KB9GKX "RJ" *rbarmore@indy.net* Roberta J. (Bobbi) Barmore. FISTS 338

NEWS FROM G0MRH

Hi Geo,

Read November KEY NOTE with interest but feel there is a typographical error on page 2. "NEWS FROM A45XN". I would love to be in Oman to operate a club station with Mary and Paul but feel that this time Dave must have another call sign other than mine, G0MRH.

Regarding Straight Key Week I am very pleased to be placed near the top but am a little concerned like yourself about those who do not send in entries. The form they are required in is not easy to compile unless one photocopies or copy-writes several pages of a log book or runs a computer programme plus word processing. I feel that a lot of members do not do the latter.

Also I feel you may be putting off the 'G's if it is open to the World when other countries may have a higher local density of Fists members to contact. Most activity appears to be on 80M in Europe. Perhaps it is now time to introduce separate sections of the contest and present awards for (1)Europe (2)State side. Those members who cannot spend many hours each day on the key may then have a better chance of showing progress up the 'ladder'.

Regards es 73 Ron G0MRH/Fists 1327

Yes Ron, I confess that I also have been a little concerned about the advantageous position of US members who have a much higher density of FISTS members than we in Europe. In addition, they are able to work state v state on the HF bands at times when those same bands would be closed to Europe. I must have words with Nancy about this because it would

be much more desirable if we either created a separate class or, even better, if the US boys could organise their own version. With the HF bands open of course there would be no problem with participants claiming the points for US members worked. We shall see.

TYPO SUPREMO

Hi Bob,

Just got the Gold Award in the mail today. Very nice job except according to the date on it, it took 20 years to get. Tell Geo the next time you see him that I am going to take up a collection for him so he can buy some new glasses. I think the diabetes is making his eyesight degrade (or maybe just 1 too many pints at the pub). Hope you had a fine vacation in VK-land and all is working out OK with Stan.

CU de Brian W8BL

Now then... I am nothing if not honest and I confess that it was I who printed the cert for Brian. My only defence is that I am too hard up to purchase a current calendar and the only one to hand was 1977. Well that's my story mate.

THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

G4GSA. Pete has done a QSY away from the RFI of N. Bristol and with prospects of an improved antenna system. **XYL** contracted pneumonia during the course of the move from one of her parrots which resulted in a spell in dry dock and cancellation of their planned trip to the Balearics. **G0MRH.** Hi Ron. I am in touch with the listing daily as you can imagine but it is rarely stable for more than a few days at a time so I can understand

your problem. **GSWL3.** Ron is resident in Raunds, Northants an like yours truly, was introduced to the code as a boy telegraphist in the RN. About 20 years after leaving the service, he bought a SR-165 receiver on impulse and has listened to the amateur bands ever since. I also signed on as a boy Tel Ron. This is one sure way of injecting a lethal dose of CW into the blood stream and like yourself left a big gap between leaving the RN and picking up my first receiver. **G4XPE.** Mike has completed the picture frame antenna (Keynote, June 96) but finds it poor on receive. Tried strapping feeders with my trapped dipole also but with no joy whatsoever. Darned thing tunes better as-is but the output sig is pathetic to say the least. Hi. Try playing with the length of the download if you can. In no way should it be worse than the dipole. **G0ONS.** Our Jim met Hilary Clayton Smith at the Leicester show who told him that she was involved with reviewing the Novice band plans to avoid the parts of the bands where other users go. **G0IAL.**

Accompanied the local club (Dacorum Amateur Radio Transmitting Society) to HMS Belfast where they received a big welcome from the RNARS members on board. Hope you didn't spend too much time in the bar mate. **DJ3RE**. Hi Hans. Your subs £6.00 plus 3 stamps @20p for listing. Eurocheque if possible pse Hans otherwise Sterling or US dollars. NO PERSONAL CHEQUES. **G0FVS**. Our Jim heard a most unusual call the other day 'CQ CQ NEWCOMERS ONLY DE DL???' The one-wire plus earth comms system between shed and summer house via a pair of phones is now silent until spring and the shed mothballed for the season. If any members in the Melton Constable area sight a somewhat oversized Basset Hound on two legs, could be you have spotted our Jim with sheepskin hat plus ear flaps. **G0HGA**. Hi Angie. 2m enthusiasm is seriously on the wane and I guess the days when condx were monitored by a moderately sized group of watchers has either gone or is fast disappearing. Your suspicion that at least three 2m units may be on the market soon are possibly a gross underestimate. Hi. Pity about the flea power on 10m. Last time it opened I missed out 'cos I was having a cuppa at the time. **G4YRS**. Gerry is still seeking confirmation but reckons the RAF will continue to need CW for some considerable time to come. Only effective mode within the Auroral zone. Same thing goes for the Russians and other countries with Arctic stations Gerry. **DE0DXM**. Hi Peter. I did reply to your letter but seemingly the mail just has not got through. Meine Deutsch ist sehr klein and letters in German are applied to a neat little programme on my computer which translates them. Because of accented characters though, unless I actually scan the original, the English version is not always as it should be. It does the same in reverse of course but makes a far better job of it. Hi. The multiple entries are errors and have now been corrected.

G4BNU

Even at the risk of appearing an 'Amateur radio Luddite', I would like to ask what is the point of using off the shelf complex data systems including Clover and PacTOR or even AmTOR for Amateur communications in the HF bands. Modern data mnodes are suitable for high density commercial or military use and surely have no place on the HF bands for low volume amateur traffic. I do of course, fully understand the technical fascination of these modes for those who have worked hard to develop and implement them but surely this does not apply to those who buy a Modem/TNC across the counter and join it to a black box. Rather it leads only to unwanted QRM and abuse - two things we can do without on the HF bands.

The above was extracted from an article in Technical Topics (Radcomm July 97) by G4BNU in connection with ex-military man-pack rigs which prove entirely unsuitable for CW. I cannot but applaud Paul for his observations since I have long contended that it would be better to have the 2m and 70cm bands devoted almost exclusively to data. Suitable bandwidth is there and what with readily available satellite links, global circulation of traffic is no problem. Far better this than to glue up unnecessarily large chunks of the HF spectrum where varying conditions reduce the efficiency of these modes to a laughably low value. In fact, Paul received a number of abusive letters after publication and addressed these in LAST WORD (Radcomm Aug/97) pointing out that whilst he had no desire to interfere with the rights of individuals to experiment with data modes he more or less echoed the sentiments which I have expressed above.

G0DJA INFO

The following info arrived via the internet from Dave: Dear All,

You will see from the header that I am sending this message to a variety of people and lists, please feel free to distribute it wider and include it in any Club Newsletter etc., as you wish. The reason that I am sending this information is that I think that you, or the list, might find it useful either because it is about CW or that the propagation predictions may be of interest (the APRS List has recently been talking about trying to spot stations in other parts of the world on 18MHz).

Every Sunday an updated propagation information and predictions for likely conditions are transmitted using CW on 3.518MHz at about 15 WPM the times (all local[UK]) being 09:00, 12:00, 15:00 and 18:00. The stations transmitting will be either G4FKH (Chelmsford) or G2FKH (Wakefield)

NB: At present, UK Local time is the same as UTC (GMT). In March the UK normally transfers to British Summer Time (BST) and the transmissions will then be 1 hour ahead of UTC. For example, the 09:00 transmission will be at 08:00 UTC during the summer months from March until October.

Exact swap over between UTC and BST are decided by the UK government, but change to BST is usually around the last weekend of March and swap back to UTC on the last weekend in October.

The information is automatically uploaded from various sources and an indication of the likely paths from the UK are added for the assistance of those who want to try various paths. Although the predictions are relevant to the UK or nearby European countries, the

actual figures for Solar Flux etc., could be put into a suitable computer program set up for your own location of course.

If you hear the transmissions, please send me a report and I will pass it onto either G4FKH or G2FKZ as they are sometimes asked questions like "Can it be heard from X using a Y antenna?" and reports from anywhere can help to give some indication of the coverage area.

Thanks a lot and good luck with propagation where ever you may be.

On the subject of CW beacons, don't forget that the Air Traffic beacons still identify in CW, although I guess that the automatic instruments on some aircraft can identify them without any human assistance, I know that several friends/colleagues with PPLs can read enough Morse to identify the one they want by ear before they lock onto it.

I have been listening to the 1:3 scale model of the Sputnik satellite, it was audible yesterday morning at 07:40 and again at 09:15 am as I was travelling into work, on 145.820MHz. It beacons away with a "Bleep Bleep", just like the original, or so I am told as I wasn't born when the original went up HI! I have some details of how the note changes with frequency, if anyone is interested. A crude form of telemetry, but it was built by High School pupils at a French and a Russian School. Let me know if you would like more information.

Cheers de Dave (G0DJA) dave.ackrill@pgen.com

G3TUX

Chris writes to tell me that I made a typo last month and that the call for number 3724 should be G3TUN and not G3TUH.

He never ceases to be amazed at the number of Radio Amateurs who exhibit some sort of physical disability. In his other interests (Railway Modelling and Sailing) he would expect that the latter would be a bar to such folks but oddly, he finds few disabled people in the realm of Railway Modelling which does not demand the same physical abilities as sailing. Maybe the fact that the modal age of hams is increasing explains this peculiarity he thinks. "Thomas the Tank Engine provides a stream of recruits to the occupation of Railway Modelling but no such role model exists for hams".

He remains to be convinced that oodles of RF is at all beneficial to health and while this is not the original reason for becoming a convert to QRP, he would happily claim it as one justification for low power operation. It would be interesting he thinks to compare the

mortality statistics for Italian OMs against those of members of G-QRP.

ODDS N' ENDS

I heard what he said but knew what he meant

They are a kind of Spoonerism I suppose, you know like "a fine fettle of kish". I am sure you are all aware that I do it deliberately so it was with some joy that I heard the BBC weather reporter warning the good people in the Western Highlands that they may find a touch of Fost and Frog. Makes you hopping mad doesn't it.

US members and QSLs

I get them here rarely but QSL cards for the bureau have no need to cross the Atlantic. The whole idea is to save you excessive postage so US members please note that your cards go to your own US bureau. Same goes for EU members in reverse of course. Little if any time is lost incidentally.

Cheques

Tha bank has had the cheque now for three weeks and I have heard absolutely zero from them. I made a fuss about it as a matter of course because the teller threw out the one made out to "The International Morse Preservation Society". Could I call in with a letter head showing the connection between FISTS and the IMPS. So I did. I know I am an awkward old cuss but I wanted to make a point. Anyone with a computer and a half decent printer can knock one of these out in a matter of minutes and as an illustration, the club letter heading was accompanied by another, lavishly decorated and declaring the Royal Straight Banana Fellowship. I think I made my point but please people... the account is in the name of FISTS though FISTS CW CLUB is acceptable.

Upgrade

G7WIH is now recognised as M0AYP. Congrats Mike. We have a few more members yet to do the same but no doubt we will be hearing from them in due course.

US members please note! Any EU or other nominations to me via e-mail. If e-mail is not available then I'm sure Nancy would oblige. Do NOT send your own application forms as these are somewhat different from our own.

Visitor from Vladikavkas

G0FDJ (Keith) has made arrangements for Vlad (UA6JD) to visit the UK. He is expected to arrive with his wife Tanya and 4-year old son Andrew at Canvey Island 10 Feb returning on 24th. Vlad and his family live some 2,000 KM South of Moscow in

Vladikavkaz and subject to their being able to obtain the necessary travel visa, Keith has made all arrangements. I knew nothing of Vlads' reputation but seemingly he was CW speed champion of the Caucas' Mountains when he was 15 years old. Members who would like an eyeball during the stay are invited to ring Keith on 01268-680638 or 0410-292217 (mobile) between 1700 and 1900.

From across the pond:

Hi Nancy! Please try to let all FISTS Members know that I'll be down on Antigua Island from 11-25-97 to 12-2-97. I will operate mainly CW, but some ssb. The callsigns you will hear will be V26KW (contest call) and my call V26ED. Hope to work many FISTS over the holiday. I will have a special QSL Card made for this trip. de WA3WSJ.

Additionally a further e-mail was re-directed from Nancy:

Hi Nancy: Thanks for the information on WA3WSJ's upcoming trip. During the same dates (Nov 25 to Dec 2), I will be QRV from Barbados. Outside the CQWW Contest, my call is 8P9HT. During the contest, I will be using 8P9Z, single op, all bands. QSL both calls via K4BAI. I hope to QSO a lot of FISTS members during this trip.

73, John, K4BAI/8P9HT FISTS #215

Sorry we are so late with these but info did not arrive here until 18 and 19 Nov.

THE LADDER

Call	MbrTotal	Non-mbrs		PrevTotal
G4LHI	36	2	0	38
G0MHR	24	3	0	27
G0VCY	18	0	0	18
G4PTE	18	0	0	18
PA3AFF	14	1	0	15
G4RBE	12	0	0	12
G0WLC	8	0	0	8
G0VBH	8	0	0	8
G0UQF	2	0	0	2

Members are reminded that log entries **must** bear the callsign of the station submitting the log. Failure to do this has involved Gerry in a lot of unnecessary detective work.

Also, Gerry would be happy to provide a good home for a RAF type 'D' key. His old CY30 has developed a lot of side play.

We note the absence thus far of Bill, GW0SGG who phoned the say he has been QRL speaking of which, he would like to step down from the duties of Slow Net control so I am now looking for a replacement.

Any offers?

NEW MEMBERS

3727	M0BEV Ralph	3728	OZ1EUOLeif
3729	DF7QK Ela	3730	G0EZI John
3731	G3RNB Stan	3732	M0BAY Ged
3733	G3KOJ Ray	3734	G3LFE Ray
3735	G0UHMLes	3736	ON6QE Luc
3737	G3DXY Brian	3738	G0USY Ken
3739	G0VQW		Sandy

COHERENT CW

Peter, G3IRM sends the latest news letter of the group. Not a lot happening as he himself notes and although some 50 copies of the PCW programme have been distributed, there has been minimal feedback. Current interest is focused upon Coherent BPSK (Binary Phase Shift Keying) which Bill de Carle thought might offer an improvement over Coherent CW.

It is noted that 7.081MHz and 14.081 MHz have been chosen for experimental BPSK transmissions and I hope this has not been a poor choice because of course, many of our members appear on or about the latter QRG for DX. Peter would be happy to offer whatever help is possible for members prepared to establish BPSK contact on 7081.

HELP

We are planning to put on a display stand at the Lancaster Rally 25 Jan 98. It is quite a hop for Bob though so, any members in the area who would like to man the stand for us please let me know pdq. We would be very much obliged. As with the Atherton QRP convention, we plan to bring an assortment of keys but this time, they will be mounted on a common base and connected to an oscillator so that interested parties can go through each of them to get a feel for their individual characteristics.

Since the full listing now occupies 9 pages, it will be impractical to try and bring a stock but on the assumption that I can make it myself, I will be happy to bring as many as required if members attending would let me know by phone a few days before hand.

The stand at the Atherton meeting created no small degree of interest and basically, all we had on display was half a dozen keys loaned by the Bills, G2AKK and G0JWB so, with them all able to produce a tone, it should be an improvement.

SUMMER DAYS

This happy young chappie is DL8MTG shown here with his portable setup in Hegedal, Denmark. He was also in the company of Heidi (DL9MTG) and a TS788 10m rig with which he found a few openings to the UK notably with G0SEC (Jim in Weymouth).

Sorry we are a little adrift with this one but space has been a bit tight recently. Still, I trust you both had a fine trip. Maybe if you repeat this in 98, there could be a few more UK contacts for you.

JOBS FOR THE BOYS

Bert, GW4KUS, sends a newspaper cutting in which the Ministry of Defence is seeking the services of a 'Supervising Radio Officer' and also for other Radio Officers. Bert underlines an item for the latter which states: "Morse transmission reception 14 WPM". Not much by the average Amateur Radio capability I suppose but at least the MOD is looking for bolt holes to which they may resort if, should the need arise, and communications of some sort may be continued.

EUCW AND FISTS

Les, G3VQO, notes that in the recent EUCW test, FISTS were conspicuous by their absence. DL3BZZ and F5NTP were the only ones noted. I am not saying that we as a group are anti contest Les but like most other members, if I switch on and hear a contest running I switch off again and find some chores to do instead. I had forgotten about the EUCW event so took it to be just another contest. Sri. Will try to remind members closer to the timing of future events instead of too far in advance.

FINALE

No space for the usual ads this month people - sri - but Feb, with some luck, will leave me with a little more column space. With the usual postal chaos here, your next Keynote will be in January for February but in the mean time, I trust you will all have a very happy festive season and perhaps it would be proper for me to invite you to disregard my usual entreaties to stay sober (advice which I rarely take too seriously myself Hi) and treat yourselves to a really super Christmas. Provided the neighbours find more of interest on the TV over the period and do not resort to the VCR or Hi-Fi, I hope to be active but in any case, will be listening to the many well established nets and seasonal skeds. 73/88 to you and your families my friends. May you find your hearts desire waiting for you beneath the tree on Christmas morning but forget not, those who are less fortunate and are blessed with no joy at all on that day. Geo.

Final Final

What do you think of the glossy cover? I want to make The KeyNote something we can be proud of, so please let me know any suggestions you have for improvement. As I've said before, I don't have any publishing background or experience, except for six or so years of TheKeynote. I'm always open to Constructive Criticism (key word there is 'constructive', please!).

A huge larger-than-life Thank You to Dennis **K6DF** who volunteered to print our membership certificates! With my printer being broken, I was way behind on these, as you know if you've been waiting for yours. When I finally shipped the backlog off to Dennis, there were over 400 of them. He got them all printed and they are on their way back to me for mailing - by having such a large quantity of them, we qualify for bulk mail rates, saving about \$1.00 per piece on postage.

After I process the applications and assign the FISTS number, I'll Email the info to Dennis, and he will print and mail the certificates and photopages from CA as they are completed. This is a major help to me, as you can imagine. We get over 100 FISTS per month and it keeps me very busy just doing the correspondence, processing and KeyNote.

We are all caught up to FISTS #4160 now. If you have a number lower than that and have not received your membership certificate and/or photopages by January, drop Dennis a note and let him know. His address is: Dennis Franklin, 4658 Capitan Dr, Fremont CA 94536. If his name/call sound familiar it's probably because you've worked him from the submarine USS Pampanito **KJ6VT**.

In September I thought I better do something about the bookkeeping, with FISTS getting so large there is a lot of money to keep track of. So, I hired a bookkeeper to keep track of things. This will also make it a lot easier when tax time comes. She deposits the subs checks once a month. Depending on when you get your bank statement, it may take a while to show up on your statement.

Thank You to Roger (RJ) **WB8HBJ**. Roger volunteered to take over the Talking Newsletter, which we send free of charge to visually impaired FISTS members. This can be quite a challenge on those months when it runs over 20 or so pages, specially when there is a lot of Geo's British English to wade thru, hi. Irene **W08E** read the newsletter for about six years, and Randy **K8EZ** did it for a while before Roger stepped forward. Ken **W8ROG** duplicates the tapes after they've been read, which I realize is very time consuming, as some months The KeyNote takes up two or three one hour tapes! Thanks to all these folks, I know their efforts are appreciated.

Thank You to all the FISTS Helpers; you see them listed on the "HOW DO I.." page. FISTS runs smoothly because of our wonderful volunteers. They work very hard behind the scenes. And Thank You to all FISTS who have contributed to the KeyNote over the year, you make my job a whole lot easier! Oh heck, I'm outta room! C U next year! (cudn't resist saying that, hi) 73 88 **WZ8C**

HOW DO I...

...ORDER CLUB SUPPLIES? Irene WO8E 44609 N. Bunker Hill Dr. Clinton Twp, MI 48038 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 FISTS Logo mugs are currently out of stock. 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/M.O. made out to FISTS for \$15/year to Nancy WZ8C POBox 47 Hadley MI 48440. **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. Student rate = \$10 if not in a Family Plan.

...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. Lee's Email is n9nvv@www.qrp.com or packet: :n9nvv@k9iu.#sin.in.usa.noam

...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 44609 N. Bunker Hill Dr. Clinton Twp, MI 48038

...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@usa.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!

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The Keynote is published approximately monthly by Nancy Kott WZ8C, P. O. Box 47, Hadley MI 48440-0047
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