

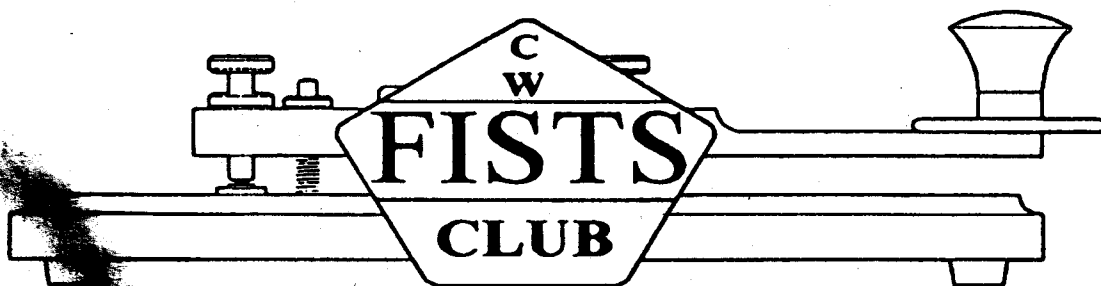
Combo Issue 9/10 2004

# The Keynote

Newsletter of FISTS CW Club

The active chapter of the International Morse Preservation Society

**“Accuracy Transcends Speed”**



**Our Goals:**

**Further the use of Morse code**

**Engender friendships among members**

**Encourage newcomers to use Morse code**

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

# **HOW DO I...Info on How to do just about anything related to FISTS**

**HOW DO I GET AN APPLICATION OR A SAMPLE NEWSLETTER SENT TO A FRIEND?** You can download a NA or DX membership application on the FISTS web page. Information and an application can be mailed to you. Email Jim at [aa9ls@turbotoads.com](mailto:aa9ls@turbotoads.com) with your name, call sign, and postal address, or mail the request to Jim at 33778 Rebecca, Kingston, IL 60145-8121

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

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

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

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

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

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

**HOW DO I ORDER CLUB SUPPLIES?** Irene W08E (44609 N. Bunker Hill Dr., Clinton Twp, MI 48038) has; Metallic Gold logo stickers, 200 for \$3.50...I "red heart graphic" CW Stickers, 3/4 inch round stickers, \$3.50 for 200...Blue enamel cloisonne/gold metal "FISTS CW CLUB" logo pin, with tie-tack type pin back 1" x 1 1/8" octagon \$1.50...White enamel cloisonne pin "I (red heart graphic) CW" and "FISTS CW CLUB" along edge. 3/4" diameter circle and tie-tack type pin on back \$1.50. Embroidered Cloth patch of our key logo, \$1.00 each (The cloth patches can be sewn or ironed on)

\*\*\*\*\*Please make checks out to FISTS\*\*\*\*\*ALL PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE. PLEASE DO NOT ADD POSTAGE TO YOUR TOTAL\*\*\*\*\* PAYPAL TO [FISTS@TIR.COM](mailto:FISTS@TIR.COM)\*\*\*\*\*

**HOW DO I GET FISTS SHIRTS?** Show the world that you are proud to KNOW CODE by wearing an "I'm PROUD to be a KNOW CODE Ham" T-shirt and sweatshirt or a FISTS logo polo shirt. The front of the t-shirts and sweatshirts are printed in silver with I'm PROUD to be a KNOW CODE Ham and the backs of the shirts are printed in light blue with the FISTS key logo graphic and Join the Code Crusade. The T-shirts are available in two solid colors: black or royal blue (a medium blue) Sweatshirts are gray with royal blue printing on the front and back. The polo/golf shirts are sky blue with the FISTS key tastefully EMBROIDERED on the top left side. They are short sleeved and have a knit collar and have a couple buttons at the neck. Sizes are small, medium, large, XL, XXL, and XXXL. All shirts are 50/50 blend. The T's are "Best" Fruit of the Loom. Sweats are 5.8 oz. Jerzee and Polos are Fruit of the Loom.

Prices are: T-shirts = \$5.00 PLUS POSTAGE Sweats = \$10.00 PLUS POSTAGE  
Polos = \$14.00 PLUS POSTAGE To figure postage for USA addresses: First (or only) T-shirt or polo

# FISTS CW CLUB

THE INTERNATIONAL MORSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

## NORTH AMERICAN MEMO

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Hello FISTS!

If the past is any indicator, you will not be reading this until some time in January. However, as I'm writing this, I'm finishing up my Christmas shopping and trying to wrap things up for the year. I hope 2004 has been a good year for you, both on and off the air.

Dick, W9CBT, has graciously volunteered his cartoons "Morse Tips & Quips" for use in the Keynote. They are a regular feature in The K9YA Telegraph, which is a free e-newsletter, done by N9BOR, K9PL and W9CBT. To check out the K9YA Telegraph, go to <http://www.k9ya.org>.

Dick has an art background and is a graduate of the Art Institute of Chicago. He's an Industrial Designer and has designed hundreds of products and packages over the years. Now, semi retired at age 73, he's discovering that he has a talent for drawing. We're happy to have his cartoons, and hope you enjoy them.

FISTS members never fail to pleasantly surprise me. I came across a story written by Jeff Davis, KE9V and asked his permission to put it in a future issue of the Keynote. He said yes, and gave me some web links to other stories that FISTS might enjoy. I took a look and there was the "1000 Marbles" story. This is a "classic" often attributed to "author unknown" when in fact it was written by FISTS # 6641! It was made into a book, called *1,000 Marbles A Little Something About Precious Time*.

Jeff explained that the story caught the attention of Andrews McMeel Publishing and they asked him to turn it into a book. It is published in German by a Swiss publishing company, making Jeff an internationally published author. He says the book is geared toward people who are running through life at a break-neck pace. (who isn't these days?) You can buy it at any Borders, Barnes & Noble, or Books-A-Million bookstore. In Canada you can find it at Chapters Book-

stores. It is also available on-line from Amazon.com or other book-sellers.

If you'd like to get an autographed copy for yourself or to give as a gift, send Jeff an email at [jeff@ke9v.net](mailto:jeff@ke9v.net) and he'd be pleased to send you details on how to do that.

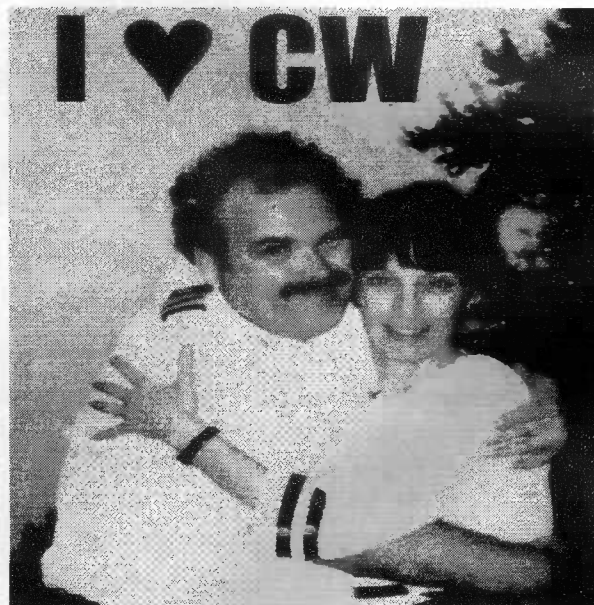
I'll be including more of Dick's "Morse Tips & Quips" and Jeff's stories in future issues. This issue also has a terrific article about iambic keying written by Chuck Adams. Enjoy! 73 88 33 Nancy WZ8C

*I haven't seen it personally, but the buzz is: The 2005 ARRL Operating Handbook has NO section on Morse operating. I understand it has a page or two of abbreviations. It is very interesting they would omit Morse code operating from the Operating Manual. Anyone have an inside scoop on this?*

# Welcome to the New FISTS

# Who Sez Hams Aren't Romantic?

#	callsign	Name	ST	Sponsor
11190	W6GZ	HENRY	CA	
11191	K6INM	JACK	CA	K1RMF
11192	KG5I	LARRY	AR	
11193	K8MIC	MICK	MI	
11194	K3MQ	BOB	DE	
11195	K5IC	AUDIE	NM	
11196	N5AUS	TERRY	LA	
11197	WA8GDU	TONY	MI	
11198	WA9BXB	RICH	IL	K9KEU
11199	AE5HI	MIKE	NM	W8DO
11200	KI4HJQ	Weiss Lake	ARC	
in Alabama, contact person: KE4I				
11201	WB6DFW	EDDIE	CA	AA9LS
11202	KE5CXX	JIM	OK	
11203	KC9EOG	JAKE	IL	
11204	K7VQ	DICK	AZ	
11205	K7EX	WAYNE	OR	
11206	N3BNT	DENNIS	NY	
11207	K7DIK	DICK	AZ	
11208	WB5EXI	CHAS	TX	
11209	K7LS	ELDON	AZ	
11210	AD5QB	KEN	TX	
11211	K7QCK	JIM	WA	
11212	K1ER	JOHN	HI	W8III
11213	K4CHS	WAYLAND	MO	
11214	K2MH	GEORGE	NJ	
11215	KB1KKP	MARV	MA	
11216	WF0R	WAYNE	MN	
11217	K0OK	BOB	CA	
11218	WA9PYH	JIM	IN	
11219	WA4TJS	ZACH	KY	
11220	N0HT	Haney	VO-Tech Amateur	
Radio Club Florida. Contact person: N3JW				
11221	KH6WO	Honolulu	ARC HI	K1ER
11222	KH6BB	Battleship	Missouri	
Amateur Radio Club HI Contact: K1ER				
11223	W9BRE	BRIAN	WI	
11224	W5OXK	FLOYD	NM	
11225	K6FGA	Flour Garden	Amateur	
Radio Club in California. Contact: K7TP				
11226	W5JIF	TRAVIS	LA	N3JW
11227	KC9RH	DAN	WI	
11228	KB3LFC	TOM	PA	K3WWP
11229	KD8AMR	DAVE	MI	
11230	K4EQQ	DEAN	GA	WB2FXK
11231	KB1LBP	HERB	ME	WB2FXK
11232	KG6TGI	ROBERT	CA	
11233	WA5CHJ	JACK	TN	
11234	K5USS	CHARLIE	TX	
11235	VA7TAP	PAT	British Columbia	
11236	KG4PWC	LEO	VA	KC0CCR
11237	KU9RK	TOM	IN	



David Ring, WAKL/N1EA, #9927 and his wife, Cheryl, (whose initials happen to be CW) KB0RQN, #2092



Awards Manager Dennis K6DF surprised his XYL Pam with this bouquet of 35 roses on their 35th anniversary - Congrats Dennis and Pam!

(continued)

11238	KD4DTM	KIRK	GA	AA9LS
11239	N9DDC	STEVE	IL	
11240	W9IV	MAC	FL	
11241	AA4XX	PAUL	NC	
11275	K9WM	Green River Valley		
Amateur Radio Club in IL. Contact: KG9LZ				

## QRP With K3WWP - Column # 66

Time again for you, my readers to get in your two cents worth.

Let's start with excerpts from a letter received from Jeff Brone, WB2JNA who does that literally saying, "Radio doesn't have to be expensive; after all, it's a hobby. The main purpose is fun, not bankruptcy.

"One way of saving money that's become very popular lately is with QRP rigs. These radios have much to offer: they combine low price with advanced design, they are small and convenient, and because of the low power they use they hardly ever cause interference. This is especially important in today's world of apartments and congested living areas.

"About a year and a half ago I bought a small QRP set for fun, as a treat for myself. I'm now hooked. The whole concept of QRP appeals to my deep rooted cheapitude in a way nothing else ever has. The idea of talking to people all over the world for what amounts to pennies a contact is a kind of frugality gone ballistic. Little else compares to that feeling of pride when the ham in Hungary or Argentina can't believe that you're only using QRP, because your signal "sounds so good." And my non-ham friends are amazed that something so small can communicate so far. I say this not to promote QRP as much to illustrate the whole "needs" idea. I like talking to other hams, and working DX when I can- period. That's what radio is about for me. A good QRP rig does this efficiently. I bought what I needed, only that and nothing more. This is the rallying cry of the money savers of the world.

"When it comes to antennas, wire is the miser's dream, and you can get it at some hardware stores for a few cents a foot. No project has provided me with more fun and more cuts on my fingers for as little an investment as a home brew wire antenna. Wire is also versatile- use it to make beams, loops, dipoles, verticals, etc. You can even use pieces of

PVC pipe for insulators! Well, I did tell you I was cheap. You get the idea- it helps to use your imagination. That's always free, and maybe the most enjoyable accessory we have. I've had a great time with our hobby, a happy wallet, and after a session on the air, those fish sticks taste just a little better."

Jeff had much more interesting info about saving money in ham radio, but the above was the most relevant to QRP, and that is what this column is all about.

Speaking of QRP, Steve W00OW submitted some ideas for this column. Unfortunately most of them dealt strictly with CW and not really QRP. He did ask an interesting question though that got me started thinking about just what QRP is.

Steve wrote: "QRP - if you don't feel comfortable at 5 watts out, how about turning down the power some and at least head towards 5 watts. (I "think" that my old Ranger used to put out about 50 watts for 75 in. I worked the world with that. I have also noticed that while I can hear beacons when they are at 10 watts out, I cannot hear them at 1 watt out. 5 watts? I am not sure about. I guess I am not a dyed in the wool QRPer. I don't need to make an 8877 pant while throwing RF into six elements at 140'. I typically run about 50 out with a wire antenna)."

As I'm sure everyone knows, QRP is a Q signal that means 'lower power'. However over the years a second definition of QRP developed. That is QRP came to mean a certain power level, at or below which you were eligible for special awards, endorsements, or recognition of your accomplishments. At first the level was 100 watts input power to your final amplifier, then when equipment improved, it became 5 watts output power. The history of this is quite interesting, but beyond the scope of this current column. Why is a definite power level needed for a QRP award? Well, it's because without it, QRP is relative. You could earn a QRP DXCC, for example, with 999 watts of power output. What? Think about it. In relation to 1000 watts

power output, 999 watts is QRP in the traditional definition of QRP as lowering power.

Granted, the 5 watt figure is arbitrary, but necessary. If you work the world with 6 watts output, that is almost exactly the same accomplishment as doing it with 5 watts output. However your accomplishment won't be recognized as having been done with QRP. Fair or unfair, that's the way it is.

Going the other direction, many devoted QRP operators feel the 5 watts power output is much too high a value and insist that true QRP or QRPp as they put it, is less than 1 watt output power.

Personally, I define QRP for myself as 5 watts or less output power into simple wire antennas. I prefer to try to keep my actual radiated power at or near the 5 watts level. Although technically even simple wire antennas like a dipole do have a small amount of gain, so in the right direction and/or at the right radiation angle, I am radiating a bit more than 5 watts. However I will not use a multi-element antenna that would boost my radiated power (in a certain direction) to 25, 50, 100 or more watts.

Time to close. Contact me on the air, at <http://home.alltel.net/johnshan/>, [jsk3wwp@alltel.net](mailto:jsk3wwp@alltel.net), or John Shannon, 478 E. High St., Kittanning, PA 16201-1304. Till next time, 73. -30-

## Net Update

The W6MTC decided to discontinue its 9:30 am net for lack of participation. We only run TWO (2) nets:

7:30 AM [1530 Z] on 20 meters 14055 +/-

8:30 AM [1630 Z] on 40 meters 7084 (rarely qsy +/-)

Sincerely, Kathy KS6CW  
Morse Telegraph Club

SQ Chapter W6MTC

## Thanks! to the Down Unders

*Isn't it great to know there are friendly FISTS all over the world, waiting to hear from you?*

To: The FISTS "Down Under" Newsletter  
Recently I qualified to receive the Fists Down Under award. Along with the certificate comes a personal sense of pride and achievement.

I live in Salem, Oregon in the middle of the Willamette Valley. The Pacific Ocean is about 50 miles to the west and a range of mountains is 50 miles to the east. I am fortunate in that my equipment consists of a 6 element log periodic antenna up about 12 m that I use for the 20 meter band and up and a 80 meter loop antenna from 30 meters down. When necessary I will use up to about 400 watts of power.

This note to the editor isn't about the award or me. I want to comment on the **reception** I received in my pursuit of the FDU award.

Feeling cautious at first due to declining band conditions and expecting weak signals and the time difference to make contacts with New Zealand and Australia Fists members **difficult** if not impossible, I half heartedly **decided** to try for the award. With the entry of John, VK4TJ / VK2FDU / 4, George, VK4XY / VK4RC, Stan, ZL2BLQ / ZL2SWR and Ralph, ZL2AOH / ZL6FF into my log, the ongoing spirit of **achievement** was **assured**. All during my efforts to **gain** that "one extra point" toward the 50 point **total** was met with **member** after member who **had** taken time out of his activities on my behalf to give me that point. I feel a strong sense of **gratitude** toward all those who helped me and to those that tried but were unable for any reason to make the contact.

The **reception** I received in my effort to achieve this award was truly reflective of an attitude that encourages friendship and ongoing CW operation. We all benefit from the FISTS Club membership, here and abroad, that consists of pleasant, considerate and dedicated men and women. My warmest regards to all the Fists Down Under members. Vern Lovelace, AA7VW, # 10,044

Note: If anyone would like to make contact and exchange Fists numbers please e-mail me at [AA7VW@att.net](mailto:AA7VW@att.net). It will be my pleasure.

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## More Small Space Antenna Suggestions

Hello Nancy and all the gang,

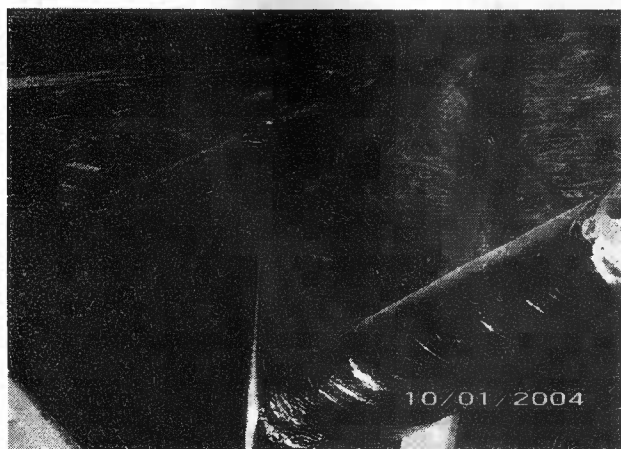
I read "The Keynote" and felt bad about the hams that wrote in about having problems with limited space and restrictions and were not able to get on the air.

Well before moving to this QTH I thought I was not going to be able to ham again, at least on HF. I sold all my antennas and equipment before coming here.

A year went by and I decided to get back on the air. I bought two Kenwood TM-742s, a 2 meter and 440 FM rig.



Stacked 2 meter KB6KQ loops



432 MHz KB6KQ loop

I then got the 6 meter module and the 1.2 GHz module.



6 meter KB6KQ loop

Now I had a 4-band FM setup using mobile mag mounts either sitting on top of a steel bar or a very large popcorn can. I was able to work the local repeaters without any problem.

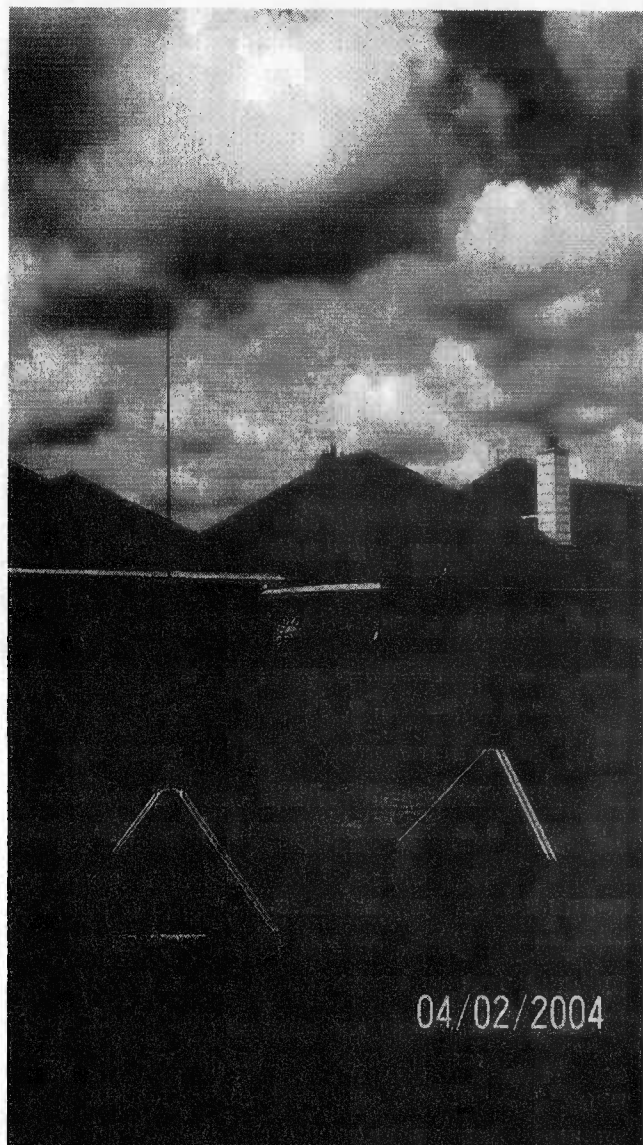
Still I wanted to get back on HF. Before coming to the new QTH I had tried several antennas but none really worked that well.

I then decided to get the Outbacker 9 foot tall Outrunner and the Outpost. The Outpost is a ground coupling tripod made especially for the Outbacker antenna for use at home/portable.

Later I bought an Outbacker Outreach, a 12 foot antenna with another Outpost. The joy of this setup is that you can place the setup any place you want it and then hook up the coax and away you go. Both of these antennas work 10-160 meters and the best part is that you don't have to have a ground rod or radial system for it to work real well.



Below is the picture of the antennas. The antenna on the left is the 12 ft one and the other is the 9 ft one.



Does this setup work? You bet it does. Have been a FISTS member since September 2002 and have my FISTS Worked All States Award and hold the Diamond and Platinum 500 awards. Also I have used one of the Outpost and an Outbacker Stealth Plus, a 4 foot antenna, inside the room and worked into Japan on 15 meters CW two days in a row. This might be a sample of an antenna that one might be able to use in an apartment.

The key is one has to try different things and don't give up.

Well I didn't stop there. I had an HF rig that could cover 50 MHz and wanted to try that band also. I wound up getting a KB6KQ loop antenna, it is 3 feet in diameter, and put it up in the attic at 22 feet.

Within 2 years I was able to get my VUCC award, for confirming 100 grid squares with QSL cards. Just recently I received my 200 grid square endorsement sticker. I work both SSB/CW on this band. It really was great when the band was open and I got on CW and worked a lot of FISTS CW CLUB MEMBERS. We exchanged numbers and QSLed to the buro.

Not finished yet. I wanted to get on 2 and 432 SSB/CW so I bought an IC-910H. I have stacked loops for 2 meters and am waiting on the 432 loop to come in. Again, all my loops are from KB6KQ. Below is some pictures of the 6 and stacked 2 meters loops. When I get the 432 loop I will also take a picture of it.

FISTS members with restrictions don't give up. As you can see I may have deed restrictions but I am not restricted in my hamming.

GOOD LUCK – Don, W5AJX, #9361

### Looking for skeds

Carl WA7CS crstrode@charter.net is looking for a sked with FISTS on 80 meters from VT, GA and NC to complete his 5 band WAS.

**SEND IN YOUR STRAIGHT KEY  
NIGHT LOG TO THE ARRL!!  
THEY WON'T KNOW YOU PAR-  
TICIPATED UNLESS YOU TELL  
THEM!**



## Portable QRP Trip by Larry w5wlb 4733

Last June, while planning the annual vacation trip to the beach house in Crystal Beach Texas I decided to take some HF gear with me. Having come into possession of a 5 watt MFJ 9020 I had to try it out at the beach and see if I could get everything to work.

The antenna has always been a problem because I rent the house and it has no permanent antenna set up. I needed something simple and easy to put up for 20 meters. An end fed wire seemed the best solution and it worked great.

I used the par-electronic end fed 20 meter wire and tied off one end to the porch railing and the other end to a telephone pole some 40 feet away. This pole was once used to support a security light and is not used or owned by the local utility company so I felt ok about using it.

The wire ended up being about 18 feet high and horizontal; pointing off toward the north west. The rest of the gear was easy, the MFJ 9020, a small battery powered MFJ keyer, a set of Bencher paddles and a small 3 amp Radio Shack power supply plus, of course, enough coax to reach the rig.

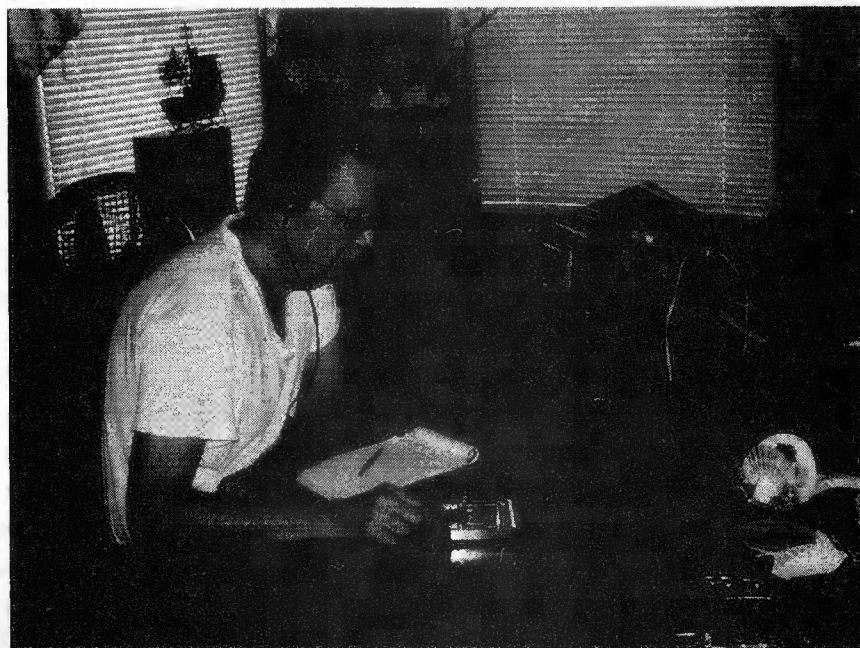
The end fed wire is resonant on the low end of 20m so no tuner was necessary.

Once at the beach house it was quick and easy to set up and by 10am on the first day I was calling CQ on 20 meters. It was a lot of fun and contacts were easy to make with the 5 watts. Stations were worked from coast to coast and even a Canadian wound up in the log. Ham radio of course took a back seat to all the other activities going on at the beach but I managed to work 25 or so stations and I really enjoyed the experience. It brought back old memories of my novice days with a dx60b over 30 years ago.

The only problem I had was that I had failed to bring any kind of log book with me and all the contact info was scratched out on various scraps of paper which did not work out so well.

Some of the info I read in my head did not get transferred to paper but I eventually sorted it all out when I got back home. Next time I will be sure to use a good log book and get everything down on paper correct the first time.

All in all it was quite a success for a casual CW operator like myself and I am already planning next year and what improvements I can make, such as adding a picokeyer to the MFJ 9020.



Larry W5WLB and his MFJ 9020, Bencher paddles and mfj keyer at Crystal Beach.

## The NANFA: Are we having fun yet?

Here are stories from operators who earned the NANFA. It's not called the Nightmare Alpha Numeric FISTS Award for nothing! The NANFA is intended to be a fun, casual, fill in the holes as you fill in your log, achievement certificate. You can take as long as you like, it isn't a contest. Something you can work toward; not a means to an end in itself.

We have a few "hardcore" wallpaper chasers in FISTS and apparently the NANFA stuck a nerve in some of them and it turned into an obsession. We've talked the awards program over with Geo, G3ZQS (FISTS founder), and he agrees that it is important that FISTS not turn into a number-chasing, wham-bam group. Contesting and Award chasing is fun, sure, but please take time to enjoy the QSO's along the way. OK, I'm off my soapbox. I hope you enjoy the stories from our top-earning award members.

### The NANFA Quest - Stan, K4UK's story.

The NANFA is one tough Award to get. Having QSO's with FISTS members whose calls will fill the 260 squares in the NANFA grid requires lots of operating time.

During the first year from January 1 until December 31, I was able to fill 241 of the blocks. Through the end of July 2004 I was able to add only 7 more squares leaving 12 yet to fill. Based on that, I figured it would probably take forever to complete the NANFA by with casual operating.

I checked with Kelsey, KK6AW and Jim, K9JXW as to how they were able to get all the squares filled. They said they had to resort to making schedules with members whose calls would fill the squares they were missing. So, I did likewise and in September, I sent letters and Emails to the members whose calls would fill those 12 squares I was missing and set up schedules.

The first schedule resulted in a

QSO with G3YSK on September 25 to fill the "3Y" square. Concerted effort from then until October 7 permitted me to get all the squares filled.

I had attempted to fill the "6P" square via a schedule with Alan, VK6PG, but we just couldn't connect. But the contact that I did get to fill the "6P" square was really great fun. It was on September 30 at 2332 UTC with Mike, KF6PVY who was running a Rock Mite at 500 milliwatts on 14.060 MHz.

The second to the last square "9R" was filled when I had a QSO with Reb, Jr - K9REB. We did that one on Sunday October 3, on 7.045 MHz at 1421 UTC. I was out playing golf that morning and after we had finished the 12th hole I drove the golf cart back to the parking lot and called him on my mobile rig at the scheduled time. There he was. He's the son of Joe, K4REB and Sue, K1REB.

The last square "2X" was filled when I had a QSO with Paul, KB2XX on 7.058 MHz at 0044 UTC on Thursday, October 7. We

had tried the night before but QSB was so bad that we were not able to exchange any information. I was surprised we could even make the contact because he lives in Charlottesville, VA, which is only 100 miles North of here. I thought that was going to be too close for the normal skip on 40 Meters that time of night. But we did it with 449 signals.

During my quest for the NANFA, I worked 821 different members of FISTS. Interestingly for 10 of the squares, the only QSO I had to fill it was with a non-US member: "1B" - VE1BHH, "1I" - HP1IBF, "2O" - VE2OI, "3O" - VE3OU, "3Y" - G3YSK, "6J" - UA6JD, "6M" - ZS8ME, "7A" - VE7AOP, "7X" - VE7XF, "0T" - G0TNU.

Also of interest was that 72 of my QSO's were with members outside of the U.S.:

27 were with members in Canada, 5 were with members in North America, 2 were with members in South America, 20 were with members in the U.K., 9 were with members in Europe, 2 were with members in Africa, 1 was with member in Asia, 6

were with members in Oceania (VK,ZL)

There were a total of 60 squares for which I had a QSO with only one member. Interestingly the only QSO I had for the "9J" square was with Jim, K9JXW who earned NANFA #2. And the only QSO I had for the "4E" square was with JJ, W4EIE who handles the "3" and "6" calls in the FISTS QSL Bureau. And Kelsey, KK6AW who earned NANFA #1 was the first of only two members I QSO'd for the "6A" square.

So, folks it can be done, but I doubt that it can be done without making schedules with members whose calls will fill your last 15 or so squares. 73, Stan - K4UK  
++++  
**From Darron - WA5TCZ**

On the subject of the "NANFA" I got down to the last 10 or so and tried for several months to work them without going to skeds, to no avail. Then after looking up the ones I needed in the FISTS on-line directory for 2 of them, there was only one call apiece for those and just luckily both were still active and got them right away. Several of the others were willing to meet me but no rig, antenna, or had not been on CW for years. One person did meet me and in his e-mail stated, "don't send fast haven't been on CW in years", I hope after I worked him it got his interest back up and he returned to CW. I don't know?

I did not find it too difficult to finish up but did take some 3 or 4 months to arrange all the skeds so we could get together. Had one guy when I e-mailed him shot right back and we got on the air minutes after he received the e-mail and that's ham radio -Hi. After working 3 calls that I had trouble working, I heard similar calls the next day that I needed and would not have needed to sked them again that's ham radio.

All in all I'm surprised there are only 4 awards given out at this time. It was a great award and some one needs to come up with another one like it. - #9441  
++++

**From Jim, K9JXW:**

These are some of my thoughts and experiences, many similar to others who completed the NANFA....some unique.

When I first heard about the FISTS NANFY Award, to be completed in one year, my immediate reaction was...NO WAY!!! Anyone somewhat active would have concluded likewise. When the award was changed to NANFA, and the time period for completion was extended indefinitely, I then considered its possibility, and thought it would be fun...WRONG!!!

After many email and on-the-air discussions with Stan regarding the feasibility of this award...Stan's computer and analytical mind provided much information...we concluded that

NANFA would be extremely difficult, if not impossible. I did not commit to pursuing the award until March 2003 and 13 months later I achieved NANFA #2.

In my opinion, the rules are left open to misinterpretation, as I did. For example, unless a callsign was modified by /#, such as /3, I was under the impression that contacts with the number 9 was limited to QSOs in Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana, A-Z. (*Editor note: The rules clearly state to use the letter in the callsign, NOT the boundaries of the callsign areas*). So, when I worked KG0GY/9 while visiting relatives in Green Bay last Christmas, I made several attempts at a sked with Brad after he returned to Nebraska before I filled the "0G" square. Likewise, I worked K9NSS in Virginia and incorrectly placed him in the "4N" square, he didn't use the /4 designation, and ultimately he was put in the "9N" square. (*K9NSS lives in VA, so he is not operating portable and does not sign /4*) There were several similar misinterpretations. I guess it's my pet peeve, but it drives me nuts to work a KH6 in Virginia or a 4 in Montana, etc., etc. This also threw me off with record keeping, and I had to redo my squares sheet after consulting/clarifying with Dennis/K6DF. The rules simply allow you to count the number-letter combination regardless of the station location, except if they use a /#. All my "6" contacts were actually in California, and I only had two /# in a different call area.

After pursuing the award for several months on a "pleasurable basis" it became a noticeably different experience with approximately 25 remaining squares. It appeared that I had hit a wall, and the experience became a frustration and obsession. How could I quit now!?! My on-the air time resembled a predator....listen, listen...pounce. I didn't have many "real" QSOs during the following months, having prided myself in having over 300 Ragchew QSOs. I just hunkered down to finish this thing off. Unfortunately, this did not help many others with my numbers so they could move forward on their awards.

When it appeared that I was at a standstill, again, I resorted to searching for needed contacts using the membership list and photopages....there are some differences...and not everyone's membership information is up-to-date. Through a QRZ.com search for email addresses, I was not always successful in locating them. Often the email addresses were not current or nonexistent. I resorted to sending several postcards requesting a sked, but with very few replies. Many, many emails were sent over weeks and weeks requesting a sked, with a variety of replies. I wish that I had kept track of them, the replies and/or excuses would have filled a book. I recall two different fellows reported that they are now using a pace maker and were off the air due to doctors orders to stay away from RF. One of the

guy's son was burying remote control cables to the shack so he could get back on the air! I sure hope he is back on. Many FISTS members knew NOTHING about the award and I needed to explain it to them. Other FISTS members declined my request for a sked due to equipment/antenna problems, lack of employment, health or family concerns or just too busy with other things. Several members declined my request for a sked because they didn't feel comfortable on CW anymore. Thankfully, some others struggled to help me at a painfully slow speed.

Other than USA calls credited for this award, I worked: VO1HO VE2ARZ VA3BWT KP4FJT VA5SAM VA7DLM HP1IBF VE2CU VA3EWP KP4HLR VE7SJK VE1QJ PA2DGR VA3FFF G4PRL VE2OI VE3GXU VE2PID VE3KLM VA2SVP G3MNS I2VRF G3TEV VA3UU G3VDV VE3XDB VE9CRM PA0OI G0USY A side note: I worked G3TEV on 15 meters. He is the QSL manager for a ham in Africa. After confirming the information via email, I found them in SSB QSO and we went to CW for a brief contact!

As my NANFA quest drew near completion, I only had sked contacts and became even more focused, frustrated, obsessed. I just wanted it to be over with. And at its conclusion with a contact with Bob/N1YLA on 30 March 2004, I was left with an empty - "so what!" feeling. It was not so

much a sense of accomplishment....as a sense of survival. It can be done.....de K9JXW FISTS # 2325

### **Here's what Kelsey wrote:**

When I first decided to try for the NANFA award my thoughts were that it would be difficult and take considerable time, how wrong I was, it was extremely difficult but it still didn't take as long as I thought it would 9 months 10 days. My first contact was January 2 and the last September 10.

I am NOT a good CW op, on a good day when everything is working in my favor I can copy up to 25 WPM but that is the exception not the rule, my range is 15 to 20 WPM. I re-entered the CW ranks about 3 years ago until then I operated almost everything but CW.

Some of you may question my methods of gaining the #1 NANFA Award, I used any means available to gain a valid CW contact which included e-mail, snail mail, echolink and anything else that occurred to me including landline.

When you check the FISTS Roster and find that in some cases the calls needed are few or non-existent for a particular CELL, I used an excel spreadsheet, and that only DX contacts are going to solve the problem you will see the reason I used any method available. I made a contact with

a VK on echolink and it took several days to finally get the contact. The VK was QRP and I was QRO 100W after we made the contact I also went QRP it was a strain but we made the contact.

My DX contacts were 1 HP, 12 VE, 1 VK, 2 G, 1 ON and 1 JA. The rest were K. The one thing in my favor was that the band conditions had not deteriorated to the level of today.

I spent on the average of 8 hours per day 6 days per week working for this award including all bands 10m through 80m. I never thought I had a chance at the #1 position until very late in the game, I heard that a couple others had only 2-3 more while I was still in need of 50.

One thing that gave me a lot of help was operating as KN0WCW/6 and also working KN0WCW/#. I worked each station I needed with my own call after the contact as KN0WCW.

As an aside, it was a blast being on the opposite end of a pile up using KN0WCW.

I have taken a hiatus from CW for awhile due to this award. In spite of that I still managed to land the 5BWAS - CW, DXCC - CW and a few other FISTS awards.

I spent a lot of time made a lot of contacts and despaired of those that got away during contests because they were on the hunt and pounce as I was or those I heard

and was waiting for a break only to get silence when I called.

I did find a wide range of operating styles and competence. I will ask you newbies out there not to worry about speed, that will come with use, but please do yourself and others a favor try your best at becoming proficient at sending quality code. I have been on the receiving end of some awful CW and this from a few old timers that have been using CW since dirt was young.

Space your characters correctly and space your words, nothing is more frustrating than trying to copy sloppy code. Please do not assume you are sending good code, if you can have someone tape your code and either play it back or send it to you for replay or even tape yourself and put the tape away for a week or two and then try to copy it.

If you send good code even though you are slow you will get a response to your CQ. If you send sloppy code you are much less likely to get a response.

This award is achievable but it will take time and patience especially with the deteriorating band conditions. I doubt that it was ever possible to achieve this award within the original one year time limit, at least for 99.9 percent of the members.

Good luck to all of you working for this award, if you need 6A drop me a line. 73, Kelsey KK6AW

## FISTS AWARDS

Dennis K6DF (Awards Manager)  
A word about awards?

FISTS awards are an added bonus for being dues paying club members. They give you a little recognition for making and enjoying contacts with club members. Awards are not meant to engender a contest style of operating but rather allow club members something to look forward to after putting many QSO's in the old logbook. Awards are a fun addition to CW operating.

I like to acquire awards too, because it is fun, but I don't think it's quite fair to ignore stations because you're working for an award and have worked them 5 or 6 times in the past. FISTS is a club that promotes friendship among CW operators regardless if they are members or not. The club also promotes the operation of CW on the amateur bands not only because it's fun, but also because it is a skill that is acquired through constant practice. Awards are secondary to those concepts. Awards will come to those who have patience.

Some CW operators are very slow, some are not as good on the key as you think they should be, but let's give them a break . . . because sometimes we are not all that good on the key even when we think we are. QRS for the slower operator, and you may find a new friend that's interested in many of the same things as yourself. Awards can wait.

So what I am saying is, get on

## The CW Boys



*Kathy, KS6CW, took this photo of 2 young boys in their sports jerseys, "CW" at a picnic. They were both delighted that she wanted to take a photo of them!*

(continued)

the air and chat with your fellow CW operators. Get to know them a little bit and actually have a nice conversation with them, even if you've worked them several times in the past. The result could be a lasting friendship throughout the years. The awards will always be there for you . . . many of those operators will not. The Awards can certainly wait!

Remember to use the awards e-mail address, ([Fistsawards@comcast.net](mailto:Fistsawards@comcast.net)) for sending in your award logs

The FISTS number for KN0WCW can only be counted ONCE!

Please check the FISTS Web Page for additional information regarding current FISTS awards and how to apply for them:

<http://www.fists.org/awards.html>

Keep banging the brass . . . C U on the bands . . .  
73, Dennis K6DF

## AWARDS ISSUED - Sept 15 to Nov 18

### Basic Century (CC)

G3JKY  
K4IR  
K5POA  
KB1LCK  
KB3HBD  
KB5MM  
KB9PLB  
KG4LLQ  
KI4DGH  
M0AWW  
N4ST  
N5DY  
N5EBD  
P43E  
UA4LFR  
VA2FFF  
VK4RC  
W0CZ  
W3EOP  
W4MY  
W5KL  
W7DK  
WC5T

### Diamond Century

AE2L  
K8NVR  
P43E  
W3JGS

### Silver Century

G0PEH  
KB9BVN  
KI4DBK  
N0ZD  
P43E  
UA4LFR  
VK4TJ  
WB8MON

### Gold Century

K0KGY  
K8LEN  
K9UQN  
N4GE  
P43E  
VA2SVP  
VE7NI  
W3HZW  
W8EOC

### Worked All States (FISTS)

AA9KH  
K6PZE  
W8DO  
W8UI  
WA1GCT  
ZL2BLQ  
1 X QRP  
K1TG  
K2EKM  
KI4DGH  
N5EBD  
VE2FSK  
2 X QRP  
K1TG

### WACA (New Award)

K4UK  
WB2WGX

### Club Call Achievement

WB4MED

### Platinum Award

K4KIX  
K6PZE  
KG4CNZ  
KI4DBK  
VK4TJ  
WB8TXG

### Platinum 250 Award

WA6RND

### Platinum 500 Award

K1TG  
WB8NMK

### NANFA Award

K4UK



## SOME MORE ON CW

I've been reading in the Keynote about the problems of some who are either too fast or too slow for other operators. Those of us who can copy at a fast speed, should do our utmost to encourage those who are many WPM behind us.

I enjoy going into the Novice portions of the bands or even in the General portion and working the slower operators. They need QSOs too. I find, for example, in the upper portion of 40 meters (7.115) there are many calling CQ at about 5 to 10 WPM, and have work a few who are Amateur Extras. I congratulate them for trying to get their speed up.

I taught myself CW in 1953 and in January of 1954 I received my ham license and the call KN2GSJ. I joined the Navy in March of 1954 and the ticket expired on me while sitting Navy circuits in Japan. After I graduated from Boot Camp, the Navy sent me off to Radio School as I was copying 15 WPM and could type 40 WPM. The Navy got me up to 35 WPM in CW.

When my ticket expired I went back to SWLing, using good Navy equipment and antennas, and continued to SWL until 1993 when I received another Novice ticket, this time with the call KB2QLK. One of the things I was proud of was that many told me that I did not sound like a Novice operator. I would work 20 and 25 WPM and use my bug. I have since put the "bug" on the shelf and stick with my old J-38. If need be I can get it up to 20 WPM. I can still copy 25 or 30 in my head if I have to.

I have my DXCC/CW, WAS three times on CW, and other sundry awards, so now days I just like to Rag Chew and give a helping hand to those who just want a QSO and can't find one at their speed.

When I got my old Novice call back in 1996, it was/is a conversation piece. If there is a question about it, it's always WHY? Because I did not upgrade, the callsign K2GSJ was taken in 1958.

So, I wanted my first call.

I have not bothered to try for Amateur Extra because the only benefit to me with the license would be that it would allow me into the CW portions that the Extras have in the low end of the bands.

A friend of mine and I took the Novice test together in 1993. We were the only two taking it. The VE came over and asked us if we would like to try the General CW test as we would have the CSCE if and when we went up for General. He had been a Radioman in the Navy in WWII. He looked at me and smiled and then said, "Would it be alright if we tried the 20 WPM test?" Four or five heads turned around to see who these two promising Novices were that wanted to take 20 WPM. They watched us closely as we aced the copy. The VE just stated, "You guys looked like you were writing a letter home." We still had to answer the 10 questions.

So, I just feel that it is a shame for someone who is QRQ op on the key, who can't take time out to QRS when someone asks politely. If the man is going too slow, DON'T call him. It's also a rule that you should never call CQ at a speed faster than you are ready to copy.

I have FIST/WAS and just for the fun of it, because there is no award for it, I am trying to FISTS/WAS again but this time with FISTS Numbers over 10,000. If it ever comes to be I am on my way, I have 26 already and one of them is Hawaii.

One thing about CW—you don't have all the profanity you find on Phone, be it "AM" or SSB. On CW you don't have time to bother with that type of chatter, who needs it?

Keep                      pounding                      the                      brass.

73 George Morton/KN2GSJ/FISTS NR 1538

## Books about CW

I saw this discussion on the CW Reflector, and thought it would be of interest to you. Since it's on the reflector, and the internet, I am assuming it's public domain and didn't get permission from all of the contributors, so I hope it's OK.

The books aren't in any particular order, and where possible, I included the name of the person recommending it. - Nancy WZ8C

### **Alone** by Admiral Richard E. Byrd

Byrd's account of his 1934 five month solo stay at the South Pole, with radio his only link with others and the outside world. I read it years ago in High School, and I believe he used only CW. I'm getting a copy now to reread. It's a great adventure book, particularly about the experience of being alone in such a hostile environment.

Paperback available at Amazon.com for \$10.88 or used from \$4.99

[http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1559634634/qid=1102924844/sr=2-1/ref=pd\\_ka\\_b\\_2\\_1/104-4904901-9947918](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1559634634/qid=1102924844/sr=2-1/ref=pd_ka_b_2_1/104-4904901-9947918)

73 George W5VU

From: David J. Ring, Jr., N1EA

### **SOS Korea 1950** by Raymond B. Maurstad

They were there then and write about it now. Eyewitness accounts of Americans in South Korea when the North attacked.

Moving recollections of the fateful first days of the war in Korea, June 1950.

Beavers Pond Press, Inc.

7104 Ohms Ln, Ste 216

Edina, MN 55439-1465

PH: 952 829-8818

Cost: US \$16.95, Canada: \$26.95

1-931646-91-0

<http://www.bookhousefulfillment.com/index.cfm?criteria=detail&id=1-931646-91-0>

**QTC I have a message for you** - Radio Officer's scrapbook by Ray Redwood - Out of print but occasionally one is available on eBay or try [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)

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### **North To The Orient** by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Anne and her husband Charles chart the unflown polar route over Northern Canada and Alaska to Japan. Anne becomes "crew" and gets both her pilot's license and her 3rd class radiotelegraph license - and her job is to be the Flight Radio Officer on this trip.

Used and New try [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)

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### **Ida Was a Tramp and Other Reflections**

by E. J. Quinby, Cdr.

From his first assignment on the "New York" and "New Jersey" pilot boats to his assignments on tramp steamers, work for RCA and Navy, Ed tells a great story. He was an excellent telegrapher and in the 1980s had a line from the last Morse land line stock exchange line in his converted fire house home in NJ.

Used - try [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)

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### **THE NYMPH & THE LAMP**

by Thomas H. Raddall

A fiction based based on Sable Island (called Marina in the book) where Raddall worked as a spark operator station VCT (Under Marconi it was MCT).

Someone has nicely added some of the extract that I typed out last year to you here on her web site. It looks rather nice: <http://www.bytenet.net/titanicimprint/raddall.htm>

Used - try [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)

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### **Practical Wireless Telegraphy - A Complete Text Book** by Elmer E. Bucher

For us who were too late to use Spark except on the

emergency transmitters some found on older ships, here is a great book for filling in what later is glossed over.

Mr. Bucher was the instructing engineer for Marconi Company and this book is wonderful for explaining some of the details about wireless in general and specifically the theory and operation of the particular Marconi receivers and transistors. Chapters on Receiving Circuits, Detectors, Tuning Apparatus; Motor Generators; Aerials for Antennae and much more. Great old photos and illustrations of vintage equipment. (I think he also covers the new fangled "audion valve" but I'm not sure, it's been a while since I've read this gem.)

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### **History of Communications-Electronics in the United States Navy** by L.S. Howeth

A book detailing the electronics, operations and politics of Radio and electronic warfare up until and a bit after WW2.

Has information on spark, arc, and vacuum tube oscillator r.f. transmission and reception and also electronic warfare and countermeasures.  
Used only available.

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### **THE SECRET WIRELESS WAR The Story of MI6 Communications 1939-1945** by Geoffrey Pidgeon

German codebreaking and eavesdropping at Bletchley Park, Whaddon Hall and other sites. Recently declassified, comes well recommended.

New issue

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### **Sparks what's going on?** by Sylvester Foecking <[foecking@main-rheiner.de](mailto:foecking@main-rheiner.de)>

This one is still in print: <http://www.seefunker.de/sparkse.html>

On February 1st, 1999, radio-telegraph service on board ships was ended. The radio officers were no longer needed and left the ships, and the majority

of coast-stations stopped their services. The grand era of the transmission of messages by Morse code had lasted almost 100 years .

"Sparks what's going on?" In 300 pages, A5 format, 64 colleagues from 20 nations tell more than one hundred, partly illustrated, stories in the English language. funny stories of life at sea and at the coastal stations.

There is something for everybody - perhaps self-experienced - and for EUR 13.00 (+ postage and packing) really affordable. The publishing of this book is on a non-profit basis, and the authors willingly declined the author's fee. However, we will make a gift: This gift may be done to preserve the memory of sea-wireless radio, i.e. to a museum or another means of preservation concerning radio communication at sea, or radio officer's lives.

The book was issued on the 50th anniversary of the "Seefunkkameradschaft BREMEN" (R/O comradeship), on August 30th, 2003. 16,70 Euro approx 21 US\$ (today's exchange rate)

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### **International Standing Committee**

During more than 3 years the CW Group of Argentina co-ordinators were seeking other clubs/groups/ persons remarks in order to build a general consensus, regarding the Morse Code and the Amateur Radio ITU Service political, training and technical issues. With our mind and heart wide open and with the help of our members, we prepare the draft rules for an international standing committee that we send to you in a attached PDF file. (*see below*)

We are calling you/your organization to participate in this important event to be held in 2005 in a place to be designated.

The GACW is offering his hospitality, and all available resources we can find ourselves in Buenos Aires, but we are also ready to go somewhere for the starting session and inauguration of this very important issue.

We think this can be real thing with a strong leadership to join together, the Morse Code and Amateur Radio real spirit. Rael M. Deaz LU6EF Hector M. Ombroni LU6UO Arnoldo J. Corda LU7EE  
GACW Co-ordinators Our address: [gacw@gace.no-ip.org](mailto:gacw@gace.no-ip.org) Our Web site: <http://gacw.no-ip.org>

### **International Standing Committee**

*Drafts rules for the Standing Committee*

**Name:** Morse Code Standing Committee / Radioamateurs Standing Committee.

**Objectives:** Research and analysis of the ITU Amateur Radio Service situation, from the Morse code groups, clubs and individual amateurs point of view.

**Actions:** To represent the Standing Committee in every place to ensure the objectives and resolutions. Elaboration of strategically recommendations and resolutions focused in the thought and defense of the Morse code. Promotion of amateur radio, its real spirit in broad terms, in order to be spread, followed and committed by clubs/groups in the Standing Committee or any other amateurs.

**Members:** Amateur radio clubs and groups, Morse code lovers, individual radio amateurs on each region.

**Regions:** North America, Central America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania.

**Delegations:** A maximum of three delegates for each club/group. Each delegation may represent more than one club/group with the proper documentation.

**Office:** Deliberations will be directed by a chairman assisted by a vice chairman and the host club/group, that may also assist as secretary and press.

**Deliberations:** Will be called by the chairman, at least once every two years. In order to insure rapid actions, the chairman will hold permanent deliberations via electronic mail or in a special forum, at his own charge. Each delegation will represent one vote. The chairman and vice chairman may vote in the name of their own delegation, only if it is not represented by other delegate. Resolutions will be approved by single majority of presents delegations in each committee meeting.

**Language work:** English will be the official language during the Committee Meetings. Other languages may be used if real time translation is available or if it is known by all delegations at that meeting

**Documents:** A preliminary agenda for each meeting will be transmitted by the Chairman to all organizations at least 90 days before that meeting. Chairman will coordinate issue, transmission and any other publications of resolutions and recommendations, whenever it is proper to make them public.

**Working groups:** Chairman will be able to designate working groups for analysis of special situations, whenever necessary. Each WG will design, at the same time, a WG chairman that will conduct WG deliberations, exchanges and preliminary reports to the committee chairman or main board This WG deliberations may be done in any alternative language.

**Elections:** A chairman will be elected for the term of three years during the Standing Committee first session, and a vice chairman for the term of two years to manage the committee. Each delegation may nominate a candidate for chairman or vice chairman, who will be able to participate in the election process, only if he is seconded by other present delegation. Chairman and vice chairman may be re-elected. First election will be managed by a delegate of the host club/group. After the election, the elected chairman will start deliberations with other subjects included in the agenda.

**Travel and other expenses:** Will be in charge of each delegate/delegation

**Meeting location:** Will be determined by the chairman, in accordance to all delegation's offers to host next meeting

**Balance:** Will be a chairman responsibility to ensure the resolutions equality for all regions, and to guarantee that no region may be affected, attending to the number of representatives or the absence of

them.

**Resolutions:** Will be adopted during each meeting sessions period only and will be mandatory for each committee member, no matter if he is present or not at that time

**Admission:** Once established a committee clubs/groups members list, present at initial meeting or represented by any other delegation; all application of new members will be send to the chairman in order to be approved or not during the nearest session.

Chairman my invite special amateur radio operators or clubs to join deliberations in order to provide a necessary background to the committee or to present their own SC delegation member nomination.

**Ethics:** All delegates and SC Members will assure to follow a proper code of ethics sportmanship and solidarity for the amateur radio community, during the meetings.

The Chairman and Vicecharman persons will follow the same codes during his term.

*Is this something FISTS should get involved in? This is all the information I have - I looked at their web page and it is all in Spanish (I think). Let's hear your thoughts and comments please! Nancy WZ8C (nancy@tir.com).*

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### Key Cleaning Tips

Here is a topic near and dear to our hearts; keeping our keys in good shape. To restore or not restore?

Again, I saw these tips on the CW reflector and thought they would be of interest and perhaps start some discussion. David writes: What do you do to make your telegraph equipment look loved and cared for? I used to poo-poo dust covers, but now I see that they do something very important for these "new" type of rigs with very little voltage on the keyline: they keep the contacts from being covered with dust which will make the keyer false!

I used to wash my bugs off with water and Joy detergent for dishes, but the older bugs had fibre (think Bran Buds) washers that held the water (and some salts) and would short out the key until it was thoroughly dry. The later plastic washers and plastic strips didn't cause this problem.

I learned that paper towels will scratch the chrome, but cotton balls, or cotton wadding won't, neither will soft towels or car drying cloths.

I learned that 100% cotton bond paper (preferably with a bit of tooth in the surface) - and NOT sulfate bond - works nicely for cleaning contacts.

Coated papers often wipes the coating on the contact.

I learned that a very light coating of vaseline kept my keys rust free when I operated from ships and also kept the chrome from pitting. Oil works too.

I learned that laquered brass once "shined" loses the lacquer and from then on must be completely taken apart to shine, so I know now to leave the lacquer on the brass and just clean with dish detergent and water.

I learned that I can smooth a rough button on a hand key by finding a flat piece of glass (like on a window!) and moving the button knob in a circle and it will polish very black and smooth.

I learned that on a bug there is a little sweet spot where the dot U shaped spring, and the dot lever swing all work together to form clear dots and that it isn't as simple as I once thought to get MANY CLEAR dots with paddle movement that isn't too much or too little. But I learned that once I had that spot to tighten up on the adjustments, and if needed only change them slightly.

QRU?

73 David N1EA

## 1,000 Marbles

by Jeff Davis, KE9V #6641

This story appeared on the ARRLWeb July 7, 2000 (permission to print here by the author)

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the basement shack with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning, turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me tell you about it.

Walking into the shack, I flipped the switch on the Astron power supply. That fired up the dual-band mobile that is usually set on the local repeater frequency and it also brought my HF rig to life. In a few seconds, I was tuned to 7.040mhz, the QRP calling frequency. Early morning on 40 meters can be interesting and like fishing, you just never know what you might snag.

I turned the gain control up until the volume was comfortable, then I leaned back and scanned the local paper. Another shooting, another bombing, some terrorist group threatening retaliation, and the government debating a tax

increase. Well, at least it's reassuring to see that the world hasn't changed since the evening news report the night before.

In the background, I heard a station calling "CQ FISTS". Before I have time to call him a VE3 with a booming signal calls him and so begins another QSO on 40 meters. Before long, that QSO has ended and another was underway.

After a quick coffee refill, I went back to the shack, put the headphones on, and begin tuning around. There was a strong signal on 7.035mhz calling CQ. I returned his call and made contact with a fellow in Kennebunk, Maine. We exchanged signal reports and proceeded to tell each other about our rigs, antennas, and the weather. A few minutes more and my new friend told me he must QRT because he is meeting several of the local hams for breakfast. We signed off, with "73" to each other.

Then I turned the dial up into the phone portion of the band in order to listen to a Saturday morning swap net. Along the way, I came across an older sounding chap, with a tremendous signal and a golden voice. You know the kind, he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business. He was telling whoever he was talking with something about "a thousand marbles". I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say.

"Well Tom, it sure sounds like

you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. Too bad you missed your daughter's dance recital."

He continued, "let me tell you something Tom, something that has helped me keep a good perspective on my own priorities." And that's **when** he began to explain his **theory** of a "thousand marbles."

"You see, I sat down **one day** and did a little arithmetic. **The** average person lives about **seventy-five** years. I know, some live **more** and some live **less**, but on **average**, folks live about **seventy-five** years."

"Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900 which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime. Now stick with me Tom, I'm getting to the important part."

By this point, I was completely hooked on this QSO. Forget the swap net, I wasn't moving from this frequency until I heard what the old man had to say.

"It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail", he went on, "and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred Saturdays. I got to thinking that if I lived to



be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy.” “So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round-up 1000 marbles. I took them home and put them inside of a large, clear plastic container right here in the shack next to my gear. Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away.”

“I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight.”

“Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign-off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure if I make it until next Saturday then I have been given a little extra time. And the one thing we can all use is a little more time.”

“It was nice to meet you Tom, I hope you spend more time with your family, and I hope to meet you again here on the band. 73 Old Man, this is K9NZQ, clear and going QRT, good morning!” You could have heard a pin drop on the band when this fellow signed off. I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to work on the antenna that morning, and then I was going to meet up with a few hams to work on the next club newsletter.

Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. “C’mon honey, I’m taking you and the kids to breakfast.”

“What brought this on?” she asked with a smile. “Oh, nothing special, it’s just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we’re out? I need to buy some marbles.”

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**A QRP Christmas** by Jeff Davis,  
K E 9 V

“A foot of new snow and it’s still falling, this is getting bad,” Tom muttered to no one in particular. Just then Stella walked in with a sad look on her face and Tom knew right away.

“The kids aren’t going to make it, are they?” he asked. “No,” she answered, “I just got off the phone with them and the roads are all closed.” Great! Two days before Christmas, and the world had come to a halt.

Tom gave his wife a hug and said, “Well Mother, we might as well get over it, nothing much we can do now but wait this thing out.” In the 50 plus years since the couple bought the house they had weathered many winter storms, but this would be the first Christmas without the kids and, now, the grandchildren. Nature could be cruel, but at least they had plenty of food and firewood, and there was ample gas for the generator in case the power went off. “I think I’ll go see if the repeater

is still on the air,” Tom said as he headed to his ham shack over the garage. Being a radio amateur had its advantages, and emergency communication was one of them. He fired up the VHF set, and—sure enough—the local repeater was alive and busy. Several folks in the community needed assistance, and snowmobile deliveries were being organized accompanied by hams to maintain communication.

As with many things, people take communication systems for granted until they’re suddenly unavailable. Two years earlier, with the proliferation of cellular telephone technology, Middletown decided it no longer needed Amateur Radio to assist during emergencies. A few months later, the river overflowed its banks during a massive rainstorm. Lightning wreaked havoc on the power grid and even cellular telephones were overloaded or knocked out altogether.

With one loud clap of thunder Amateur Radio was back in the disaster communications business in Middletown. The Town Council went so far as to give the Middletown Amateur Radio Club access to a county building to serve as a communications headquarters and monthly meeting spot.

Stella walked up the stairs to the radio shack with a hot cup of coffee for Tom. She figured he’d be spending quite a lot of time on the air during this snow emergency.

She was wrong. Tom wasn't all that fond of 2-meters, really. He'd always been a CW op. In fact, for years he never even owned a microphone for his HF gear. To him, ham radio was and would always be, CW.

His high school print shop teacher had convinced him to get his ham license in 1939. A few years later, Uncle Sam took note of his radiotelegraphy talents and made him a Navy radio operator aboard the USS Missouri. He served from 1941 until the end of the War and even was present aboard the Missouri for the formal Japanese surrender.

Not long after the War, he married his high school sweetheart, Stella, and started what would be a 40-year career at the telephone company. They had three children and still lived in the very house they'd bought brand new as a young couple in 1947.

Tom was a tinkerer, and he'd built several transmitters and even a few receivers. But he was a serious brasspounder and could handle 30 to 40 WPM with ease. His station was always as clean as his signal, and any piece of equipment he built was a work of art. It wasn't good enough just to work and look good—it had to be perfect. Other members of the local radio club poked fun because Tom had a habit of making sure that even the screw slots on anything he built were aligned in the same direction.

He didn't buy his first commercially made gear until 1961—a Hallicrafters SX-140 receiver with a matching HT-40 transmitter. That was the only store-bought equipment in his shack until over a decade later, when his best friend died suddenly. His friend's widow gave Tom all the equipment in her husband's shack, including a complete Collins S-Line. That gear took a special place in Tom's heart and shack, not so much because it was the "ultimate station," but because it had belonged to his closest friend.

After retiring in 1986, Tom quit building equipment. He maintained several skeds with on-air friends from around the world. Saturday nights were his

favorite, for it was then that he met with a large number of old Navy radio ops on 7.030. He really enjoyed those rag chews! But, one-by-one, the gang started to dwindle as more and more of his buddies became Silent Keys. It depressed him so that when his main receiver quit working in 1993, he didn't bother to fix it. K9NZQ was off the air for the first time since World War II.

Stella was worried enough about her husband's depression that she told the kids about the problem. They chipped in and bought him a brand new 2-meter FM radio for his birthday thinking that would cheer him up. Tom listened to the local repeater every day, but he rarely transmitted. It just wasn't the same.

She had hoped that having all the kids and grandchildren at the house again this Christmas would perk Tom up and chase away the lingering blues but now the weather had ruined that plan.

"I think I'll go out and make sure the generator still starts," he said as he passed through the kitchen. "The power lines are beginning to ice up."

Once he was out the back door, Stella took the opportunity to quickly and carefully wrap her gift to him. One of his friends had suggested to her that she buy Tom a kit for Christmas. Taking his suggestion, she ordered a small QRP CW transceiver kit he'd recommended. She didn't know if he would like it, but with this weather she was especially glad it had arrived a few days earlier. Like it or not, at least he would have something to open on Christmas morning.

Day turned into evening and somehow the power stayed on. More snow was falling outside. The TV was calling it some sort of record snowfall for central Indiana. When Tom said he was going to bed and it was only 6:30 PM, she decided it was time.

"Let's go ahead and open our presents now, and not wait two more days" she said, handing him the gaily wrapped box. He didn't really want to open

presents, now but he didn't want to disappoint Stella, knowing that she was still upset about the kids.

"All right, let me go get yours first," he agreed. In a few minutes they were opening their presents. She seemed to really like the bread making machine. He was more than a little surprised as he opened the little QRP kit.

"There now," she allowed, "that will give you something to do for a few days and it will keep you out of my kitchen." Tom knew he'd been underfoot lately. "You're sending me to my room without pie?" he said with a smile.

"Go on with you. I'll bring pie up to you as soon as the coffee quits brewing," she said as he headed back to the shack with the little box in hand.

By the time she walked in the shack, pumpkin pie in one hand and hot coffee in the other, Tom had unpacked the box, sorted the parts and was half-way through the instructions. She was happy to see he at least looked interested and left the room with her fingers crossed that this might cheer him up.

He didn't leave the shack until nearly midnight. By then, he had half of the components soldered to the main board, and he had wound several coils. "If the power doesn't go out," he muttered, "I could have this thing running by Christmas!" The next morning he awoke at 7:30 AM, two hours later than usual. Stella already had the bacon frying when he walked into the kitchen. A quick look out the back window revealed yet another foot of fresh snow had fallen last night. He was glad to see blue sky and sunshine and hoped that meant the worst was over. After breakfast he was back in the shack, soldering pen in hand.

Tom was genuinely impressed with the little kit. The instructions were clear, and it looked to be of high-quality. He had already convinced himself, though, that he would never make a contact on 40 meters with less than 3 W. Nonetheless, he was happy to have something to keep his hands and mind

busy. And it was a good thing that he'd kept up that dipole so he could see if this radio actually worked.

By 7 that evening, the kit was nearly finished. He was ready to apply power and begin initial testing. Stella knew that her decision to buy the little kit was a good one when he asked if she'd mind if he ate supper in the shack. By 11 PM Christmas Eve, the kit was finished. He plugged in the headphones, hooked up the antenna connection, and applied power.

The noise level jumped, and he knew things were working when he moved the VFO ever so slightly and instantly heard a QSO in progress. "Now, that's a good sign," he said to himself. He pulled off the headphones and headed upstairs to tell Stella the good news. But she was fast asleep. It was midnight. No point in waking her up now. He slipped back to the shack and put the headphones back on.

73 ES MERRY XMAS OM DE W5WBL he heard as one QSO completed. Tom moved a little higher in the band until he heard a strong station in QSO with a VE6 in Vancouver. He was more than a little impressed with the sensitivity of the receiver. After listening to a few more QSOs he continued moving up the band until suddenly, he heard a familiar call sign.

CQ CQ CQ de XE3HHH XE3HHH XE3HHH K. Tom almost couldn't believe it. Here was his old friend Miguel in Mexico calling CQ. He listened as Miguel called several more times with no reply. Thinking it silly to even try, Tom grabbed an old straight key and plugged it in. It was the first time in years that he had even touched a key. "This will never work" he thought as he tapped out XE3HHH XE3HHH XE3HHH de K9NZQ K9NZQ HW CPI OM?

Tom's jaw dropped when almost instantly Miguel came back. K9NZQ de XE3HHH FB OM I THOUGHT YOU DIED HI HI MERRY CHRISTMAS AMIGO. The two chatted for nearly an hour until Miguel had to go.

After the final 73, Tom sat back in his chair and rubbed his chin. He couldn't help but smile when he thought of just how much fun this day had been. Building the little kit and actually working an old friend just seemed to make his day complete. He would have bet half his retirement pension that there was no way to work Miguel with less than 3 watts. He knew some guys who worked QRP regularly, but he had always assumed that actually making contacts was a pretty rough and risky business. At least he never thought it would be that easy.

He was about to shut down the rig and go to bed when he heard a loud CQ just off the frequency where he worked Miguel. It was KL7DD. Tom reached for the key figuring he'd get in another quick QSO—or at least make the attempt—then go to bed. KL7DD turned out to be Joe in Point Barrow, Alaska. Joe also was ex-Navy, so the two hit it off right away. What started off to be a "quick" contact turned into a two-hour QSO. Joe only had trouble hearing Tom a couple of times. The little QRP rig was holding its own and making a believer out of Tom in the process.

Four contacts later, Tom was exhausted. About the time he shut things down and headed for bed, Stella walked in. "Merry Christmas!" she exclaimed. "What time did you get up? I didn't hear you get out of bed?"

Tom wasn't sure how to tell her he had been up all night 'playing radio' so he just replied, "early."

"Well, I've got breakfast ready," she said as she walked back down the stairs. He was still thinking about the contacts he made last night when he sat down at the kitchen table. "You know Mother," he said with a smile, "this might have been one of the very best Christmas's we've had in a long, long time. After breakfast, let's call the kids, but then I need to be back in the shack by noon because I told a guy that I would meet him on 40 meters to help him check out his new antenna..."

No doubt about it. K9NZQ was radio active once again 73 de Jeff, KE9V

## Using an Iambic Paddle

by Chuck Adams, K7QO <http://www.k7qo.net/>

This article is written with an emphasis on the use of iambic paddles only.

Single lever paddles like those made by Vibroplex and others take more mechanical motion to send the Morse characters. I'll prove this later.

This does not mean that I am an opponent of other types of paddles (other than badly made paddles). It's just that I have been using dual lever paddles for over 30 years (my first was a Brown Brothers paddle using a Hallicrafters TO keyer, which was not an iambic keyer with memory) and happen to be an avid fan.

I own two Hensley paddles (one square and one round base - each costing around 500 bucks) that are unfortunately no longer being made and many others that I use. At one time, just before I moved from Dallas, I had quite a collection of paddles, but sold many of them before moving so that they would be used and not just sit on a collectors shelf. See my web page for some photos of some of the paddles.

Unfortunately, many of them are no longer being manufactured as they were being done by individuals and the demand far exceeded their limited resources for producing them.

For sending Morse at speeds greater than 20 to 30 wpm you will need something other than a straight key or you will get very tired and frustrated. You may have experience sending Morse or maybe not. If you don't, then let me personally recommend that you start with an iambic paddle and a keyer. Most modern commercial rigs and kits that I know of have a built-in electronic keyer. You should learn to make good use of it if you haven't already.

First let me take the 'bug' (mechanical paddle) people aside. You know that it takes a certain force to hit the paddle and get the lever that sends the

mits to move and stay moving long enough to get mits sent. You will have to kill off the tendency that you have to "hit" or "slap" the paddle with a lot of force. Be gentle, please. The following steps will guide you. Please bear with me and don't skip anything.

From personal observations over the years at swapmeets, ham conventions, field day events and other contests, I have noted that I cringe when I see someone else use an iambic paddle. They "slap" the paddle around like it was a bug. Just a light touch is all it takes if you have it adjusted correctly.

If the paddle moves around the table while you are sending then you are using too much force. If you are sending with one hand and holding the paddle in one place with the other, you are doing it wrong. It shouldn't be moving if you are using a gentle force on the paddles. The typical paddle has a mass around 2 kg or so. Take it easy. It isn't going anywhere on its own.

So let's begin. You will need the following items:

- o an iambic paddle
- o a keyer
- o connecting cables
- o phone book, dictionary, book or a newspaper.

Let's first have a look at your paddle. Hopefully you can find one used and get it at a good price, if you don't have one already. I have gotten Brown Brothers and Bencher paddles for less than 30 bucks at swapmeets on the last day when everyone is in a dealing mood and doesn't want to pack up all that stuff left over to take back home. You know the story, they were told not to come back home with anything..... The paddles didn't look pretty but I spent some elbow grease, paint remover, primer, and paint to get them looking like new again.

Take a good look at the paddle and see how it fits all together. The iambic paddle has two separate movements and sets of contacts which I will call the left side and the right side. Note the adjustments for spacing on the contacts. Play with the adjust-

ments and see if they are clean and operate in a smooth manner. If you are mechanically inclined and working with a used paddle that needs some work then take it apart and clean it up and put it back together. Take notes before you take it apart.

Keep a small box to hold all the parts 'cuz Ace Hardware and others may not have a replacement part if you lose it or damage it in anyway. Also there are many manufacturers that are no longer in business to obtain spare parts from. Use common sense on chemicals, etc.

Also, do this in one sitting if possible so you don't forget and reassemble the device incorrectly.

Keep kids away from the parts unless you are showing them what a wizard you are or showing them how to do some mechanical work.

Also do not use a file, fingernail file, sandpaper, or other abrasive material on the contacts.

I use a sheet of smooth typing paper that I slide between the contacts to clean them aperiodically. The sulphur dioxide and other pollutants in the air tarnish the contacts and cause problems while in use. The contacts are either silver or gold plated and you do not want to remove the material. Hopefully the contacts have not been abused by previous owners if you working with a used paddle.

Now that we have a working paddle let's go and hook it up to the keyer. I will assume that you are right-handed. Just reverse things for left-handed operation.

You need a small cable that has two wires and a shield. It should be long enough to reach from where you will have the paddle on the operating desk to where you would like the keyer or rig to be.

I have used the audio output cable found in CD drives for computers. It is small and flexible. If you are lucky to have the manual for the keyer then find out the connections needed to the paddle.

The following connections are what I used for the AEA keyers and my rigs.

Hook the left paddle contact to the tip connection of the stereo plug, the right paddle contact to the ring connection of the stereo plug, and the shield to the ground of the paddle and to the ground connection of the stereo plug.

You need shielded cable so that later when you connect this setup to a transmitter, you will not have problems with RF getting into the keyer and cause it to malfunction.

Power up the keyer. See if touching the left paddle sends dits and the right paddle sends dahs. If you have a keyer built into the rig, then set the power output to the lowest level and use a dummy load.

Historically, the reason for the dits on the left paddle and the dahs on the right paddle is due to the semi-automatic mechanic paddle, a.k.a. bug, first being built in the configuration that gave dits with the left paddle, etc. A number of people do it the opposite way and that is fine. Just be prepared to be unable to walk up to any operating position and use their setup unless they have a keyer that will electronically switch to the opposite paddles for dits and dahs (reverse mode).

OK, now first adjustments. Make sure that all the adjustment components are aligned correctly and ready to be adjusted.

With the keyer powered on, I take the adjustment on the dit contact closure and move it to narrow the spacing until contact is made and the keyer starts sending a continuous string of dits. Then I back off the adjustment until the dits stop. This is just a small part of a turn on the typical adjustment. Don't make the spacing too wide as I will explain in a minute. I find that a sheet of 20 pound typing paper just barely fits and there is a slight amount of friction. That's how narrow it is when I make the adjustment.

Now some people are going to come along and sug-

gest or demand that you use a wider spacing. I don't think so. If the paddle will hold the adjustment and stop sending when you release pressure on the paddle then it is fine.

Next do the same thing on the opposite side for the dah paddle, and you are just about done. There may be a tension adjustment for either a spring or springs or magnets. Adjust this for the minimum tension you can get and still have the contacts stay open after you release pressure on either or both paddles. So with the light touch and the narrow spacing, let's get down to some real exercises.

Sit down at the desk you will be using and place your entire arm from the elbow to the wrist on the table in a comfortable position. Some of you may want your arm parallel to the edge of the desk and some at an small angle. I don't think straight into the desk is a good idea. You want to be able to do this for hours on end later in your CW career.

Now point your pointing finger straight along the same direction as the rest of the arm. This is the direction I want your paddle to line up with the paddles towards your hand. Extend your thumb straight out and place the paddle with the left paddle just touching it. The thumb should be relaxed and you may want it bent just a little. It's up to you. The index finger should just touch the opposite paddle on the right side of the pair. I use the tip of the finger while the finger is curved. I find my wrist is turned to the left a little so that it is not vertical to the desk surface and the wrist and arm are resting on the table.

With the thumb and index finger touching both paddles and no dits or dahs being sent and with you in a comfortable position I want you to hold this position for a few minutes.

Don't take your fingers off the paddles and don't push on them either.

Not a word and not a sound for a few minutes! Think about what you are doing and if there is some-



thing that doesn't feel right then adjust your posture, arm position, etc. until you feel comfortable.

I don't need 5 minutes from you, but you get the picture. If you can't do this for 5 minutes then how are you going to do it for longer periods of time while talking to someone on the air?

Get ready to send. I assume that you know all the characters and numbers and if not, pick the ones you do know.

If you have the manual on the keyer, look and make sure that it is in Mode B.

Set the keyer speed to 15 wpm or so and no slower.

Apply pressure to the left paddle with your thumb. You should hear a string of dits the entire time you have it depressed. Do this with the right paddle and you hear a string of dahs.

Here is the neat part. Hold down both paddles at the same time. This requires a 'squeezing' motion on the part of both fingers, thus the term 'squeeze keying' in some literature and advertising. The sound pattern will alternate continuously between dits and dahs.

With both paddles closed lightly, let the pressure off of one of the paddles, but DON'T remove the finger from the paddle.

*Always touching is the motto.*

Now bring pressure back on with the finger you let off and get the alternating pattern going again. Now let off with the other paddle, again keeping the finger or thumb touching and get a continuous pattern of dits or dahs. Bring the finger or thumb back.

Do this until you get the feel of it. The important thing that I want you to learn is that you can do this with the thumb and index finger still in contact with the paddles.

Remember when you learned to write? What did your parent(s) or teacher(s) or whoever have you do? They gave you some paper, most likely a Big Chief writing tablet, a pencil and a picture of the alphabet. A sample of the alphabet was usually on the inside cover of the Big Chief pad. You started with the letter A and I don't remember whether it was lower case first or capital. Probably caps first 'cuz you could do those with straight lines. Then you did one or more complete lines of all A's, then B's, etc.

Well welcome back kid, we're gonna do the same thing all over. First do a letter A. This is done with a di-dah sound combination.

I'm going to adopt the following notation for the finger pushes. A lower case 'r' means the right paddle and only long enough for one element, the dah. An upper case 'R' means the right paddle for at least two or more elements. Of course you can figure out what a 'l' and 'L' are. So an A looks like the combo of "lr" with almost no time between the first and the second depression.

Try it. You have to gently tap the left paddle and immediately tap the right paddle with a gentle pressure. Never let your finger or thumb come off the paddle if possible. Also make sure you are not sending ET as we aren't trying to phone home just yet. It is important to not leave a gap larger than the time of a single dit between the dit and the dah.

The neat thing about a keyer is that it will always put at least the smallest allowed spacing and you have to react fast enough on the next element so that it doesn't leave some more space. Some keyers will automatically space for a word if you go just a fraction of a dit too long. OK, just like pre-school, kindergarten or the first grade.

Time to do a line of A's. Get a watch or clock with a second hand and send an A every two seconds. Not any faster. Do this for 15 seconds to 20 seconds. And repeat until you can do this without a SINGLE error. Remember how you used to com-

plain and say to your parents? "Oh mom, oh dad, this is so easy and so boring. Can't I do something more interesting?" No. Do your homework and no dessert until you finish.....

Now here is the time to tell you something. Did you notice that if you didn't let up on the left paddle very quickly you'd get the letter R? This has to do with an internal memory of the keyer.

Here is the way the Mode B works. If the left paddle is still depressed at the half-way point of the dah or later, the keyer will do an automatic 'lock' into memory this fact and after the dah is finished the keyer will go ahead and send an additional dit EVEN if you have released pressure on the left paddle!! This is gonna make the letter R and some other stuff easier to send as we will see later.

OK, now the letter B. The finger combination will be 'rL' where we will hold the left paddle down in order to get the string of dits.

I don't know any other way to say this. *Don't you dare count. Counting is bad. Counting kills.* Just remember the sound of the letter B and do just what it takes to sound the letter. If you start counting dits you are dead meat. You'll never get to high speeds. So break the habit now and work on it until you do. Go back to the beginning code CDs or tapes if you must.

Repeat the same exercise we did for the letter A. Send a letter B every two seconds for 15 seconds until you get a perfect sequence. Then go to 30 seconds until you get it perfect.

Now the letter C. The letter C is the first neat one that you get to demo the power of IAMBIC KEYING. Watch someone who was a bug user and maybe even you have the tendency to do this. They will do this combination 'rlrl' for the letter C. You try it. This is a waste of time and energy. You just took four strokes to get one letter.

• Now try this combo to get C - 'RL'. Hold the right

paddle down and then immediately depress the left. Hold the right until after the second dah is half finished or complete and release and immediately release the left paddle at the mid-point or later during the second dah. Work on this until you can send C perfectly. OK, we did a C with only TWO strokes instead of four. This is the beauty of Iambic Keying with a little help from Mode B.

There is a Mode A for iambic keying that can do the same thing but **requires** a longer timing and I don't care for it at all. **In fact**, with Mode B we can send all the letters and **numbers** with TWO strokes except for the letters X and P.

Now practice on the letter C **until you can** send one every two seconds for 30 or more **seconds** without a single error.

Practice makes perfect. I find that people **who** are accomplished musicians make the best **students**. Know why? They learned very early in life that patience and sticking to something will allow you to do most anything. I don't think it is so much music but the love of doing something well that makes them better at a lot of things.

OK, here is the combo for each of the letters using the K7QO notation for Mode B Iambic Keying. Hopefully I don't have any typos here.

Take each letter and learn the combo for doing it. Send the letter for thirty seconds with correct spacing without error and go on to the next one. Afterwards, forget the chart. Just concentrate on the sounds and the feel of sending each character.

A - lr

B - rL

C - RL

D - rL

E - l

F - Lr note: hold L down and tap r during the second dit

G - RL

H - L don't count

I - L don't count  
 J - IR don't count, not ever.....  
 K - Rl  
 L - Lr  
 M - R  
 N - rl  
 O - R don't count :-)  
 P - lRl OK, this took three strokes  
 Q - Rl  
 R - Lr  
 S - L

T - r  
 U - Lr  
 V - Lr  
 W - IR  
 X - rLr The other letter that requires three strokes to send.  
 Y - Rl  
 Z - RL There is no overlap on closures.

Now note that this notation isn't perfect. It relies on you knowing the letters and working out the physical timing. For the numbers

1 - IR Don't count  
 2 - LR Don't count  
 3 - LR Don't count  
 4 - LR Don't count  
 5 - L Don't count  
 6 - rL Don't count  
 7 - RL Don't count  
 8 - RL Don't count  
 9 - RL Don't count  
 0 - R Don't count

Those puppies take a long time to send at 15 to 20 words per minute. Makes 'em easy if you memorize them by sound and not count the elements. This is the biggest killer of CW operators, the worst habit to obtain and the most difficult to undo. So get to work if you have the bad habit of counting for any letter or number. Think sound sound sound....

I'll leave it as an exercise for the student to figure out the punctuation symbols , . ? and the / (slant symbol). HINT: 3, 2, 3 and 3 strokes. Here is some-

thing that I found to be interesting and I had never seen done anywhere. Here are the number of strokes it takes to send each letter using a straight key.

One Stroke — E and T

Two Strokes — A, I, N, and M

Three Strokes — K, O, S, U, W, R, D, and G

Four Strokes — B, C, F, H, J, L, P, Q, V, X, Y, and Z  
 Five Strokes — 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 0 (zero)

So if I asked you to send the entire alphabet and all the numerals, you would have to work the key a total of  $2 + 8 + 24 + 48 + 50$  which is 132 key closures. No wonder you get tired after sending a long session with a straight key.

Now let's graduate to the old 'bug'. Historically the bug was invented before we had a lot of digital designers around who weren't making the big bucks in computers.

One Stroke — E, I, S, H, 5, T

Two Strokes — A, B, D, M, N, 6, U, V, 4, 6

Three Strokes — F, G, K, L, O, R, W, X, Z, 3, 7

Four Strokes — C, J, P, Q, Y, 2, 8

Five Strokes — 9, 0 (zero)

Again, totaling up the number of strokes we get  $6 + 20 + 33 + 28 + 10$  giving us the winning number of 87 motions.

This is quite a savings over 132 strokes required for the straight key. Timing-wise it gave the operator considerable more accurate timing on the dits. There is still a limit of human capabilities to send by hand each long element rapidly. Then came along the first electronic keyer.

Now let's again go through our counting exercise but this time using only a single lever paddle used with an electronic keyer. Some of the better CW ops that I know still only use a single lever paddle. I can see that it closely approximates a bug in operation and it would be a much simpler transition to the new technology with a rapid learning curve.

Here is the count that I get.

One Stroke — E, H, I, M, O, S, T, 0 (zero), and 5  
Two Strokes — A, B, D, G, J, N, U, V, W, Z, 1, 2, 3,  
4, 6, 7, 8 and 9  
Three Strokes — F, K, L, P, Q, R, X, and Y

Wow!! That saved a lot. Totaling up the damages we get  $9 + 36 + 24$  for a total of 69 which again is a reduction from the previous two methods that involved 132 and 87 strokes for their respective totals. And then came the dual iambic paddles and more sophisticated keyers.

One Stroke — E, H, I, M, O, S, T, 0 (zero), and 5  
Two Strokes — A, B, C, D, F, G, J, K, L, N, Q, R, U, V, W, Y, Z, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9  
Three Strokes — P and X

Now we have  $9 + 50 + 6$  for a total of 65 strokes with again a savings in strokes.

So look at the totals again 132, 87, 69, and 65 for each of the methods of sending Morse. With the Iambic Keying you can save over 50 per cent of the work of using a straight key. Something to think about and wow your friends and neighbors with.

OK, now it's time to start practicing. Here I'm leaving you on your very own to do the work. Now I asked you to get a phone directory, dictionary or newspaper or book. The reason? I want you to randomly open it to a page and start sending line by line. If you make a mistake, you have to start over with that line.

Do this for about 15 minutes at a time and take a break. Do this for at least 30 minutes a day for a week.

I know it's hard work but when you get to the point that you can do this in your sleep then you will forever be able to get on the air and sent flawless CW day in and day out without breaking into a sweat. Get a copy of QST (*ed. note: or WorldRadio or the Keynote*) and send all the calls you see for more practice.

OK, graduation time. If you have followed the above instructions and practiced dutifully, you are ready to get on the air daily.

Of course, read the ARRL Operators Manual and review all on air procedures that you need. And hopefully I will work you on one of the FISTS calling frequencies and I will be impressed with your skills, then we can work on your speed. dit dit de K7QO

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## Canadian FISTS Presentation

On December 9, 2004 I presented the FISTS CW CLUB package at our Lakehead Amateur Radio Club meeting.

In attendance were about 30 members.

The presentation was well received, and a lot of the members were not familiar with FISTS.

There is definitely an interest shown in CW, and the information presented brought forward a lot of questions. I think the fact that FISTS is a volunteer organization with no paid staff or outside direct ties to other organizations or business was well received. The handouts – Keynotes, badges and 'You are Cordially Invited' brochures were available for pickup. All the badges are gone, almost all the brochures and Keynotes were taken!

I hope this results in some new members from Thunder Bay, Ontario!!

Thanks for all your help in getting this information to me, The handout package arrived yesterday, just hours before the meeting! Great timing! 73, Leo, VE3ATC, VA3UO

*Thanks for doing a Canadian presentation Leo! If anyone else would like to do a presentation at their club or Hamfest, contact Joe KK4NA from the How Do I page.*

This wraps up 2004 for the Keynote. I hope you are enjoying your association with FISTS. Please remember that as FISTS Founding Father Geo sez, "when you are on the air, you are flying the FISTS flag." Please operate kindly. See you on the air, and keep those articles coming. Have a great 2005! Nancy WZ8C



## **FISTS CW CLUB "DOWN UNDER"**

### **Newsletter – December 2004**

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Address e-mails for above persons to: [fistsdownunder@ihug.co.nz](mailto:fistsdownunder@ihug.co.nz)

Visit our Web Site : <http://fistsdownunder.morsekeys.com>

#### **E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

Members are requested to note the new e-mail address for sending correspondence to persons listed in the above header. You should address any mail for the attention of the person you are writing to in the text and send your e-mail to: [fistsdownunder@ihug.co.nz](mailto:fistsdownunder@ihug.co.nz)

#### **FISTS DOWN UNDER NEWSLETTER & QSL BUREAU**

With the holiday season soon to be upon us, please note that as usual there will be no January newsletter. The next newsletter will be the bumper February 2005 edition, issued in late January. During the holidays, the QSL Bureau will continue to function, so please post your cards to your Manager as usual.

#### **SUGGESTED H/F CALLING FREQUENCIES**

1.808kHz (160M) – 3528kHz (80M) – 7.028MHz (40M) – 10.118MHz (30M) – 14.058MHz (20M)  
18.085MHz (17M) – 21.058MHz (15M) – 24.918MHz (12M) – 28.058MHz (10M)

Members are reminded that the above frequencies are suggested calling frequencies. If they are busy, it is suggested that once you establishing contact with a station, it may be prudent to change frequency down the band, avoiding other calling frequencies of known clubs.

#### **DOWN UNDER MEMBERS' NEWS**

Again, we express our thanks for generous donations received from VK1AI – Greg # 9604, VK1LK – Ernie #9608, ZL1BEG – Ken #9098, ZL1MH – Mike #9038, ZL1PD – Alison # 9623, ZL1PY – Rod #9622 and ZL2BPE – Jan #9024.

ZL6FF the New Zealand FISTS Club national call was aired for the full 24 hours during the Coast-to-Coast Contest on 24-25 October. Operators were ZL2TX – Nigel #9040, ZL2BSJ – Wilbert #9637 and ZL2AOH – Ralph #1073. Contacts were obtained on 10, 15, 20 and 40 metres. Especially pleasing were the number of ten metre contacts with excellent signals. The main purpose of airing the call sign - was to enable as many members as possible, to earn the extra award points for working the call. The other FISTS Down Under club calls – VK2FDU/3 (Operator Chris – VK3CGB), VK2FDU/4 (Operator John – VK4TJ) and VK4RC (Operator George – VK4XY), were also operating during the event. Although most contacts were with FISTS stations, like good FISTS members we were also happy to work all the other stations that called us.

The main operation of ZL6FF by Wilbert and Ralph was from Quartz Hill, Wellington where the pair had access to the big "RHOMBIC" and "VEE" beams, 20 Metres high, which no doubt assisted their efforts in putting a big signal into Europe and the Americas. Nigel acted as back up from home, operating in the early hours of the morning with limited success, mainly on 40 metres.

(On checking their log, I couldn't help noticing a contact with George, GM30XX #7174. George is World famous for his QRP operations using only 1 Watt –(Yes, ONE WATT OUTPUT) to a 40 Metre doublet. I have had the pleasure of working him on several bands and would like to bet that he was using his One Watt output on this occasion. George – If you were - let us know! He is also a member of the G-QRP Club and features in an article later in this newsletter. – Ed)

ZL1BRS – Syd sent in a clipping, part of the Royal New Zealand Navy's magazine "Navy Today" Sept 04. An article entitled "Today's Communicators Recognised" by PORS "Ike" Ikenasio, described the R.N.Z.N. "Communicator of the Year Award". The Award recognises a Students contribution, academic achievement, attitude, professionalism and excellence in the training environment. The first "Communicator of the Year Award" went to ACO Cheryl Wagener and shows her proud smiling photograph holding the award - a brass Morse Key mounted on an inscribed plaque! - Who said Morse was dead?

**ZL1CYK - Derek #9036, ex ZS6AEI** writes: - The last issue of Keynote had an interesting article by G4KLF-Tony Selmes # 1198. - I was aware that Tony has had a "Dickey Ticker" for quite some time now, and I hope that his experiences with all sorts of RF will be a help to others. Tony, alias "Big White Fish" and I have been good radio mates since the early 1980s. I can't remember exactly when we met, but we lived in the same town of Benoni just east of the city of Johannesburg. Tony had the call of ZS6BWF as well as G4KLF and we had many a good rag chew on the air on both CW and SSB. Since my arrival in New Zealand in 1997, I have worked Tony several times on the DX bands whilst he was living in Oman as well as a few contacts on Echolink with a very good mutual friend of ours...ZS6TB OM Joe in Pretoria.

### OVERSEAS MEMBERS' NEWS

**WA9PWP - Paul #2153** sent us this picture, taken in the small village of Morse, Ashland County in the southern part of Wisconsin state. The fellow the post is holding up is Paul himself.



We received notification of a new FISTS Club in the United States. It's K8FGA-Flour Garden ARC #11225. The name appeared to be a typo, so we queried it. The explanation is that the club meets every Friday for coffee and bagels in a bakery! Thanks to K7TP-Grover #11104 for this crumb of information

**KH6HE - Alex #4723** is working on the FDU Award and is looking out for down under members.

Another is **K9JXW - James # 2325** looking for SKEDS. Contact [k9jxw@yahoo.com](mailto:k9jxw@yahoo.com)

### A NOTABLE ANNIVERSARY

By John Gibb in the Otago Daily Times - 19 October 2004

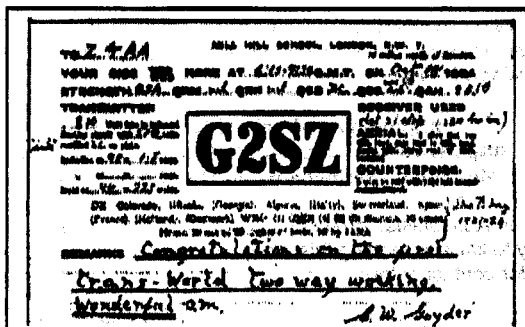
Waitati resident Mike McAlevey last night celebrated the 80th anniversary of the first Trans-World radio broadcast. Amateur radio experimenter and operator Frank Bell made history on the evening of October 18, 1924, when he transmitted Morse code messages from his home in the Shag Valley, Otago. These historic short-wave signals were received and replied to by a London-based amateur operator, Cecil Goyder.

At the time, this was not only the first amateur radio contact around the world but was the first radio transmission of any kind to be sent and received at such a distance. The transmission was received in parts of England so clearly that there was initially some scepticism that the signal had indeed come from the other side of the world. Doubt was quickly replaced by international delight when the transmission was confirmed from New Zealand. Mr McAlevey, a keen amateur radio operator and a New Zealand Association of Amateur Radio Transmitters Otago branch committee member, transmitted in Morse from his home in Waitati last night to mark the anniversary. It's quite a buzz. Its definitely worthwhile marking the event, he said.

At an earlier function marking the 40th anniversary of the broadcast, in 1964, the then president of the New Zealand association, Clive Liddell, commented that this amateur achievement showed the whole world the practical use of short wave communication. Congratulations also flooded in from many overseas amateur radio organisations, including in Germany, the United States of America, and Britain.

Otago branch president Lindsey Ross said yesterday that in honour of the historic achievement, the club had long adopted ZL4AA as its official call sign. This was based on Mr Bell's similar original call sign, he said.

Dr Craig Rodger, a University of Otago senior lecturer in physics, said his calculations suggested the original Otago signal had bounced off the ionosphere, at the height of about 120km, many times before reaching England. The feat of communicating from a New Zealand farm to London in the 1920s remained terribly impressive, Dr Rodger said yesterday.





OTHER NOTEABLE ANNIVERSARIES

By Jim Linton VK3PC for WIA National News – 1 October 2004

This week marks a very important milestone in global communications.

The first direct two-way radio communication from Australia to the United States occurred 80-years ago on 3 November 1924. Max (Walter Francis Maxwell) Howden, A3BQ, in the Call Sign series before the national VK prefix was introduced, contacted Mr Williams U6AHP of Tecoma in California, using Morse code wireless telegraphy. A3BQ used a wavelength of about 83 metres running 130 watts into a single Z4 valve transmitter at his home in the eastern Melbourne, Australia suburb of Box Hill. The antenna consisted of six wires, 65 feet long and 80 feet above ground. The first transpacific QSO was a very significant achievement at a time when radio amateurs were seeking to prove that long distance communication was possible on short wavelengths that governments had considered to be useless.

Nine days later on 12 November 1924, Max Howden achieved the first Australia to Great Britain two-way wireless telegraphy contact with G2OD at Meadow Lea, Gerards Cross in Buckingham, England.

The testing continued and another breakthrough came on 10 February 1925 when A3BQ made the first two-way Radio Telephony or voice communication with G2OD in England. Another - world first.

The efforts of the late Max Howden VK3BQ and many other pioneering Radio amateurs of that era, both in the southern and northern hemispheres, significantly added to the knowledge of communications. It led to the rapid development of radio in terms of inter-continental and global communications and opened up the short waves for broadcasting, international wireless telegraph and many other uses over long distances.

QSP - GACW - ARGENTINAPCH100H

On 19th December 2004, it is exactly 100 years ago that the Dutch Coastal Station PCH Scheveningen Radio was founded. Sufficient reason to organize an event for radio amateurs all over the world! The 75th, 85th and 90th anniversary and the closure of the station on 31st December 1998 were celebrated with the opportunity to make radio contact with the coastal station. Especially during the last days of operation, the possibility to make cross-frequency contact with PCH on maritime frequencies caused tremendous and hour-long pile-ups. As a final event, on 18th and 19th December the 100th anniversary of the founding of PCH Scheveningen Radio will be commemorated with a special amateur radio station. This time we will use the callsign PC100H. You are kindly invited to make contact with PC100H, which will be active from Saturday 18th December 0700 UTC until Sunday 19th December 1900 UTC.

## Frequencies

1.830 CW and 1.850 SSB  
 3.530 CW and 3.650 SSB  
 7.030 CW and 7.050 SSB  
 10.130 CW and 10.145 RTTY/PSK31  
 14.030 CW and 14.250 SSB  
 18.090 CW and 18.150 SSB  
 21.030 CW and 21.250 SSB  
 28.030 CW and 28.250 SSB

For the actual schedule, please refer to [www.remeeus.nl/pch/pc100h.htm](http://www.remeeus.nl/pch/pc100h.htm).

Further information can be obtained from [hans@remeeus.nl](mailto:hans@remeeus.nl).

73 - Hans PA1HR.

Cordiales saludos (Best regards) - GACW

<http://gacw.no-ip.org>

[gacw@lan.no-ip.org](mailto:gacw@lan.no-ip.org)

MESSAGE PASSING

ZL1ANY – Stephen #0055 is interested in forming CW message passing group, to practise emergency communications skills using CW. He says that further information on the protocols and nature of these groups can be found by searching the following URLs:

<http://www.qsl.net/n5lf/cw-nts.html>

<http://www.cas.umt.edu/phil/Walton/ibpn01.htm>

<http://home.earthlink.net/~k7bfi/tfctools.html>

He hopes that if we could form an Australasian group of at least five or so people we might be able to get something going and growing. He is happy to liaise in forming this group and can be contacted by email or by telephone. Please see FDU members list for contact details.

## QRP FROM SCRATCH

By VK4JAZ-Grant McDuling #9635

Being able to communicate with someone far away with a rig cobbled together from commonly available components has always fascinated me. And being able to do so without much experience when it comes to home brewing is an added attraction.

A few months ago I took the decision to stop dreaming and actually do something about making this particular dream come true. And in keeping with the times, I jumped onto the Internet and began searching for a project that would fit the bill.

It wasn't long before I came across the site of QRP International ([www.qrpp-i.com](http://www.qrpp-i.com)) and was delighted to find they had just what I was looking for. Called the Pixie 2, this mighty little rig consists of no more than 24 components. So I printed out the schematic ([www.qrpp-i.com/elmer001/pixie2-schematic.gif](http://www.qrpp-i.com/elmer001/pixie2-schematic.gif)) and I was in business. I quickly made a list of the parts I needed and after forking out the princely sum of \$14.02, I heated up my soldering iron and began building.

Being a rank beginner, I settled for ugly construction, which basically means I would be following the schematic literally - soldering the components together as they appear in the schematic. I cut out a suitable piece of PCB material so that it would fit onto the bottom of a tuna tin. Then I cut pieces of leftover PCB material into little squares which I would super glue onto the main PCB such of those connections that are not grounded would be soldered onto these little 'islands'. The PCB proper would all be at ground potential.

This I found to be the easiest construction method, with no drilling of holes or etching needed. And the end result looks pretty good, too. ? Where does the name ugly come from?

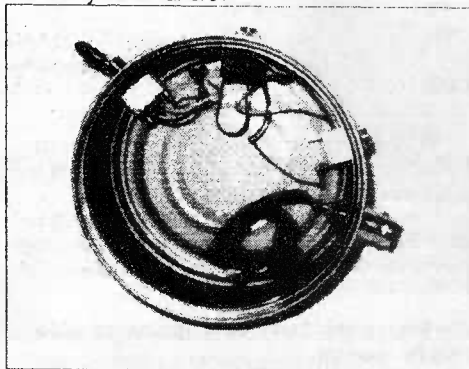
Once that was done, I bought the few connectors and a switch that was needed and proceeded to mount them into the tuna tin. Drilling small pilot holes into the tin first, then enlarging them with a hand operated reamer proved the go. Again, the end result I found more than pleasing.

Once that was done, it was time for the smoke test. The crystal I used is fixed on 3.579 MHz (and is freely available). So that was the frequency I would be operating on. I soon discovered that not many CW operators lurk there, so I had to arrange a sked. I arranged one with VK4TJ-John #9080, whose QTH in Toowoomba is 130 km away from my shack in Brisbane. I hooked up the power, tuned my main rig (TS520SE) because the Pixie 2 doesn't have a side tone of its own, making it difficult to operate, because I can't hear myself key, and plugging in my Windom antenna feed line. I then tentatively pounded out CQ on my old trusty straight key.

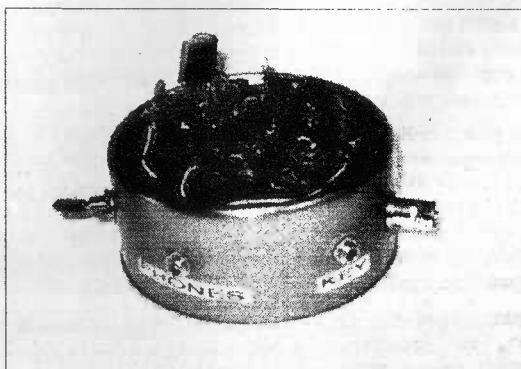
Almost immediately I heard VK4TJ reply loud and clear. I could hardly believe my ears! The little rig was working. We had a great QSO that lasted all of half an hour, but perhaps the greatest thrill for me came the next day when John informed me that I was causing some QRM to an SSB net that was operating on 3.580. I couldn't help laughing because I could imagine what they would think if they knew they were being worried by a flea of a station that was putting out a mere 125 mW!

With new - found enthusiasm, I arranged another quick sked with CW ops from the Australian Naval Amateur Radio Society and had a good QSO with Craig VK4CWC. He earned his living as a CW operator and now lives on the Gold Coast. Norm VK4FON and Capt Peter VK4DPL monitored this QSO. We have since had much fruitful discussion about the joys of QRP on this naval net and Norm is now gearing up to join in on the fun.

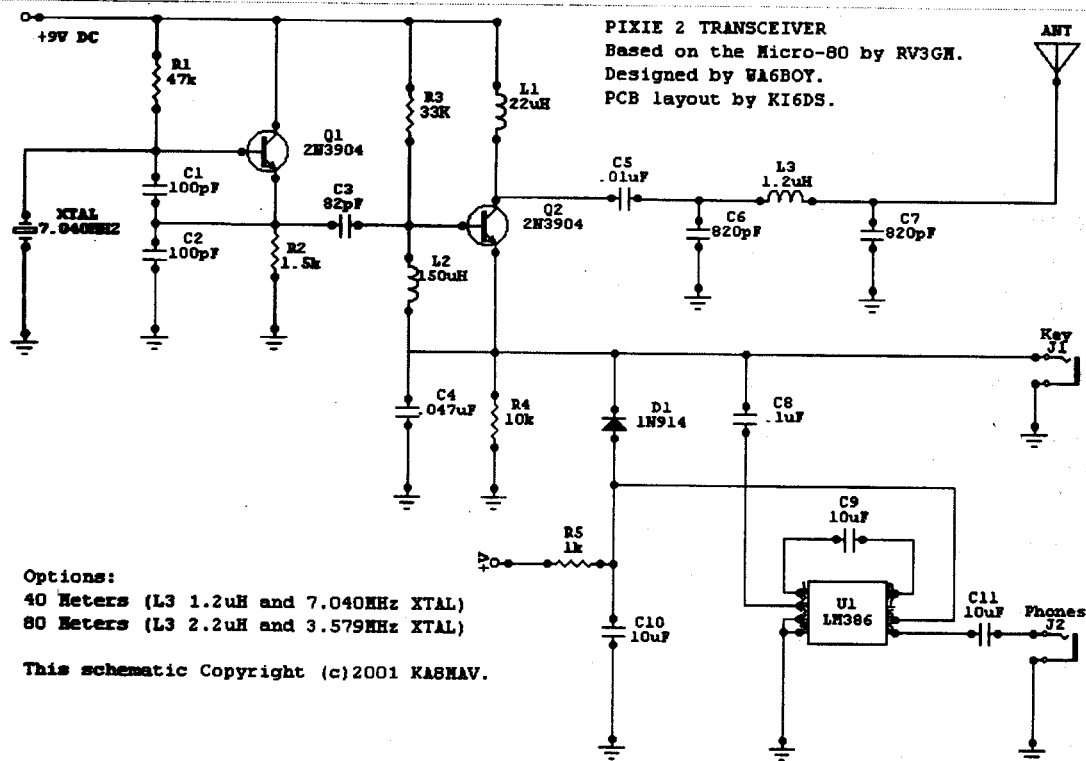
Are there any other takers?



The Innards



The Completed Pixie 2



**Editors Notes:** - My thanks to Brice D. Hornback, KA8MAV for granting permission to use his Copyrighted Schematic in the above article. Readers are recommended to take a look at the GQRP and QRPP-I Web Sites for further information on similar circuits.

[www.gqrp.com](http://www.gqrp.com)

[www.qrpp-i.com](http://www.qrpp-i.com)

Such was my interest, that I downloaded "SPRAT" the Special Edition, Issue 1 of the G QRP Club - entitled "The Pixie File". This interesting file of more than 20 pages contains an introduction by Tony, G4WIF, who mentioned George Burt - GM3OXX (FISTS # 7174) as the originator of a circuit design that captured the imagination of the QRP world. His "FOXX" transceiver used only 5 transistors yet it featured both SIDETONE and R.I.T. running just One Watt Output. I suddenly remembered his call sign and went to my QSL card File, where I found George's QSL card depicting a cute "Scottish Terrier" wearing a pair of headphones labelled G QRP 126, his club membership number. The dog collar bears a simple tag with just the figure 1 showing - George's output power! This wasn't the only card I'd received from George, I had others bearing different years, confirming contacts we had made on the 14, 18 and 21MHz Bands. His output power in each case One Watt! Next to the cards was a coloured photocopy showing his house, operating position with his beautifully constructed QRP equipment and his workshop. Unfortunately the copy is a little worse for wear and I am unable to reproduce it here. Truly incredible!

At this point I contacted Grant, VK4JAZ asking him if he could fire up his little transceiver on 3579kHz. A schedule was arranged and in the interests of low power I was to reduce power to 5 watts. You can imagine my astonishment when I could just make out his call sign amongst the 80 Metre static. He was barely perceptible RST 219 but peaked later at RST 329. Unfortunately he could not read me and so we will have to try another time when conditions are ideal, probably later at night. Line of sight between Brisbane and Otaki, New Zealand is about 3,200km. To think his 125milliwatt output would be audible over this distance on 80 Metres is almost unbelievable! Try again, we shall! - I'm hooked.

If anyone has a suitable Crystal to enable Grant to operate lower in the band it would be much appreciated. (See Trading Post Advertisement). Alternatively a suitable V.F.O. circuit may be required. At present we are trying to contact the G QRP club to ask their permission to photocopy "The Pixie File" for Down Under Members who do not have access to a Computer. We hope that further information will be available in due course. Nigel, ZL2TX (Editor).

TRADING POST

**FOR SALE:** - Telereader CWR685 5inch screen, CW, RTTY, ASCII, with touch-type keyboard F8A complete with operating Instruction Book. Any sane offer accepted - Insane ones only considered...  
 Also for sale RF 660 Daiwa Speech Processor, used once on a TS 120s \$60.00 o.n.o  
 Contact Stan Mangin, ZL2BLQ Details as per FDU Members Listing.

**FOR SALE:** - RG58U Coax, Pacific Aerials brand, 100m Roll (still shrunk sealed). \$125.00 ono, plus freight. Contact John Powell, ZL1BHQ - Details as per FDU Members Listing.

**FOR SALE:** - TRANSMITTING RF COMPONENTS: I have a quantity of transmitting type variable caps, coils, ceramic coil formers, rotary inductors - Too many to list. Let me know what you require, will see what can be done. Am rationalizing my parts collection.  
 Contact Barry Kirkwood ZL1DD - Details as per FDU Members Listing.

**FOR SALE:** - SERVICE MANUAL - YAESU FT1000 MP V Transceiver. CD Version, new (still sealed in shrink wrapping). The US supplier forwarded the wrong version. \$70.00.  
 Contact John Powell, ZL1BHQ - Details as per FDU Members Listing.

**WANTED:** TONO Morse keyboard Unit and Crystals for the 80 METRE CW Band - 3500 to 3530kHz.  
 Contact Des O'Brien ZL2OB - Details as per FDU Members Listing.

**WANTED:** Suitable Crystals for 80 / 40 METRE CW Bands. Especially 3528kHz. What have you?  
 Contact Grant McDuling, VK4JAZ - Details as per FDU Members Listing.

(The above Trading post is available Free of Charge to members of FDU. As this newsletter is sent by e-mail overseas, it has been decided that contact details should not be published. Instead, you are asked to obtain details from the latest FISTS DOWN UNDER MEMBERS LISTING, which has been sent to all members -Ed)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To: The FISTS CW CLUB "DOWN UNDER" Newsletter

Sir,

Recently I qualified to receive the Fists Down Under award. Along with the certificate comes a personal sense of pride and achievement.

I live in Salem, Oregon in the middle of the Willamette Valley. The Pacific Ocean is about 50 miles to the west and a range of mountains is 50 miles to the east. I am fortunate in that my equipment consists of a 6 element, log periodic antenna up about 12 m that I use for the 20 meter band and up and a 80 meter loop antenna from 30 meters down. When necessary I will use up to about 400 watts of power.

This note to the editor isn't about the award or me. I want to comment on the reception I received in my pursuit of the FDU award.

Feeling cautious at first due to declining band conditions and expecting weak signals and the time difference to make contacts with New Zealand and Australia Fists members difficult if not impossible, I half heartedly decided to try for the award. With the entry of John, VK4TJ / VK2FDU/4, George, VK4XY / VK4RC, Stan, ZL2BLQ / ZL2SWR and Ralph, ZL2AOH / ZL6FF into my log, the ongoing spirit of achievement was assured. All during my efforts to gain that "one extra point" toward the 50 point total was met with member after member who had taken time out of his activities on my behalf to give me that point. I feel a strong sense of gratitude toward all those who helped me and to those that tried, but were unable for any reason to make the contact.

The reception I received in my effort to achieve this award was truly reflective of an attitude that encourages friendship and ongoing CW operation. We all benefit from FISTS Club membership, here and abroad, consisting of pleasant, considerate, and dedicated men and women.

My warmest regards to all the Fists Down Under members.

Vern Lovelace, AA7VW, # 10,044

Note: If anyone would like to make contact and exchange Fists numbers please e-mail me at AA7VW@att.net. It will be my pleasure.

(On behalf of our FISTS Down Under members - Thank you Vern and Congratulations on your hard earned FISTS Down Under Award, the first issued outside Oceania. You'll now have to consider a holiday down under to meet us all and sample our hospitality! - Ed)

**CONGRATULATIONS**

- To the South Wairarapa Radio Club, ZL2SWR, # 9618 on attaining the following FISTS Awards. Silver (422), Gold (264) and Platinum (411).
- Nigel, ZL2TX, #9040 on attaining the Diamond Award (126).

**WARC 3 BAND ANTENNA****By David Dunn, VK3DBD / G3SCD #3756**

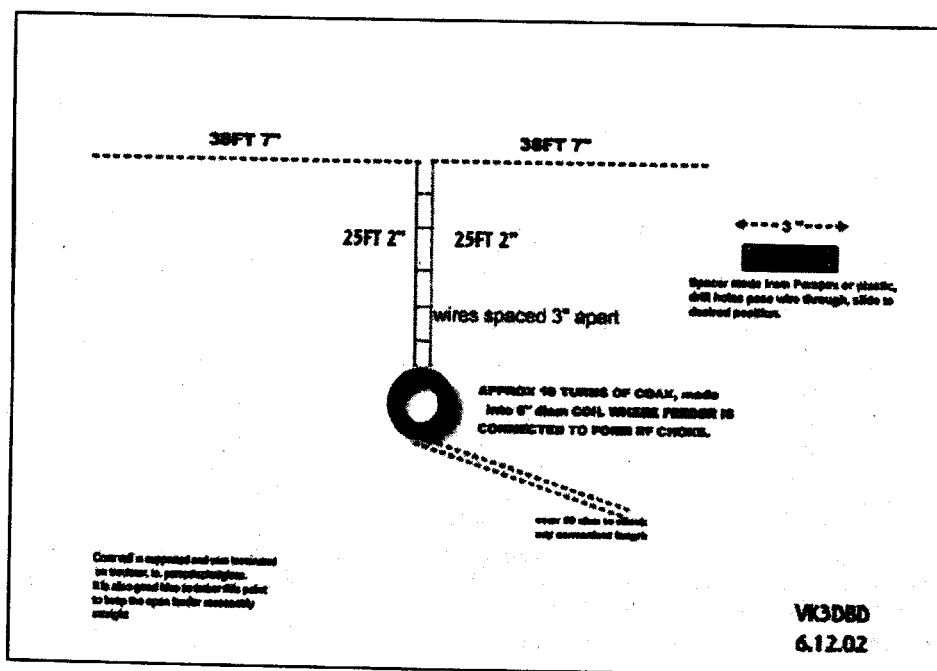
This antenna is simple to make, reliable to use and it works extremely well. It has been in regular use at VK3DBD for the last 5 years and for 5 years or more before that it was effectively used at G3SCD. Yes actually the same bits of wire transported around the world!

I don't remember the origins of the idea, certainly I do not take credit for it, nor the calculations or dimensions. These are taken from my actual antenna. I imagine I found them in some publication in the dim and distant past.

The antenna gives a near perfect SWR on all three WARC bands and needs no ATU - but it is likely that due to individual locations etc a small matching adjustment, such as is provided by the popular built in ATU's (perhaps I should call it ACU) should be provided. My dipole centre is suspended from the top of a pole about 35ft high and the ends are tied off with insulating poly rope to the fence below. The angle of the two sides of the dipole being about 90 degrees to each other, so it is in fact an inverted V.

The coax balun is about ten turns of the coax feeder, that provides an easy entry to the shack and this is wound around a short piece of 6" plastic pipe, suitable secured by tape. This is also tethered to the ground to keep the open wire feeder reasonably taut and respectable. Initially the 10 turns of Coax were a heap system, which worked quite OK, but recently I tidied up the balun and re-wound it on the plastic pipe. I have not noticed any difference.

Current band variations are such that my regular 20m Schedule with UK sometimes is not possible, then we change to the 30m band and using the described antenna below, usually maintain the SKED!

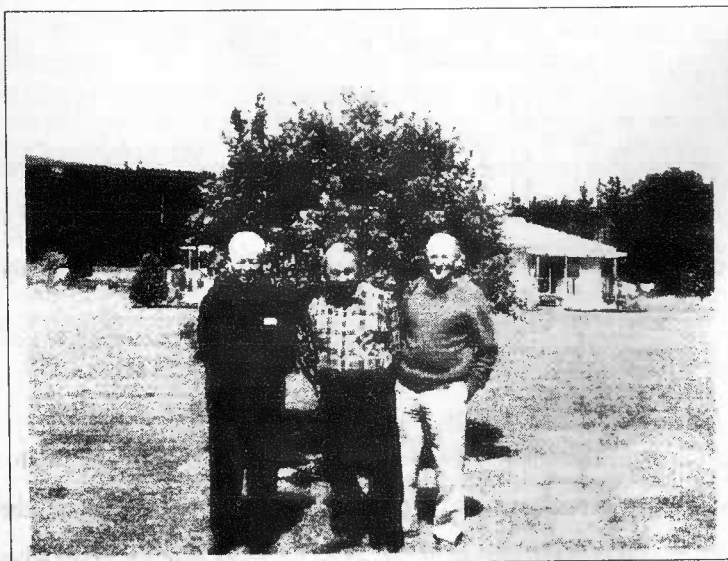
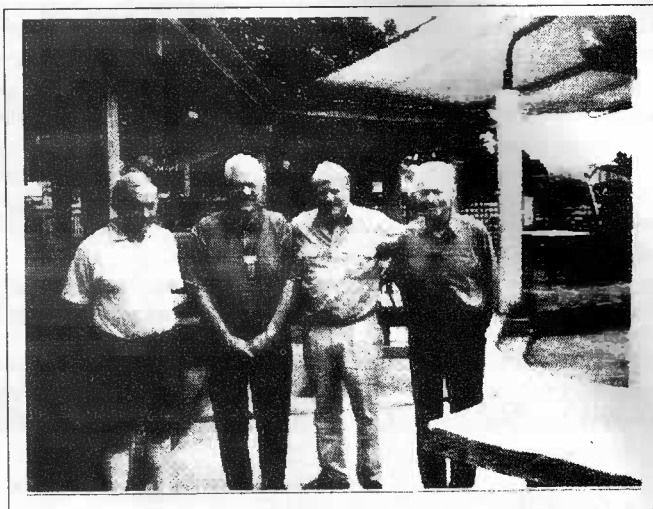


**RECENT DOWN UNDER  
PHOTOGRAPHS 2004.**

**Top Left:** Chris, VK3CGB # 9087 taking a well earned rest from operating VK2FDU/3!

**Top Right:** (L-R) Nigel, ZL2TX #9040, Ralph, ZL2AOH #1073, Bevan, VK4BCM #9053 and Bill, ZL1VS #9603 at a luncheon at the Waikanae Hotel, Waikanae, N.Z.

**Bottom:** (L-R) Bill, ZL1VS #9603, Nigel, ZL2TX #9040 and David, G3KMG # 0124 pictured in front of a "Pohutukawa" tree (New Zealand Christmas Tree) at Nigel's QTH.



Wishing all our readers and their families

A very Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year!

See you all in 2005!

# East Asia news

Editor: Yoshiro 'Jean' Nishimura, JL3SIK/N1VF, Takemidai 4-2-6, Suita city,  
565-0863 Japan. E-mail: [jl3sik@fists-ea.org](mailto:jl3sik@fists-ea.org)

## FISTS-JA7, JE7YTQ started operation

FISTS local club of JA7 area, JE7YTQ started operation in this October. Sugi JK7UST and few members got a new club call. In Japan suffixes that begin with "Y" and "Z" are for club station. They already worked with a few stations in FISTS C2C 2004.

## We are now preparing for FISTS JA national club station

We are now preparing to apply for a new FISTS JA national club station. All JA members can participate in this station. Please see the appendix of JA members with this issue.

## New name competition

Few members in EA subscribed for new name competition. Names listed below are nominated for our newsletter. We should decide new name by vote.

- 1) "FAR EAST"
- 2) "FEAST" means Fists EA Story
- 3) "FEATHER" means Fists EA together
- 4) "morsE Asia"

The winner is decided at the top poll. Please send e-mail to [jl3sik@fists-ea.org](mailto:jl3sik@fists-ea.org) for voting. If you cannot send an e-mail, a paper mail is also acceptable to the address shown above. One vote for one person is allowed. Please indicate your name, callsign and the name you take. Deadline Jan 31, 2005.

## A suggestion of QRS On-the-Air Meeting

It's clearly true that many FISTS EA members are interested in communicating in morse code. Apart from trying to improve your CW skills for accuracy, how about focusing on the information you exchange with the other end? I think, for most of us, especially for non native English speakers, the brain is overloaded to keep up with the flow of code, to comprehend the receiving sentences and to prepare for the next transmission. It's too much for beginners to do these at the same time! So I suggest to have a QRS On-the-Air Meeting a week or two to



focusing on only the communication in English. This might not be good to improve your head-copy skills, however, I think this kind of practice is necessary for us in addition to improving de-coding skills. The OAM can be divided into two separate meetings, the one is QRS, and the other is slightly QRQ. We don't need to have any particular rules for the QRS part except that the stations can only send code less than a certain speed, say 12 WPM. Other than that, you can send anything you want to. The meeting does not have to be a big one. It's just enough that a few stations get on the air. Doesn't that sound interesting? The question is who can take role of the control station for the OAM...

Jun JM1JOT

We would like to inform you that Nao, JJ1XET/3 kindly joined the EA staff in charge of On-the-Air meeting (OAM). If you have any suggestion about OAM, please contact him.

### **The first CW net (OAM) will start on December 20**

Hello Everyone,

Jun/JM1JOT has asked me to start an informal CW net for anyone wishing to practice English QSOs. The speed will be quite slow, 12-15 wpm and everyone is invited to join in. I will act as controller at first and we will see how it goes (I am not very experienced as net control). BV and JA wishing to contact each other may find it easiest through me. The net will take the form of 9V1VV first calling FEA then taking a list of stations wishing to participate. Then 9V1VV will call you each in turn and ask who you want to talk to. Then when you finish talking to your friend, you hand back to 9V1VV.

When?

Every Monday at 1200 UTC (2100 JST), starting 20 December 2004.

Where? Primary 14050 +/- QRM, or secondary 10130 +/- QRM.

See you there and let's hope for an enjoyable and relaxed time!

73 de John 9V1VV

## **About EA chapter**

### **New members**

15010 BM1BAE Will

15011 BM1BNY Lin

15100 JE7YTQ FISTS-JA7

## **FROM OSL Bureau**

Please see our newsletter volume 1 for details.

Mailing address of the EA QSL bureau is:

**FISTS EAST ASIA QSL Bureau**

**Kosuke Nakamura - JM6FMW**

**2-9-2-201 Nakakoshima,**

**Nagasaki 850-0836, JAPAN**

**Please note that the address of EA bureau has been changed!!!**

## **FISTS EA calling frequencies**

FISTS EA calling frequencies are proposed as follows. They are almost same as other chapters'.

30m: 10.118/10.138 (\*1)

20m: 14.058

17m: 18.085

15m: 21.058

12m: 24.918

10m: 28.058/28.158 (\*2)

(\*1) 10.118MHz is sometimes used by fixed or DXpedition stations, and is outside of the Taiwanese frequency allocation. BVs are allowed to use 10.130 to 10.150.

(\*2) BVs are allowed to use above 28.100.

160m, 80m, and 40m are narrow and crowded in Japan, so the calling frequencies for these bands are not proposed for now.

### **References:**

BV frequencies and power

<http://www.ctarl.org.tw/bv5ya/freqpowr.htm> (Chinese; Big5)

JA Band Plans

[http://www.jarl.or.jp/English/6\\_Band\\_Plan/japanese%20bandplan.pdf](http://www.jarl.or.jp/English/6_Band_Plan/japanese%20bandplan.pdf) (PDF)

# From our friends

## John, VK4TJ sent a suggestion for us

Konichi-wa, Jean San:

Congratulations on your new FISTS chapter, and your first issue of the EA Newsletter. Ralph, ZL2AOH kindly forwarded copies to all of us in the ZL/VK chapter so that we know what you are up to.

Some random thoughts that might serve as topics, or help you fill up issues 2 and onwards...

1) I assume at some point you will be going into some of the FISTS awards.

Readers with web access will certainly want to view:

<http://www.fists.org/awards.html>

The best part of the FISTS awards program for those of us in this part of the world is:

a) They're free. No having to source foreign currency.

b) They do not require QSL cards. Postal expenses will not eat up your ham budget!

c) They can be applied for via e-mail. No delays and the service is prompt and friendly (as you would expect from a fellow FISTS member!).

2) Along the lines of number 1, there are quite a few ZL/VK FISTS members currently working on their Century Club award. With the sunspot cycle approaching minimum, I'm afraid our world of possible contacts does shrink a little. Fortunately, the ZL/VK path to Asia is one that is holding up well, despite poor conditions. Please encourage your members to make some noise on the FISTS frequencies, particularly in our late afternoon on 20 metres. They will be warmly received indeed! It's not QUITE like rare DX, but any "fresh meat" is always made to feel extremely welcome! Be sure to call "CQ FISTS", not just a general CQ, as some of our members are very focussed on completing award goals they have set for themselves, and may not respond to a general call. Many of us leave a receiver tuned to 14058 kHz all day, so it's best to stay as close to there as you can, even if it means waiting your turn for the frequency to become free.

3) Because the Asia/ZL-VK path is holding up so well, your members are uniquely well placed to pursue our "Fists Down Under" Award. See:

<http://fistsdownunder.morsekeys.com/aboutfdu.html> for details.

ZL2AOH reports that only one member outside VK/ZL has obtained claimed this prestigious award. You could be next, but you had better hurry, as I am aware of several very keen US

stations that are not going to give up without a fight!

4) Although your chapter has not designated 80 & 40 metre calling frequencies, your members might want to monitor 3528 & 7028 kHz occasionally, as these frequencies are heavily used by ZL/VK members, particularly in the evenings. The 40-metre path to JA, in particular, is very reliable. We have the same problems as you with band congestion, but if we keep the frequency constantly busy, others will respect our use of it, and leave us to our strange pursuits.

5) You might wish to publish e-mail addresses for your members where they are available. During these times of lean pickings on HF, many of us have resorted to e-mailing other FISTS members for skeds to complete various awards, or even just casual chats. Members should be encouraged to keep their details (including e-mail) up to date on: [www.qrz.com](http://www.qrz.com) as well, of course. I wouldn't put the e-mail addresses up on a web site, as that will undoubtedly attract spam, but having them available in a PDF for download is probably pretty safe.

There you have it - some random thoughts. -I know what it is like to try to fill a newsletter on your own, Jean san. Hopefully, the above helps in some small way....

73

John Kirk VK4TJ

### My challenge to get my first FISTS award - by Nao, JJ1XET

I joined FISTS EA last April. When I received very beautiful membership certificate from Jun JM1JOT, my challenge to get my first FISTS award was started. The first FISTS member I contacted was Craig K7UIE. He called CQ FISTS at 14.058 MHz. When I sent my FISTS number to him, I felt big pleasure and was proud of it.

Then last September, as mentioned by Geo in the KEY NOTE October 2004, I contacted GX0IPX at 21.058 MHz. Can you imagine how I was surprised when I received his FISTS number 1? I sent "You are 24th FISTS member for me, and yet my total point is 43." He kindly informed me "By this QSO, you get extra 5 point." Maybe I can't forget this QSO forever.

The end of last October, I found CQ FISTS at 21.057 MHz by ZL6FF. This is the call of FISTS Down Under New Zealand Club, and the operator was Stan. At the same time, he sent me ZL2SWR, the call of South Wairarapa Radio Club and ZL2BLQ, his personal call. I got  $5+3+2=10$  point during this one QSO! My point is yet under 100 and my challenge is continuing.

I'm very enjoying QSO with FISTS members. If you hear my "CQ FISTS," please call me.

## **Jun. K6KF/JM1JOT sent his recent state**

This past summer, I decided to change my jobs and left Silicon Valley where I lived in for four years. My new QTH is located in Southern California. The city is clean and organized which is good, but the big difference is my ham environment. My antenna in my San Jose house was an R-8 vertical. That worked pretty well and helped me obtain my first DXCC. Now I rent an apartment here in this new location. It was good that I could find one on the third floor with an open roof, but no space for my vertical obviously. So I bought a pair of mobile whips to make a shortened dipole. I find this antenna works better than I expected. Although the usable bandwidth is narrow, the SWR is low 1.1 without the built-in tuner so that I can run up to 100W. I worked some JA stations at about 50W with it. The biggest issue is that I need to assemble/disassemble this antenna because I don't want to have people's attention, but it should definitely be better than being forced to QRT...

Jun K6KF

## **Faqs**

If you have any questions about FISTS or FISTS-EA, please do not hesitate to contact us.

E-mail: [question@fists-ea.org](mailto:question@fists-ea.org)

### **Q1. What is FISTS?**

The FISTS Club (International Morse Preservation Society) was founded in 1987 by Geo Longden, G3ZQS of Darwen, Lancs England, after recognising a need for a club in which veteran operators would help newcomers and less-experienced operators learn and improve CW proficiency.

During the first year, membership reached 300, most of whom were in Great Britain and Europe. World wide, FISTS members now number over 5000 members, growing by up to 100 each month.

### **Q2. What is FISTS-EA?**

The East Asia Chapter was formed in 2004 by a few BVs and JAs to provide East Asian members with various services in their native languages.

### **Q3. How to join FISTS-EA?**

If you want to join us, please email to following address with your:

- Callsign or SWL number (required, if you're a radio amateur or a SWL)
- On air name (required)

- **Full name** (required)
- **Mailing Address** (required)
- **E-Mail Address** (required, if you have)
- **Phone Number** (optional)
- **Year of Birth** (optional)

[join@fists-ea.org](mailto:join@fists-ea.org)

#### **Q4. How much is the subscription? How can I pay?**

FISTS is not tied to **any commercial** interests and has no paid employees. BV and JA members **subscribe** to the **UK produced** newsletter Keynote and a local supplement FISTS East Asia. All our activities are **funded** entirely from modest annual fees of 5 USD (Credit Card only, using PayPal) or 500 JPY (Bank only). If you have any inquiries about payment, please contact [ja2dna@fists-ea.org](mailto:ja2dna@fists-ea.org).

## **From the editor**

### **Waiting for your contribution! I need your help!**

Your assistance is necessary to make up our newsletters. I am always waiting for your contribution. Any kinds of manuscript are acceptable. For example, essays, introducing yourselves, shacks, rigs, keys, etc. If you write, please send it to [jl3sik@fists-ea.org](mailto:jl3sik@fists-ea.org) as plain text or MS WORD format. Thank you for your attention.

## **Contact Information**

<http://www.fists-ea.org/>

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**Events & planning:** Hiroyuki Osugi, JK7UST

**OSL manager:** Kosuke Nakamura, JM6FMW

**Webmaster:** Akinori Harry Shibata, JL3AMK [webadmin@fists-ea.org](mailto:webadmin@fists-ea.org) for JA, James Chung, BV2WS for BV.

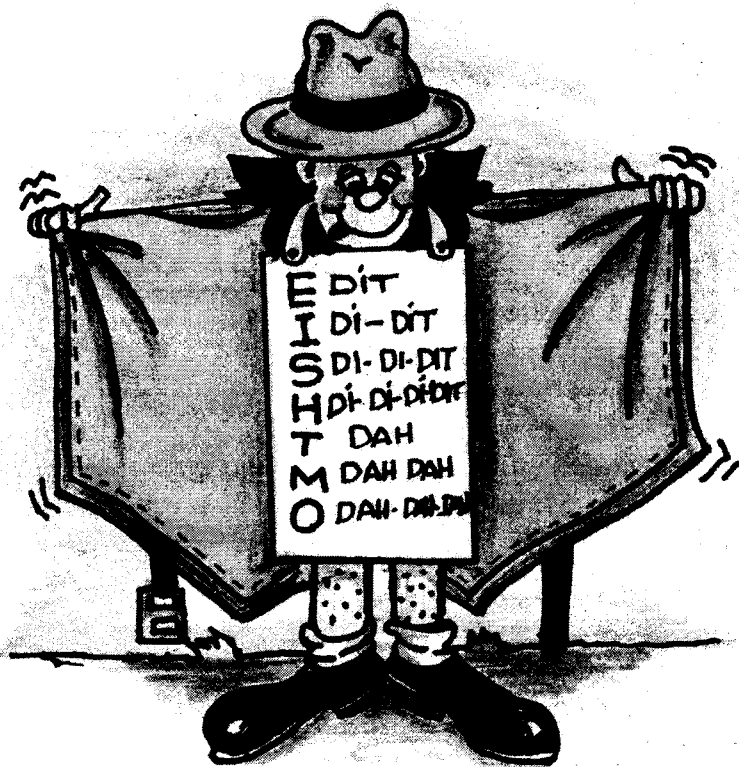
**Membership:** Yoshiro "Jean" Nishimura, JL3SIK [jl3sik@fists-ea.org](mailto:jl3sik@fists-ea.org)

**Chief editor:** Yoshiro "Jean" Nishimura, JL3SIK [jl3sik@fists-ea.org](mailto:jl3sik@fists-ea.org) for JA, James Chung, BV2WS for BV.

**Editor:** Kenji Rikitake, JJ1BDX/3

**On-the-Air Meeting:** Naoyasu Hosoda, JJ1XET/3 [jj1xet@fists-ea.org](mailto:jj1xet@fists-ea.org)

# "MORSE TIPS & QUIPS"



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You may order using Paypal. The email address to use for Paypal is fists@tir.com. In the "comments" box of the Paypal form, please be specific about what you are ordering, since this info will be used to fill your order.

To order by mail, send your order (don't forget to include what color tshirt you want, and the size!) to: Nancy Kott WZBC PO Box 47 Hadley MI 48440, Checks payable to FISTS. Paypal to fists@tir.com

**HOW DO I GET/SEND FISTS QSL CARDS Via BURO?** Keep SASEs in stock with the FISTS QSL Bureau. Stan Reas K4UK runs the Bureau. Questions? Email k4uk@rev.net. Send envelopes to 1020 Long Island Drive, Moneta, Va 24121

**How DO I ORDER FISTS QSL CARDS?** You may use the FISTS logos and get cards from any printer you wish. Cheapqsls.com has made a special FISTS card with special pricing for FISTS members. For ordering information and to see the cards visit <http://www.cheapqsls.com/fists.htm>

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

**HOW DO I APPLY FOR AN OPERATING AWARD?** Dennis Franklin K6DF is the Awards Manager. We have many different operating awards. Dennis's contact information is [fistsawards@comcast.net](mailto:fistsawards@comcast.net) or 4658 Capitan Drive, Fremont, CA 94536-5448.

**HOW DO I OPERATE KN0WCW?** KN0WCW is the USA FISTS Callsign. Members in good standing (meaning, paid up dues) can operate KN0WCW from their home station after getting PERMISSION. To get permission, contact Karl Zuege 2176 DRAKE RD, Bomoseen VT 05732-9799 or kb1dsb@arrl.net. A schedule of operators can be found on the FISTS Web page. Remember, when you're using KN0WCW, you're flying the flag for FISTS, so please operate responsibly.

**HOW DO I VOLUNTEER FOR or GET A CODE BUDDY?** W3HEM, The Historical Electronics Museum Amateur Radio Club members are the volunteers handling the Code Buddy Program. Contact them at Box 746 MS 4015, Baltimore, MD 21203 or Email [W3HEM@arrl.net](mailto:W3HEM@arrl.net). We need ELMERS, please volunteer to be a Code Buddy!! Code Buddy applications are available on line.

**HOW DO I GET MY PHOTO ON THE PHOTO PAGES?** Send a shot of yourself with your face about the size of a quarter to Ken W8ROG 44609 N. Bunker Hill, Dr., Clinton Twp, MI 48038.

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

**HOW DO I GET A COPY OF FISTS PRESENTATION** To give at my local club meeting? It's easy and fun! We send you everything you need for a snazzy 15-20 minute presentation. Contact [kk5qa@kk5na.com](mailto:kk5qa@kk5na.com) Joe Spencer, 3618 Montridge Ct, Arlington TX 76016.

**HOW DO I SUGGEST IDEAS FOR THE WEB PAGE?** Contact Bill [kk4kf@cox.net](mailto:kk4kf@cox.net)

**HOW DO I ORDER A FISTS CLUB ID BADGE?** Our club badge is dark blue, with FISTS logo in gold and your name, FISTS number, callsign, and "Int'l Morse Preservation Society" in white. They are \$8.20 postpaid from The Sign man of Baton Rouge, 879 Castle Kirk Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

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

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