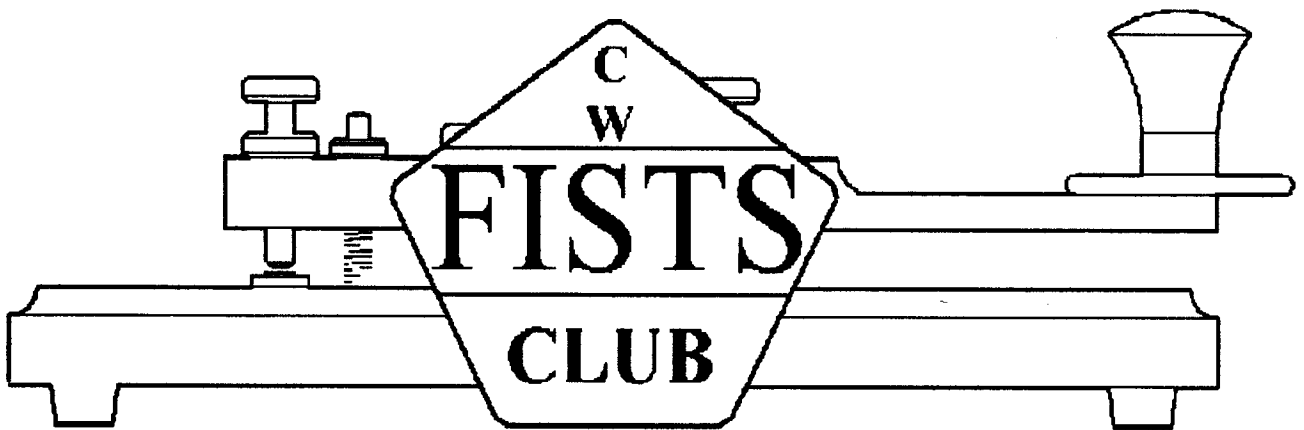


The Keynote

North American Memo
Newsletter of FISTS CW Club
The International Morse Preservation Society



Our Goals:

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

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

FISTS CW CLUB
NORTH AMERICAN MEMO
THE INTERNATIONAL MORSE
PRESERVATION SOCIETY

NANCY KOTT WZ8C PO Box 47 HADLEY MI 48440

NANCY @TIR.COM PHONE: (810) 797-2033

FAX (810) 797-5808

Hi FISTS,

What a crazy year this has been, and it's not even half over! I apologize for the lack of Keynotes, but there were several changes in the Reference Issue. I decided to pull it at the last minute, and make the changes so we didn't have a lot of headaches for the rest of the year.

We are also starting up a new General Upgrade Program, featuring a new K7QO General Upgrade Program course, available on a CD - made of mp3 files. These files will NOT play on a regular CD player. You have to use the one in your computer, or perhaps your vehicle has one, or they are available from places like Walmart, Best Buy, etc for under \$20. I also have restocked with a big batch of K7QO beginner's code course.

Chuck, K7QO, pointed out that there are tens of thousands of new Novice, Techs and Tech+'s who, because of the licensing restructuring, now have privileges in the CW bands that they didn't before. We want to encourage these hams to use their privileges and upgrade. Chuck put the General Exam written question pool on CD in Morse code, starting out slowly and working up to about 20 wpm. It's not a beginner CD because it doesn't have the letter repetition, but it is excellent practice, and even a good refresher for those who have been licensed a while. I was surprised how much of the question pool topics I had forgotten about when I listened to it!

To get a K7QO Beginner Course, or General Upgrade Course, send \$1 to FISTS, PO Box 47, Hadley MI 48440. A return label is appreciated. I'm doing it this way instead of an SASE because people were sending in all sorts of weird envelopes with incorrect postage and I was spending hours at the PO each week getting them weighed and often putting extra postage on them. \$1 will cover the mailer, postage and help defray the cost of the disk.

To encourage Novice/Tech activity, FISTS is offering two new operating awards. The first one is ONLY for Novice/Techs who work 25 FISTS members in the Novice/Tech parts of the band (CW, of course). The second one is for FISTS members who work Novice/Techs in the Novice/Tech subbands. N/T's who are FISTS are worth 2 points, non-FISTS N/T's are worth 1 point. We don't have a log ready on-line yet, but will have one in the Reference Issue, too (another reason I haven't printed the Reference Issue). Basic info will be required for the contact to be legit, including the date, band, RST, name, QTH, Call worked, license class and FISTS number, if applicable. The starting date for this award is MAY 18, 2009.

Let's all be Elmers and encourage these new people to use their privileged - it will benefit all of us, and Morse code, in the long run. 73 88 33 Nancy WZ8C

When you have a question about FISTS, go to the source for the correct answer.

Posting a question on a chat room or email reflector may result in a lot of opinions, but your best bet is to ask a FISTS volunteer or look in the reference issue.

Please put the word 'FISTS' somewhere in the title of your email.

This will help the volunteer recognize that your email is important and not spam.

For questions about:

Awards and Certificates contact

Dennis Franklin, K6DF,
fistsawards@comcast.net : 4658
CAPITAN DR, Fremont CA 94536

The QSL Bureau contact

Stan Reas, K4UK, k4uk@rev.net :
1020 LONG ISLAND DR, Moneta VA
24121-1952

Our club call KN0WCW contact

Karl Zuege, KB1DSB,
HMC FMF_Karl@peoplepc.com :
2176 DRAKE RD, Bomoseen VT
05732

The membership roster, call changes, name changes contact

Ed Hayes, N7CFA, n7cfa@msn.com :
2628 LILAC ST, Longview WA 98632-
3525

To get an application or sample

Keynote sent to a friend contact

Jim Ranieri, AA9LS,
aa9ls@turbotoads.com : 33778
REBECCA RD, Kingston IL 60145

Web page changes, getting your personal or club webpage linked, etc contact

Webmaster Bill Myers, KK4KF,
kk4kf@cox.net

Club presentation packets contact

Joe Spencer, KK5NA,
kk5na@kk5na.com : 3618
MONTRIDGE CT, Arlington TX 76016

Code Buddy volunteers and buddies contact

Nick Yokanovich, K3NY, & The
National Electronics Museum
Amateur Radio Club, K3NEM.
K3NY@arrl.net or Box 1693 MS 4015,
Baltimore, MD 21203

Sprints contact

Dan Sheperd, N8IE,
W8PIG@yahoo.com : 1900
PITTSFIELD ST, Kettering OH 45420

Get Your Feet Wet Weekend /G3ZQS

Memorial Straight Key Contest

contact

Lee Hallin, N7NU, hallinl@lanecc.edu
: 3413 WALTON LN, Eugene OR
97408

Ordering supplies: Irene Kott W08E

44609 North Bunker Hill Dr, Clinton

Twp MI 48038 or paypal to

fists@tir.com.

Irene has no email capability. Some
shirt sizes are sold out - check web
page.

All other questions, including
supplies, tapes for the blind,
address changes, general
membership questions and
articles for the Keynote contact
Nancy Kott WZ8C,
nancy@tir.com; PO Box 47,
Hadley MI 48440, phone 810-797-
2033, fax 810-797-5808.

Welcome to the New FISTS

Number, call, Name, State, Sponsor

14257 AA4N JAMES TN
 14258 N8COO Mark OH
 14259 VE1THO Anthony NS
 14260 AA0GK Brian AR
 14261 KG4PRK PETE IA
 14262 KC2SNK JIM NJ
 14263 WA1LMD TOM FL
 14264 KA9BHD BOB IL W7GVE
 14265 KB5LT DOUG OK
 14266 KG7U THOMAS WA
 14267 K0EMG Bruce KS
 14268 VE3FUJ BRION ON
 14269 KU8O RUSS OH
 14270 K6HT Henry CA
 14271 KE5VMO NIC OK
 14272 KD5MM MIKE TX
 14273 N9GXA PAUL IN
 14274 W5EIY BILL OK
 14275 AI6DX TIM CA
 14276 K7FEL WALLY AZ
 14277 K4UTJ TOM VA WB2FXK
 14278 W0IE Henry KS
 14279 N7DOC Bob MI
 14280 W1MAS Michael MA
 14281 AA8CS Gary OH
 14282 K6TBD JOHN CA
 14283 KE7WOU Charlie AZ
 14284 WB2RCB RON NY
 14285 KJ4HEY LARRY SC
 14286 W6GJB GLEN CA
 14287 AD7FS Scott WA
 14288 W2MGT Michael NJ
 14289 KD0GBM LARRY CO
 14290 N9ND DALE IL
 14291 KI4NGL Roger NC
 14292 WA4GIB Harold SC
 14293 AB7OC Michael OR
 14294 WU1E Chris CT
 14295 N8YDH DARREN MI
 14296 N6IB Ron CA
 14297 KB3FWW RAY MD
 14298 W3ZI MARK VA
 14299 KK4RR Richard NC
 14300 W2RZS RZS ARC NY
 WB2NVR
 14301 WO1O CHUCK FL
 14302 KK9MM CARL NV

Number, call, Name, State, Sponsor

14303 KA9QGH GEOFF IL
 14304 AC0NV MIKE CO
 14305 KA4UPI MARK GA
 14306 WA1YDG LEE MA
 WB2FXK
 14307 N2DCB GEORGE NY
 WB2FXK
 14308 AB4YE BUD KY
 14309 KJ4FFG RON NC
 14310 N4XO DAVID NC
 14311 KA0RJY REG MN
 14312 KC8TEO LLOYD OH
 14313 N2CDV CHARLES NY
 14314 KE5YLU BILL MS
 14315 KL2LZ DAN AK
 14316 KB2PIZ MARK NY
 14317 VA3RNJ Ryan on
 14318 W3FDK ROLAN MD
 14319 N2JHZ FLORIAN NY
 14320 K3BQT HARRY PA
 14321 AJ8MH JOE MI
 WA3HIC
 14322 K5MMH Michael TX
 WA3HIC
 14323 W2JEK DON NJ
 14324 NA6DX ROG CA
 14325 WF4J BROCK VA
 14326 WB8FLE MAX VA
 N3AO
 14327 KC8ZTJ JOHN MI
 14328 N6DXM DAVE CA
 14329 W7AUM CHUCK WA
 14330 KU9L DAVE FL
 14331 KC9QQ FRED IN
 14332 K1SHR KEN NH
 14333 VE3ANO Allan ON
 14334 N3GQ Curt VA
 14335 K8RHQ BOB OH
 14336 AF6TB Tom CA
 WB6FRZ
 14337 KD7QOV DICK OR
 14338 KB6WR STEVE CA
 14339 KG5GTX RON VA
 14340 AI4TM BRADLEY MD
 14341 VA7JY JIM BC NAQCC
 14342 KE7LOY BRIAN ID
 14343 KJ4FDV TREY AL
 14344 W1EMM MATT MO
 14345 VE1BFR KEN NS

Number, call, Name, State, Sponsor
 14346 N3IOD Bill DE
 14347 K9BAG PETER IL
 14348 K9CIV Richard IN
 14349 WB0NRE Richard CA
 14350 W4KBL Princeton Ham
 Radio Club KY1LAW
 14351 KJ4CBA BOB FL
 14352 AD4XJ BRIAN SC
 14353 WD8NJR ED FL
 14354 W1WH BILL MA
 14355 W0MRZ Michael IA
 14356 K9YF GREG WI
 14357 KD5YKH DON MS
 14358 W2OU Eldred NJ
 14359 SWL Ken MO AC5SH
 14360 K2GPM DON FL
 14361 K1LKP CARMEN NH
 14362 KF4ZQB WENDY FL
 14363 KE5WNJ STAN TX
 14364 K7YFP GLEN WA
 14365 AC6WX David CA
 14366 N5GLU TOM TX W8VQV
 14367 KD5ZBP JOHN MS
 14368 KC1JB PETE MA
 14369 K5FNG Dave TX
 14370 WA1K JACK CT
 14371 KM5TY GARY CO
 14372 AB2RA JANIS NY
 14373 NA7US Mitch WA
 14374 K7ROH THOMAS ID
 14375 KE7RME BRIAN OR
 14376 K4SPO Paul KY
 14377 WR5RR RON OK
 14378 AJ4LE FRANK FL
 14379 N8BB Werner MI
 14380 WW1U Roger MA
 14381 AD7NT RANDY UT
 14382 AH8S LORENA TX
 14383 AH8T RICKY TX
 14384 K4ORH JOE NC
 14385 WA0DEL DAVE MN
 14386 W4AYF BILL GA
 14387 WD8CRQ ARMIN MI
 14388 AF6DM JIM CA NC6Q
 14389 WA4VTN VIC VA
 14390 K0RAR ROB CO
 14391 KF7ADJ GREG WY
 W7GVE
 14392 KA2CAQ WALTER NY

14393 KJ4KJL JAMES NC
 14394 KB1RVV KEVIN MA
 AD1R
 14395 K0IDS JUDY IA WW0JD
 14396 KD0DCT MONICA IA
 WW0JD
 14397 KD0DCS CALEB IA
 WW0JD
 14398 K0HL KEN ND
 14399 KF7HB ANDREW OR
 14401 KC3OU JON MD
 14402 N3CJD GEORGE OR
 14403 KZ9H ALBERT IN
 14404 WN5S DICK TX
 14405 AE5KM Corey TX
 14406 W8DER Michel MI
 14407 KY1LAW Jonathan KY
 14408 WB2NVR BOB NY
 14409 KI4UXJ KAREN KY
 KY1LAW
 14410 KI4VBA Stephen NC
 14411 NG9Y ROBERT IN
 WB2FXK
 14412 K4VTA DAN KY
 AA4XA
 14413 K7JRC DICK MT

Do you enjoy CW rag-chewing like me? Chances are that if you do, you'll often mention the weather during the QSO and perhaps you send the local temperature? I often send something like this "FB UR WX = HR WX SUNNY TEMP ABT = = = " as I am trying to quickly guesstimate the actual outside temperature - *Darn* I forgot to check the thermometer before getting on the air. Happens every time....

... But no more! ...

This project actually came to life after a fairly expensive commercial wireless thermometer bit the dust. It had been a pain ever since I stumped up the \$39 at a large home improvement franchise. It ate batteries, refused to communicate and finally shorted out causing its own temperature (and mine!) to rise significantly.

So, always conscious of the "true ham spirit" I decided I would make my own but this one wouldn't try to communicate with an indoor display using 432MHz and FM data but directly to my ears on HF and in CW too! So now, all I have to do is tune my main rig before the QSO and listen to the current temperature without venturing outside!

Background

Fortunately, at least in the USA the FCC has seen fit to address the issue of low-power non-licensed transmitters in their Part 15 regulations. The bit that interests us for this project can be found in their OET Bulletin No.63 ("Understanding the FCC Regulations for Low-Power, Non-Licensed Transmitters") and I summarize here:

Home-Built Transmitters that are Not for Sale

Hobbyists, inventors and other parties that design and build Part 15 transmitters with no intention of ever marketing them may construct and operate up to five such transmitters for their own personal use without having to obtain FCC equipment authorization. If possible, these transmitters should be tested for compliance with the Commission's rules. If such testing is not practicable, their designers and builders are required to employ good engineering practices in order to ensure compliance with the Part 15 standards.

Home-built transmitters, like all Part 15 transmitters, are not allowed to cause interference to licensed radio communications and must accept any interference that they receive. If a home-built Part 15 transmitter does cause interference to licensed radio communications, the Commission will require its operator to cease operation until the interference problem is corrected. Furthermore, if the Commission determines that the operator of such a transmitter has not attempted to ensure compliance with the Part 15 technical standards by employing good engineering practices then that operator may be fined up to \$10,000 for each violation and \$75,000 for a repeat or continuing violation.


Looking through these regulations it becomes apparent that a very low power HF transmitter can be employed on a wide range of frequencies for personal use.

To help ensure "good engineering practices" this project uses a small tuned HF oscillator, **NO PA** and **NO ANTENNA** because we don't need them. My measured range with a sensitive HF radio is about 25 ft. Perfect

for in-shack listening. The actual power generated by the oscillator is less than 1 milliwatt so not likely to cause much QRM to anyone, especially operated without an antenna!

On to the good stuff!

At the heart of the project is a miniature computer in a single 8 pin IC. It's the nifty little Atmel ATtiny13 a very low power 8 bit microprocessor with it's own memory, clock, ADC (analog to digital converter) and a variety of configurable

output/input pins. Here's one -small isn't it?

The project uses an LM335 temperature sensor connected to an ADC channel on the micro. This sensor provides 10mV per °K (Kelvin) from which corresponding Celsius and Fahrenheit temperatures are easily obtained.

The HF transmitter is really just a collector-tuned Colpitts oscillator using a junk box crystal. In my version I used a cheap 4.00MHz xtal I salvaged from an old computer. The frequency is certainly not critical but probably should be out of the ham bands, just in case you end up having a QSO on that frequency one day and QRM yourself!

The oscillator draws about 1mA of current key-down and is driven directly from one of the output pins on the ATtiny. The collector-tuned circuit helps to clean up the waveform and prevent too much RF from getting near the microprocessor. I used a 27uH miniature inductor and a 10-60pF variable trimmer and this should ideally be adjusted using a 'scope to observe output (measure at emitter). Just rotating the trimmer until the oscillator starts reliably is probably enough. Harmonics will be present at very low levels but you might find that by tuning to 8.00 MHz or 12.00MHz a

clearer signal will be heard especially at night. You would have to be very close to the oscillator to pick these up, but if you situate the thermometer somewhere near your outside antenna it should work just fine. I wouldn't try a xtal fundamental any higher than perhaps 10-12MHz as you will probably have some chirp. You would also need to alter the tuned circuit to get reliable oscillation at a much higher frequency.

The LM335 sensor has an internal accuracy of 1°K but needs a 10k miniature potentiometer for calibration with respect to operating conditions. You can measure the voltage on pin 3 of the ATtiny and set it to 2.982v at room temperature (25°C). A little experimentation with a real thermometer and patience will help you make it accurate.

The Morse temperature output will be transmitted approximately every minute and will send the Celsius reading followed by a "C" and then the Fahrenheit reading followed by an "F". The speed of the Morse is about 12wpm. All temperatures sent are integers (i.e. whole numbers). This loses a bit of accuracy but is a heck of a lot easier to copy! Negative temperatures are prefixed with the Morse hyphen/minus character: — —

The range of temperatures is from -40°F/-40°C to 127°F/53°C. Temperatures outside of this range will produce a nonsense output but it is unlikely to be an issue unless you happen to live in Antarctica or the Sahara Desert. For those that *do* live in Antarctica or the Sahara, email me and I will endeavor to extend the range for you.

Powering the thermometer is an interesting issue in itself. I believe a lithium PP3 (9V) battery should last for

a few weeks but for longer term you could use six alkaline AA batteries to provide 9V. The 9V is not critical and anything over approximately 6.5V should work fine. Because the total power consumption is around 4mA, a cheap "car charger" 12V solar cell would be an ideal candidate too. The project has an on-board 5V regulator so anything up to about 30v DC is safe to use as long as you observe correct polarity!

Another idea might be to power it via the shack's 12V supply. If you put the thermometer on the outside wall of the shack, you should be able to run the 12V through the wall to it. This would also increase the received volume having it so close to the shack. Of course, it wouldn't really be 'wireless' at this point.

The schematic is shown and a picture of my prototype using perf board. The code is available pre-programmed onto an Atmel ATtiny13 for \$5.00, which includes return postage within the USA. My postal address is here www.qrz.com/k7tmg or I can supply an Intel hex file via e-mail to FISTS members who would like to program the chip themselves. There is no charge for this.

Notes about enclosures

I deliberately haven't suggested an enclosure for this project as I leave that up to you. The sensor needs to be at air temperature to work properly, but not exposed to the elements. You could use a metal "heat sink" (perhaps a galvanized bolt) through a plastic project case as the heat conduction device. A little thermal transfer compound on the sensor and a dab of glue would hold it in place. The electronics need to be in some form of waterproof container for long life. Ideally it should also be mounted in a location that is protected from rain and

direct sunlight. I am still experimenting with enclosures so would be interested to hear suggestions on this. One other caution is that in very cold climates the battery may freeze so you may need to investigate some type of foam insulation to keep it happy.

Although I stated no antenna was necessary, if your unit is very quiet a small wire attached to the PN2222A emitter may help you hear it.

Remember...

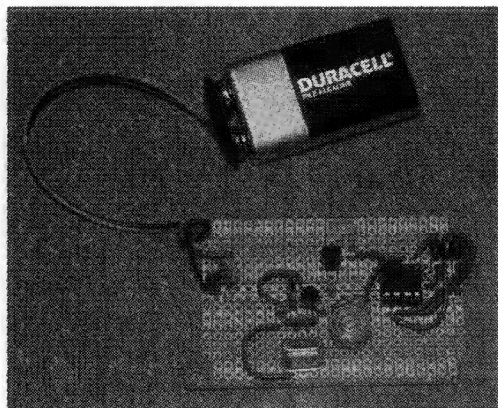
If in doubt, follow the guidelines set out in the Part 15 regs to make sure you are legal. It is not worth losing your amateur license over.

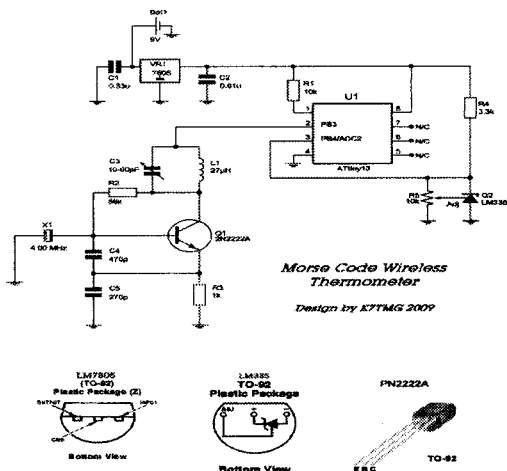
Readers in other countries will have to check your local radio communication laws for determining legality. I believe Canada has a similar scheme to Part 15 but I don't know about others. Check first!

Good luck with the project and I am happy to help or answer questions.

~73~

You can contact me at the following email address k7tmg@arrl.net





uplifting experience. You hung in there, as did I. In the depths of the sunspot cycle, I was inspired!

I then received your unsolicited QSL card. I was reminded of the camaraderie and good will permeated our hobby and decided that it was time to get active again. It was at that point that I ordered some updated literature, called around to see what organizations were still active locally, called a ham friend of mine, proclaimed my comeback, AND ordered some QSL cards.

Some Nice Comments!!

Hi Mike (N4VBV FISTS #8109),

I want to personally thank you for your QSL card and tell you the impact of your QSO and your QSL

15 years and a QTH ago, I was very active as an amateur radio operator. I was active using Morse code and the other digital modes of the day i.e. packet, AMTOR, etc. The move to the new QTH coincided with a new more time consuming job. Ham radio fell by the wayside. About two years ago, I put up a wire antenna (a Windom from Radio Works) and unpacked the old Kenwood TS450. I set up a very spartan station. I would tune around the bands, copy a little code but failed to do much else. I actually put the radio equipment away for about 6 months as I thought that I really wouldn't get involved again. I was going to take the antenna down too. Well, fortunately I didn't. I put the station equipment back together and this fall began to "piddle" again. It wasn't until that day in December that I actively tried to carry on a QSO. The QSO midst the QSB and QRN was quite the

I am pleased to tell you that this QSL to you is the first card I've sent out in over 15 years. Although I am still working at the same very consuming position, I am allocating radio time in bigger hunks. I've been in contact with and will join the local radio club, improve my CW in anticipation of Field Day and I anxiously await a newly purchased interface for my radio and computer. I guess in the day-to-day operation of our hobby it's difficult to know what impact we have. For your impact on me, I thank you!

By the way, did I thank you for the QSL card?

73, Gary AA8CS

Thanks for being a fine example for FISTS, Mike! We need more QSOs like this on the air and less sniping on the computers. And, Gary, we hope to hear you on the air - remember, when you've worked a FISTS, you've worked a friend.



Code Practice on the Computer

Chris K6DBG has put a source of slowly changing CW at various speeds on one of his servers.

He says, "Mostly what it provides is the last 15 CNN headlines, at speeds from 30-13 WPM. I run it in the background when I'm working on the computer so I'm always listening to code. I also have some of the W1AW code practice files, as well as the practice tables from NN9U's article in QST.

"This is an alternative to the various sites that turn text into an mp3 file to load onto your ipod - it just works via a browser.

Try it out: point your browser at <http://cw.dimebank.com:8080/> and see what you think."

Telegrapher Interview Questions

by Bob Grubic, NC6Q

I'm about to do some research on the past use of commercial telegraphy throughout the Republic of Panama in Central America. I have discovered that some former telegraphers—*telegrafistas*—are still alive and well in Panama. In fact, I have already interviewed two of them in the province of Coclé. I have learned that the telegraphic system in Panama utilized the American Morse code and not the International Morse code. It was also in use up to the year 1979!

I plan to follow up these interviews with further interviews and meetings in a few months and to try to interview as many other *telegrafistas* as I can. I have my own list of basic questions and areas of interest, but I thought I would solicit from the ham

CW community other questions that I may not have thought of.

If you have any suggestions or recommended questions you'd like to send my way, please email them to me at nc6q@arrl.net. Tnx es 73

Use Caution around Mercury

From Garry Nichols FISTS #3846

Just discovered the issue 7 & 8 Keynote that got buried on my desk. The story on salvaging electronic parts from burned out compact fluorescent bulbs should probably have noted that the glass elements contain mercury. All types of fluorescent lights use a small amount of pure mercury. The better quality ones use only about 5 mg.

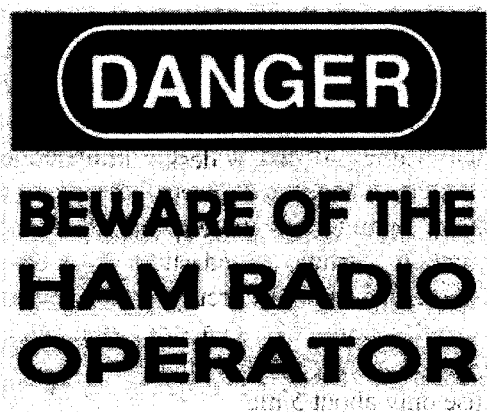
If the glass is not broken, there will be no problem. However, it is advisable to try to recycle the bulbs rather than toss them away. Eventually, this will probably become a requirement.

The net result of using fluorescents is a reduction on mercury released into the environment, even though some is potentially added by release from broken or thrown out compact fluorescent (CFL) bulbs. The CFLs will use much less electricity over their long lifetime and require less electric generation, quite a bit of which comes from coal fired generating plants on the national electric grid. Burning coal releases significant amounts of mercury into the air.

Although improperly handling a broken fluorescent bulb (of any type) will likely not harm anyone outright, there are guidelines that are recommended by the EPA: <http://www.epa.gov/hg/spills/>

The highlights are:

- Open a window if possible and leave the area for 20 minutes.
- DO NOT USE A VACUUM TO CLEAN UP. It will blow mercury into the air in fine droplets.
- Pick up and sweep gently.



By Joe W4CBJ

An engineer since 1949, "Anything I could learn, I would learn." Example: started as a draftsman. "How can I learn how to letter better?" Answer: what you need to do is purposely "distort" your letters!

Just a little bit of instruction was all Joe needed -- there's something interesting about this. This speaks to our core idea and habit of "learning to learn."

Joe also recalls the different language deployed by different types of engineers. Talks about how engineers communicate between specializations--mechanical, structural, and chemical engineers.

Ham radio operator narrative: Attended my first amateur radio meeting in the Maplewood section of Malden, MA with my brother Leonard W1LSC (SK) in March 1938. I was eleven years old. I can still remember that day! Those in attendance were older than I and used

terminology that I did not understand. This was such an interesting endeavor that I was determined right there and then to pursue it with all the vigor that I could muster. At the tender age of eleven, one must have a mentor and attempt to study as best as possible, with all the other schoolwork I had to do.

Fortunately, one of my brother's friends, Robert G. Mugnai W1KLW (SK) took an interest in helping that little kid who was so interested in learning about amateur radio. Besides learning the theory and technical details...I was required to learn the Morse code. Without further ado, I studied the code characters and numbers by sight. Later, I learned that this was not the correct method. To properly hear and interpret the message...one has to hear and write...not see and write. After all, you hear what emanates from a radio, not see it !

The Morse code was formulated by Samuel Finley Breeze Morse (1791-1872), long, long ago. It was designed to be used on the telegraph lines and later for rapid transmission of messages, for radio. In time, it became an International language. To save time, each letter was carefully compared to the frequency of use in the English language. The most often used letter "E" became the shortest code symbol, which is a dot (dit). The often-used letter "T" became the symbol dash (dah). The code is spoken by using 'dit' and 'dah' instead of dot and dash.

In a way, the code is similar to text messaging (TM) insofar as abbreviations are used instead of spelling out each word. For example, there is a standard "Q" code, used in all countries that consist of a three-letter abbreviation, the first letter start with Q. QTH means location. QTH? means: "What is your location?" It is entirely possible to transmit a message to a foreign ham,

even if he doesn't know a word of English.

The similarities to text messaging (TM) end there, because in order to understand a text message you have to know the language in which it was sent. As far as message speed goes...the old Morse code is faster than TM. What? Yes, it is faster. In order to prove this point I will refer you to an article in the January 2009 issue of QST magazine, pages 54 thru 58 authored by William E. Packard, Ph.D, NN9N. In part, he states, "Morse code, though very old, is still a reasonably fast way to communicate for experienced operators. This was illustrated on a Jay Leno program in which two adult ham radio operators had a sending race with two young text-messaging champions. At the word "GO!" each team began sending the same message at the same time but the code operators, seemingly effortlessly, won over the text message champs."

The video clip can be viewed at: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=AhsSgcsTMd4> If you notice, Jay Leno asked one of the ham operators, "How old is the Morse code?" He replied, "170 years old." At the end of the session, Jay states to the TM champ: "I'm sorry, you were beaten by 140 year old technology."

"A similar contest took place in Australia between a 93 year old retired telegrapher and a 13 year old girl using her text message phone. Again, the old technology beat the new and by a wide margin." reference: "Old Tech Versus HIGH-tech," World, May 2005 p.11, www.worldmag/articles/10686.

I often hear the sad lament, "They don't use the code anymore." I reply, "You are entirely correct. They don't, but I do."

You cannot imagine how much fun it is to use low power (QRP) to contact stations around the world. Often, the wattage used is five watts or less. It is truly amazing what records have been established using low power although the legal limit is fifteen-hundred (1,500) watts on most bands.

Starting with the most elementary test, I advanced from Novice, Technician, Tech Plus, General, Advanced and finally to Amateur Extra, the highest achievable. Armed with the knowledge learned, I took and passed the second class commercial radio and then the General Radio Operators License (GROL). Details of this may be viewed on QRZ.com. My FCC assigned radio callsign is W4CBJ.

Antenna Wax

Mike, N9JIY, #1282

A friend and I got hold of a bunch of little containers of wax lube for clarinets. Put them out on a swapfest table with a sign that had the attached copy on it. Lots of curiosity & questions. Almost some believers.

P&M Antenna Wax

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YOU KNOW RF energy travels the SURFACE of antenna conductors.

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YOU KNOW that for tiny electrons, EVERY small conductor surface imperfection is a HUGE pothole. EVERY dirt particle is a boulder.

YOU KNOW these electron potholes and boulders slow RF and waste precious RF energy traveling along antenna conductors!

FINALLY, YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!! GIVE YOUR antennas the P&M Antenna Wax treatment to:

- * REMOVE electron BOULDERS
- Surface dirt particles
- * FILL electron POTHOLEs - Surface pits and cracks
- * INCREASE RADIATED RF ENERGY
- * SLASH THROUGH QRN
- * SMASH THROUGH QRM

WITH P&M ANTENNA WAX, YOU TOO CAN BE A BIG GUN. Just dip a cloth in quality P&M Antenna Wax. Apply to ALL antenna surfaces. Polish to a smooth finish with light strokes of a clean soft cloth. Satisfaction guaranteed.

From Ray K9IT #13580

Shortly after graduation from high school in 1956, I took a correspondence course in radio repair. Some time later, I was given a radio that had quit working and that evening, after I somehow had it working, I noticed it had a second band, marked "short wave" something not on any radio I had seen before. I had tuned in a female voice reading the news in English. Upon completing the news she said, "You are tuned to Radio Brazzaville," A check of the atlas showed Brazzaville was located on the Congo River in Africa!

Little did I know that was the beginning of an interest in radio that is still strong after nearly fifty-five years. I soon joined the Newark News Radio Club and the International Short Wave League. After acquiring a Hammarlund HQ-145, I spent many happy hours in the coastal stations with their messages to ships, and

that is the way I learned Morse code, since that was the mode they used. I ended up with loggings and QSLs from over a hundred countries from these stations.

Meanwhile, my twin brother also had the DXing bug and he was mostly interested in listening to the ham radio bands. One day in 1967 he announced that he was going to St. Louis and take the test for his ham license and wanted me to go along. He became WA9UES and I got WA9UET. A couple years later, we both got the Extra license, he changed to K9UE, and I became K9IT.

The first station was a Johnson Ranger and a Hammarlund HQ-180A. My first QSO was WA9UEV in Wisconsin, who happened to be next after me in the callbook! I have changed gear several times (I Presently use a Ten Tec Omni 6) but one thing that has remained constant and that is my use of CW. All of my QSOs have been using Morse code; I have never made a contact on phone. In fact, I have never owned a microphone.

I spent two years in the US Army, stationed at Kagnew Station, Asmara, Ethiopia. I used the GI Bill to get my Radio Telephone Second Class License. About that time, my neighbor, who was in the construction business, needed another worker and I spent many years with him. I later got a job as a rural letter carrier and retired from the Postal Service in 2002.

I have been a member of FISTS for over a year and have had many enjoyable QSOs using my small collection of straight keys.

International Morse Preservation Society



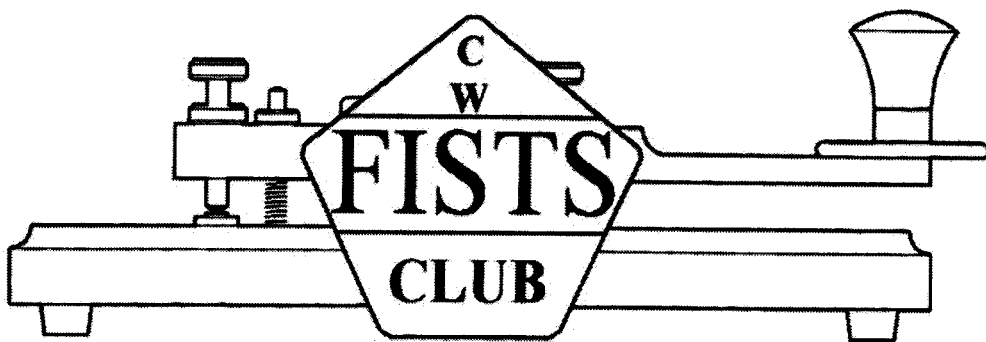
KEY NOTE



Founded in 1987 by the late Geo Longden, G3ZQS

Recommended calling QRGs: 1.818, 3.558, 7028, 10.118, 14.058, 21.058, 28.058

SPRING EDITION 2009



Club Goals

*Further the use of CW
Encourage newcomers to use Morse Code
Engender Friendships among members*

And remember
"Accuracy Transcends Speed , Courtesy at all Times"

EDITOR: M0BMN

Paul Webb, 40 Links Road, Penn, W-TON, WV4 5RF

E-Mail :- paul@fists.co.uk

FISTS UK WEB SITE URL:- [HTTP://WWW.FISTS.CO.UK](http://www.fists.co.uk)

"When You've Worked A FISTS, You've Worked A Friend."

FISTS Who's Who?

Many members that I meet at rallies often comment on they have no idea of who does what and so don't know who to contact for their questions. I Hope this helps.

Editor: Paul Webb M0BMN E-mail paul@fists.co.uk Contact Details:-
40 Links Road, Penn,
Wolverhampton WV4 5RF
Tel : 01902 338973

If you have any comments on the content or distribution of Keynotes then I'm your man! Also if you need info about Rallies that we are attending or if you have any articles for publication.

Treasurer and Membership Secretary
John Griffin M0CDL E-mail John@fists.co.uk
35 Cottage Street,
Kingswinford DY6 7QE

If you have questions about subs due or membership applications the please contact John for help.

Activity Manager: Robert Walker M0BPT Email Activitys@fists.co.uk
125, Devereux Road,
West Bromwich., B70 6RQ.

Any comments and feedback about any of the Activities that FISTS run or information for inclusion in the contests and activities section of the newsletter can be sent to Rob.

QSL Manager: Chuck Spence M0AVW E-mail m0avw1@ntlworld.com
Contact Details:-
32 Woodford Walk
Harewood Park,
Thornaby., TS17 0LT

QSL cards and questions about the FISTS QSL Buro should be addressed to Chuck who looks after the Sub managers for different calls

News Group / Forum Manager M0BLT
Mark Waldon E-mail forum@fists.co.uk

Mark looks after the Yahoo group FISTS and can help with any problems you may have with accessing the forum or issues arising from it.

Club Sales Officer: Anne Webb Email Sales@fists.co.uk
40 Links Road, Penn ,
Wolverhampton, WV4 5RF

If you're looking for club badges, QSL cards ,car stickers etc Anne's your Man, err Woman Hi.

There are other people that help with the running of FISTS.
We have a number of QSL Sub managers that are working hard in the background to keep fists alive and well.

G4's.
Mr Jim Steel - M0ZAK
6 CENTRAL AVENUE
Shepsted
LE12 9HP

G3's
Mr Grant Merrils - G0UQF
2 East Street
Darfield
Barnsley
S73 9RE

G1,G2,G5,G6,G7,G8
& Specials.GB,GX etc.
Mr Rob Walker - M0BPT
125 Devereux Road
West Bromwich
B70 6RQ

G0's
Mr Selwyn Auty
3 Rochford Cres
Boston
PE21 9AE

M0's, M5's, M3's 2E0's etc
Mr Glenn Waring - M0AYI
7 Tynedale Terrace.
Annfield Plain
Stanley
Durham
DH9 7TZ

Wales & SWL
Mrs Mandy Spence
32 Woodford Walk
Thornaby
Cleveland
TS17 0LT

EU &DX members. If you wish to receive any qsl cards from stations you have worked, could you please send postage in either UK£, US\$, or Euro to M0AVW. 73. Chuck.

Subscription Information

A number of members have contacted me to ask the amount to pay for their annual subs, and what by what methods they can make payment.

All subscriptions will be from April to April, but if your subs fall due before April 2009 your in luck. Pay by the due date but your subs will be covered upto April 2010!

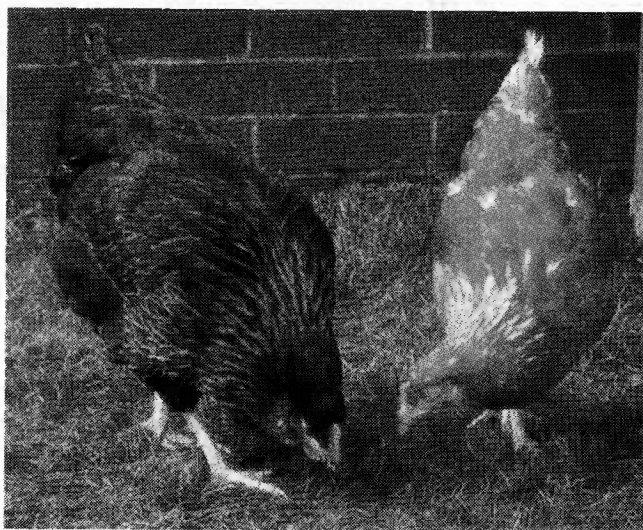
Payments can be made the good old way of cash or cheque; (made payable to FISTS) and sent to The membership sec , MOC DL (address on previous page)

Or if you're feeling all modern we can take PayPal payments to subs@fists.co.uk but whatever way you pay please include your fists membership number with the payment.

Any overpayments will be considered a donation and are always very gratefully received !

Welcome to Spring

Its finally warming up a little im glad to say, It seems to have been a very long Winter this time. I have really felt down with all the dark nights and cold days, I really like to get outside and do something around the garden. This year Annes got a number of jobs for me! You may recall that i said we were considering having chickens, well now we have 4.



Top Left : Jasmine, then Violet and Lily and bottom left is Poppy. (Only Jasmine laying yet)

The coop we bought was designed for 5 birds but we feel its a little to small and so I am now building a much larger one that will be more under cover to make it warmer for next winter. I also have planted my Tomatoes and they are just coming up now.

On the job front I am still working at the school and really enjoying it. Up to Christmas I was teaching 12 hrs a week to the 6th form in computer programming , they have now taken their A level exam in ICT so I am waiting to see their results, they better pass or it looks bad on me !

The school did offer me a place on a teacher training course so I could become a fully fledged ICT teacher but with the problems at home with Chris I don't think I could give the time I would need to the course and so I have declined the offer. If a high level teaching assistance job comes up i may be interested in that. This leads me on to a request for help, I will be starting up a school radio club about the time you read this and at time of writing have no equipment for the club, if anyone has a spare ft-2000 HF rig or a VHF/UHF radio under their desk that is unwanted the club would be most grateful for it, (just joking about the ft-2000 any type of equipment would be very helpful atu, meters, psu etc) I only have my Elecraft K3 here and will take that in but i think we will have to raise some funds to buy something a little less expensive to start with asap, but if anyone does have a old rig even if it only works on a couple of HF bands that they no longer want and would consider donating it to the school club please contact me .
(01902 338973 or paul@fists.co.uk)

A number of club officials have health/personal issues at the moment and so unfortunately this edition is much shorter than normal , sorry,

Again I must ask members to put pen to paper and give me articles for the next edition as I am very short of material , again contact me at the address in the front of the mag or to paul@fists.co.uk

We lost the web site for a day in Feb and I received a number of worried emails about it, what happen was that the credit card I use for automatic renewals had been changed during the last year and so when the auto payment request was made the card was not valid, within a couple of hours payment had been made and the site was back up and running, thanks to those that let me know about the problem so fast.

“THE CODE AND I” - BY MARY - GONZA
A personal journey.
(or the ramblings of an addicted woman)

Back in the late eighties I was a G7 and like many other radio amateurs had to learn Morse Code to become a G0, and obtain a full licence.

I learnt in a group which was challenging and it was about halfway through this process (after the initial early stress) that I gradually realised I was actually starting to enjoy myself and knew I wanted to use the Code as a mode of communication. I wasn't going to join the “get it and forget it brigade” and be one of those people who, after taking the test would either throw the hated key through the window, or relegate it to the back of a shack drawer, never to see the light of day again.

I am amazed at the interest in the Code at the moment, especially as there is no longer a requirement to take a Morse test and we all know tales of the different states, both physically and mentally, that most of us got into on that occasion :- different shades of grey to puce, uncontrollable shaking, that awful feeling of nausea, and butterflies in the stomach! To name but a few.

My first live CW QSO was memorable. After a brief prearranged contact with a friend, I plucked up courage to call CQ on 144.050 and nearly fell off my chair when I was answered by Ron G4NZU, who was only the CHIEF MORSE EXAMINER in Nottingham! My understanding OM Gerald GONRA stood at the side of me shouting “breathe”, “breathe”, as I was nearly in a state of collapse and needed a stiff brandy afterwards to recover! (but later on, I felt I had made a small achievement and felt quite elated).

I am a second timer, passing my driving test, final nursing exam, RAE, and Morse test after two attempts, so perhaps I am a testament to “if at first you don't succeed, just try - and try again”, and in the case of Morse, remembering those 3 - P's :- Patience, Practice and Perseverance.

Amateur Radio is a wonderful hobby and there are so many facets of it to be enjoyed. My preference turned out to be teaching slow Morse. I soon realised that there was more to teaching than just pulling out a book and sending a bit of Code. Apart from assessing the student's ability to learn, there is also a lot of preparation to Morse can be fun, but at one point I was teaching at four different speeds ranging from an absolute beginner, to approaching being able to have a full QRS QSO, and I nearly met myself coming backwards!

I have found it very rewarding teaching slow Morse and have made a lot of friends and hope I am putting back into the hobby the help that other Amateurs gave to me. I enjoy welcoming newcomers and helping QRS stations with sometimes faltering contacts. My "Elmer" was Ernie G0KZA who taught us both the Code and we all need an "Elmer".

I could not have spent so many hours teaching without the support of Gerald, and wonder if our lovely border collie, Cassie, knows her code yet, she often lies with her head on my feet while I am sending F2A, and is prone to join in with an unlicensed "woof" here and there. I have also been responsible for many a dinner being in the dog due to my prolonged lessons!!

During the time I sent slow Morse for the RSGB using the call sign of GB2CW, the preparation involved was amusing, as the time to begin a session approached making sure:-

The phone was off the hook.

The dog was in the garden.

The batteries were taken out of the door bell.

There was a glass of water for that tickly cough which only seemed to appear at GB2CW time!

There was a sticking plaster over Mum's mouth (bless her, she just couldn't understand why she was not allowed to talk during the broadcasts)!

Excuses

We have all heard them, and over many lessons I have been given lots of reasons for not receiving correctly. Apart from the usual boring excuse of “my pen has run out, or my pencil lead has broken! Here are just a few :-

I sneezed.

I coughed.

The cat jumped on my knee.

The dog barked.

It thundered.

I had a telephone call.

Somebody came to the door.

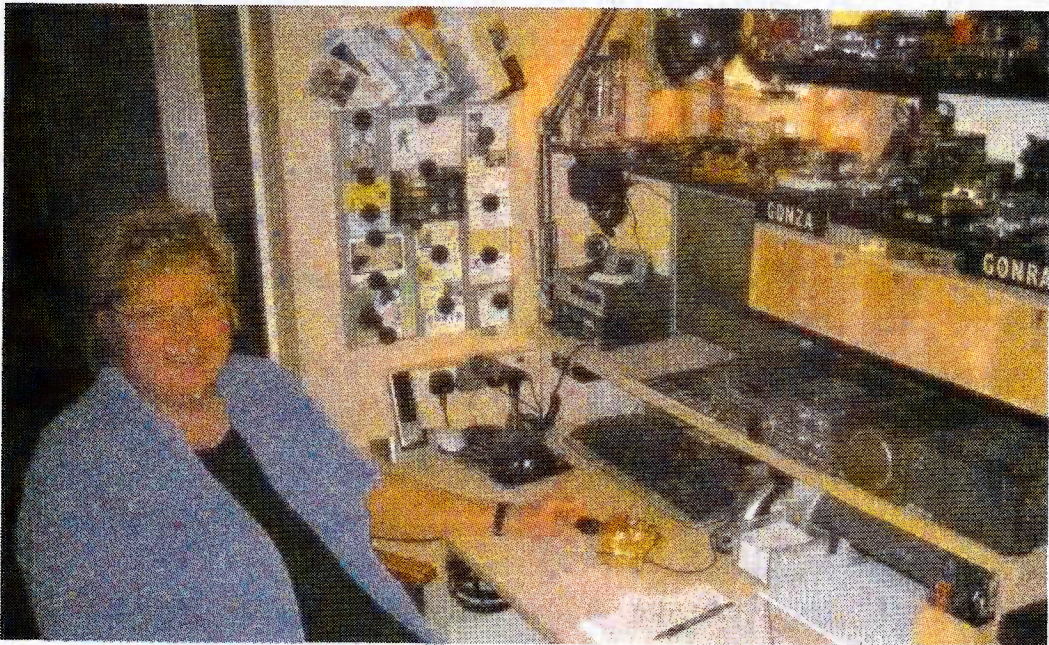
The XYL came in with a cup of tea.

A helicopter went overhead

A noisy motorbike went by - followed by his mates!

The ice-cream man parked outside my window.

My parrot/parakeet/budgie landed on my head and put me off,



(sometimes with the added verbal distraction of “Who’s a pretty boy then”).

Anecdotes x 3

Mark and Mary

Just after I passed my test I was working a very experienced G station on 40 mtrs. who sent impeccable Morse and after sending my name 3 times he called me Mark for the rest of the QSO. Unsure what to do, and being very respecting of the station's status I decided to end the QSO in the normal way and sent 73 and 88, whereupon there was a large pause and "88?" sent, to which I replied "yes I am a YL", what a difference a dah makes!

Moggy

On one occasion during a CW QSO I sent to the puzzled recipient "Cat brought mouse in through cat flap – sending with legs in the air"!

Crossed purposes

On another occasion PW Editor Rob Mannion G3XFD contacted me asking if I would mind if the BBC got in touch regarding sending some Morse for a docu/drama about Bletchley Park and to my alarm, teasingly suggested that I would be expected to learn to parachute jump! I was duly contacted by the BBC and told that a car would be sent for me on the day of the filming. Thinking they only wanted a shot of my hand and key I was surprised when asked what size uniform I needed, to which I replied "Hold on a minute, I'm not a dolly bird but a mature Grandmother". Needless to say I didn't get the job! A few weeks later I received a phone call jokingly asking me what I had done with the Enigma Machine which had been stolen from Bletchley Park around the time of filming.

There is such excellent software available now, there is really no need to do anything else in the way of Morse practice, but computer generated Morse is so accurate,

it can be a bit soulless and human tuition helps to get you motivated and to “set your barrow down” as my dear Mum used to say. The use of software, personal tuition and listening on the bands to as many fists as possible is a good combination.

Some programs that you may not have played around with are :-

CW PLAYER – suitable for beginners

CW GET – suitable for improvers.

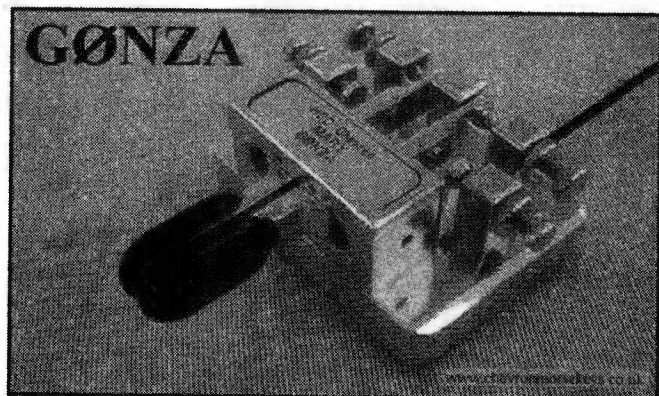
MORSE RUNNER - essentially a Morse contest practice program.

G4FON – for those wishing to seriously increase their receive speed.

AUDACITY - is also useful shareware to record your Morse directly from the sidetone and listen back to it, which helps correct problems with spacing. We have all heard beautifully sent Morse in one long stream of words and abbreviations with no gaps in it, and this becomes tiresome to read. We all know the pleasure of sitting back and listening to a really good fist – simply a joy.

I collect Morse memorabilia and have 57 Keys in my small collection and like Heinz there is a variety. The smallest being a mini G4ZPY brass one, that you could lose in the palm of your hand and the largest, the NATO Naval Key in the large light blue powder coated box. The old Ed-dystone Bug key perhaps being the most fascinating. Many are old and seen better days and I often wonder when and where they were used and by whom.

After many years of using straight keys (my favourites being the brass Peter Jones/HK707) I am learning to use a twin lever key (the HCD Chevron) but it was like buying a F1 Ferrari for a novice Go-Karter.



Marys new QSL Cards showing her very nice HCD Chevron key.

It is an excellent key and I hope to do justice to it one day. Perhaps sending on a straight key for so long at slow speeds has been detrimental to my own personal advancement, and I have found it very difficult to change. A veteran CW operator advised me to send right from the start using full iambic mode B with dit and dah memory and ACS and use full break-in and to put my straight key into my museum! The former advice I gratefully took but I still love using the straight key as I see it as an important part of Amateur Radio heritage.

So now I am the student again, trying to increase my sending and receiving speed, and learning to receive in my head. I have tried to use other types of key before and failed miserably putting it down to being a cacky left hander.

Choosing Your Friends.

When first trying to crack the iambic mode, I had terrible problems (and still do at times) sending "V's", getting an extra dit, so you can imagine why I avoided one of my CW pals, DAVE G0FVV like the plague for a while!

I am very lucky that in this area that there are so many experienced CW operators that send excellent Morse and some are FOC members and it is down to the patience of my friends, especially Bob G3PJN, that I hope I am gradually improving.

The breakfast bar is set up for off air mock QSO practice using the Kent twin paddle key and the E R Tick-4 tiny CMOS keyer for when G is using the computer (which is in the shack).

The Tick-4 and the DK1WE mini twin blade key (the one that looks a bit like a pencil sharpener) along with the mini Palm Radio retractable key, can all be slipped into my handbag, so that when travelling I don't get withdrawal symptoms (SAD!!!)

So it is here that I am on my journey, tentatively approaching 25 wpm on 2 mtrs CW, which is such an excellent spring board to the HF bands, with strong local signals, no violent QSB and dare I say it no QRMARY! and trying to bear in mind that club goal – "Accuracy Transcends Speed"

I think because there is no test, and the pressure is off, that people now learn Morse because they WANT to and not because they HAVE to and this has created a whole new relaxed atmosphere in which to study.

I whole heartedly agree with the RSGB introduction of the Morse Proficiency Certificate through the affiliated clubs and I think it a shame it is not recognised by Ofcom for use with the countries that still have a Morse requirement in order to get a reciprocal licence. In this time of renewed interest in the Code and the re-introduction of GB2CW nationwide, it is CW related clubs like FISTS that unite fellow travellers along that road to hopefully every operator's dream of sending as near perfect Morse as possible. In the words of a comment on a QSL card I received recently, from a past enthusiastic contact "VIVA CW"

Watch Out

On the way to your stand at the Donnington Rally last year I slightly lost control of my buggy and nearly demolished a stall and pinned a startled onlooker to the wall, unfortunately I then remembered that I had a very large callsign badge on the back, so that as I disappeared into the distance, I was a marked woman!! However - it was great to meet Paul and the team again and have another diddle on the key.

A big thank you to everybody at FISTS, you are all doing a grand job.

If you hear me on the bands, please give me a shout, I can usually be found either working the Code or talking about it! I really enjoy CW, having a really good ragchew, or a short rubber stamp copy, at whatever speed, whether it is on the other side of the world or just down the road.

Happy pounding, paddling and squeezing!

73/88 de Mary FISTS #721

Diddley Dah Di Dah - Dit Dit

Thanks Mary, great article , it was good to hear from you again.

Now Mary as been kind enough to send me some practice audio disks for "improvers" at around 14 wpm, i have listened to them and they would be great for people looking for good well sent CW QSO's around that speed. If you would like copies send me a stamped addressed envelope or pay 50p to the paypal account of fists (sales@fists.co.uk) and I will copy them and send then on to you

Thanks again for that too Mary.

From The Membership Sec'

Hi All, The Spring is here again, doesn't time fly? Christmas was only a few weeks ago or it seems like it! Had quite a few new members join us, I just wish the bands would pick up a little, had a Note from Roy G4PRL memb' No 8997 it seems he's off to Sweden sometime in July It's alright for some! He hopes to be operating SM6/G4PRL please keep an ear out, He says he is also reactivating his Czech Call sometime in August please listen out for OK8AGK, I've had lots of enquiries via the fists forum about Fists Subs price, the cost of subs varies depending on how you choose to receive your copy of Keynote, if you receive your copy via e-mail the price is £5 anywhere in the world, if you receive Keynote via the Post Office in the U.K the price is £6, for our overseas members the posted Keynote is £8, We have a PayPal account so if you wish to send your subs electronically you can, the address is subs@fists.co.uk We also accept Cheques drawn on a U.K Bank, and of course good old cash inc' Euros! If you would like to setup a standing order with your bank, the codes you need are here, our bank is Lloyds TSB, the account name is Fists, the sort code is 30 14 51 and the account number is 00948847, please include your Call Sign and membership number, or I won't know who the payment is from! So on to the New Members.

14075 M6FBK Alan
14077 G0VGS Ian
14079 DJ0MBC Bob
14081 M3XZT Ken
14083 M0UFO Jim
14085 G4MJO Alan
14087 GW0NKG Mike
14089 F8FGZ Dirk
14091 G0EXD Chris

14076 G3UED Mike
14078 EB3CXQ Sergi
14080 LA3MAA Terje
14082 GSWL 7 Chip
14084 GM6JUJ Jim
14086 G4FAD Rich
14088 GSWL 8 Alan
14090 EI3IK Brian
14092 M6WOW David

Welcome to Fists, I hope to meet you on air soon, Please Call CQ Fists and have fun, Also **Please remember the 1st of April is the renewal day! If you don't renew this will be your last Keynote! We don't want to lose you so please renew!** Vy 73/88 fer nw, John M0CDL Memb'Sec'

The Bill Windle CW QSO Party

The First Class CW Operators Club has a regular QSO party celebrating the memory of our Chairman Bill Windle G8VG who steered the Club through difficult times in the 1950's and 60's.

This event takes place twice a year in May and November and FOC in 2009 is once again inviting participants from any other CW club who may be interested to join us. Over the last few years we have been joined by many non members some of whom have since joined our ranks.

The event is run on a Saturday for a 24 hour period from 0000z to 2359z on all bands excluding the WARC bands. Activity takes place around 25 KHz up from the band edges.

Non members should send as a minimum RST and name and send the total number of FOC stations worked to K5ZD@aol.com along with any comments not later than a week after each event.

This years dates are May 23rd and November 14th and FOC is actively welcoming anybody at any speed to enter the event to promote CW across the bands

Colin Turner G3VTT President FOC 200

BRASSPOUNDER

For those within FISTS who enjoy a challenge.

Welcome to the roundup of what's been happening in the events and activities planned within FISTS.

The FIST of the year award received some nominees, albeit slow with folk waiting till the last moment before casting their votes.

I'm very pleased to announce that Peter Rosamond. G4LHI Fists#2219 has been awarded the accolade of "FIST OF THE YEAR" 2008. I'm sure that you'll all join me in congratulating Peter, a very worthy recipient of this award. The reasons from members who voted for Peter was his active fist on air and his almost tenacious publicity of the society to all he met on air during 2008. I can concur with this comment as many new members have said "I Worked G4LHI who introduced me to the society" also another reason raised by members, was his devotion to the mode of CW and his regular on air Morse practice nets in his locality... Other nominees included OH7QR for his /p operation activating different grid squares during 2008, and his readiness to publicise the society. And myself! Which I must say was a pleasant surprise. Heartfelt thanks to those who thought me worthy of such an accolade!...

Lets take a look at the final results tables for 2008, namely the ladder and WARC Activity. It was an eventful closing

period, In the WARC Activity, IK2RMZ put in a last minute charge to overtake G4LHI and win the G3ZQS Trophy for 2008. Congratulations to Martin for his excellent effort. "Well done" goes to G4LHI and K4UK for second and third places respectively.

CALL	NOV	DEC	TOTAL	MULTI	G-Total	PWR
IK2RMZ	256	361	2326	147	341922	QRO
G4LHI	115	215	2296	125	287000	QRO
K4UK	139	68	1169	142	165998	QRO
G6GUN	0	29	621	51	31671	QRO
W4YE	107	52	576	47	27072	QRO
OH7QR	57	84	819	32	26208	QRO
MØDRK	26	28	357	25	8925	QRO
KA3NZR	37	10	169	34	5746	MIX
G8XGQ	24	41	247	18	4446	QRO
W4FCR ©	19	7	122	31	3782	QRO
DL1GBZ/DP6M	0	0	208	10	2080	QRO
G3ZOD	121	93	242	7	1694	QRP
2E0TEK	0	0	95	12	1140	QRO
K4ORD	3	2	45	10	450	QRP
G0XAH	0	0	33	4	132	QRO
PA3AFF	0	0	25	5	125	QRO

Congratulations go to highest placed QRP entrant was Graham G3ZOD, who did marvellously well with his indoor aerial!



Here's an image of Graham G3ZOD with his G3ZQS WARC Activity QRP award certificate for 2008.

The activity ladder too, had an eventful finish, with G4LHI and G6GUN tying for joint first place, with IK2RMZ in third place. This is, as I'm aware, the first time that we've had identical scores at the end of the year.

CALL	NOV	DEC	TOTALS
G6GUN	13	43	416
G4LHI	37	44	416
IK2RMZ	5	12	200
M0DRK	21	19	186
OH7QR	18	8	182
G8XGQ	14	17	154
M0JRQ	0	0	45
2E0TEK	0	0	37
G3ZOD	8	14	26
G0MRH	0	0	9
DL1GBZ	0	0	1

Congratulations to G6GUN and G4LHI for sharing top spot in the 2008 activity, and a worthy third place goes to IK2RMZ.

Peter G3JFS Sent a statistical overview of his operations during 2008. You may have worked Peter under his own call or when he kindly activated GXØIPX Fists #1 on occasions during 2008.

Conditions were mostly quite dreadful in 2008 and still do not shown any sign of improvement. The HF bands will get better during Feb-March and April but this will be a normal seasonal change around the Spring Equinox, rather than higher sun-spot numbers. Nothing to get too excited about but keep an ear out on the higher bands, especially 10 and 12 m where there is always the prospect of sporadic E and transequatorial propagation. In spite of conditions there was dx aplenty being worked by stations with good locations and big antennas. For example, in G3WGV's 2008 internet CW

table GM4FAM is listed as having worked 243 countries, and up to the 11th Jan 2009 the leading score for this year is 82 dxcc, worked by G3TBK. I often wonder if people leading the annual tables ever leave their shacks. For those of us with less than ideal setups it was hard going to find and then work dx stations - a case mostly of digging into the noise to find weak signals and then patiently waiting for them to peak up long enough to make a qso.

You may be interested in my 2008 results below. These are from casual operating in number swapping marathons and working some dx expeditions rather than chasing dx for annual tables. I gave that up a few years ago as it is very time wasting activity.

G3JFS Countries worked in 2008:									
1.8	3.5	7.0	10	14	18	21	24	28	ALL
48	57	87	91	113	58	69	17	49	169

Pleased to receive a statistical overview from IK2RMZ for his WARC Activity..

IK2RMZ FISTS WARC statistics for 2008

616 worked squares:

134 worked DXCC entities:

3B8 3DA 3V 4J 4L 4S 4X 5B 5H 5N 5R 5T 5X 5Z 6W 8R 9A 9G 9H 9J 9L
 9M2 9X
 A2 A4 A6 A7 AP BY CE9 CM CN CT CT3 CX D2 DL E7 EA EA6 EA8 EA9
 EI EL ER
 ES ET EU EX EY F FM FR G GD GI GJ GM GU GW HA HB HR HS HZ I IS
 J2 J3 J6
 JA JY K KL KP2 KP4 LA LU LY LZ OE OH OH0 OJ0 OK OM ON OY OZ P4
 PA PY PZ
 S5 SM SP SV SV5 SV9 T7 TA TF TG TI UA UA2 UA9 UK UN UR V3 V5 VE
 VK VP2E VP5 VP6 VQ9 VU XE XU YI YK YL YN YO YU Z2 Z3 ZC4 ZD7
 ZD8 ZL ZS

30 meters:

3B8 4J 4L 4S 4X 5B 5R 6W 9A 9H 9X A4 A7 CE9 CT CT3 DL E7 EA EA6
EA8 EI
EL ER ES ET EU EX F G GD GI GM GW HA HB I IS J2 J6 JA K LA LU LY LZ
OH
OH0 OK OM ON OY OZ PA PZ S5 SM SP SV SV5 SV9 T7 TA TF UA UA2
UA9 UK UN
UR VE VK VQ9 YI YL YO YU Z3 ZL ZS
80 DXCC entities 1025 QSOs (52%)

17 meters:

3B8 3DA 3V 4S 4X 5B 5H 5R 5T 5X 5Z 8R 9A 9G 9J 9L 9M2 A2 A6 A7
AP BY CM
CN CT CT3 CX D2 DL E7 EA EA6 EA8 EA9 EI ES ET EU EY F FM FR G GJ
GM GU
GW HA HB HR HS HZ I IS J2 J3 JA JY K KL KP2 KP4 LA LU LY LZ OE OH
OK OM
ON OZ P4 PA PY PZ S5 SM SP SV SV9 TA TG TI UA UA2 UA9 UK UN UR
V3 V5 VE
VK VP2E VP5 VP6 VQ9 VU XE XU YI YK YL YN YO YU Z2 Z3 ZC4 ZD7
ZD8 ZL
113 DXCC entities 821 QSOs (42%)

12 meters:

3B8 5N 6W 9A 9G D2 DL E7 EA ER ES EU F G GD GI GW HA HB I LA LY
LZ OH
OJ0 OK OM OZ PA S5 SM SP UA UA2 UA9 UR VQ9 YL YO Z3 ZD7
41 DXCC entities 111 QSOs (6%)

Thanks to Peter and Martin for their overview for 2008.

As I close this edition of the BP Round up, the first Exchange your age week has finished. And well received it was by a lot of the membership, pleasing to hear.

EYAW (Exchange Your Age Week) results 2009

Well, what an amazing reception the new activity for 2009 received from members!

I was so surprised to receive mails from participants before the activity had finished claiming "What a success EYAW has been" And looking at logs received for the event, I could see why these mails were appearing in my inbox! The amount of members who were active during the week was striking! If all the members who were active had sent in an entry! I would have been busy for quite some time! So, where were the logs from all our active members?.....

Send in your entry and a report on what the week's activity meant to you! This is and has been a fun event....And to answer all the requests received from those who did send in an entry....I can confirm and answer your requests that EYAW will remain in the activity calendar for 2010 and beyond.....

Already it has been mentioned that it will be as popular as SKW! Praise indeed! Thank you for your kind words for introducing the activity..And mails received saying "Can't wait for EYAW to come around again next year!"... I look forward to EYAW 2010 being received with even more enthusiasm than 2009, and look forward to receiving more entries....

Before I get onto the comments and reports received...I would like to wish a most cordial welcome to the members who had decided to enter one of our activities for the first time; again, the member numbers I've seen in logs received stretched from early numbers to very new members... I hope you'll find time to enter other activities during 2009.

Another thing that I was looking for, was, in the absence of any data, a possible centarian in someone's log! After looking at the logs, and checking, my wish was not to be realised this year.... But we can hope for the next EYAW....

The oldest and youngest members worked during EYAW?.... I can tell you that, at 94 years, fists Member Glenn, W9FFU; was the most senior member worked. (By Roy, G4PRL and Stan, K4UK...congratulations guys) The youngest member, who was very active during the week; was fists member Graham 2EØTEK at 22 years. The most senior EU member worked was Dawson, G3AHS at 88 years... Congratulations to Glenn, Dawson, and Graham for supporting the event. Who knows, we may get a centarian in a forthcoming EYAW. (Does anyone know of such an amateur still active?)

On to the members reports.
Firstly. Graham 2EØTEK who comments

Hi Robert

Very good idea, this event was great fun, amazing how many members came out this week; been nice to work some old faces again and even managed to work a club station once. Only wish I had more time or could get home from work slightly earlier hi.

73 for nw. Graham 2EØTEK

Thanks for your kind words Graham...glad you enjoyed the event.

From Stan. K4UK

Rob - MOBPT:

Attached is my log for the Exchange Your Age Week.

Unfortunately I wasn't able to participate much because we had left home on Friday, February 27 and drove to Florida so my wife could attend her High School Class Reunion in Sarasota on Monday, March 2.

Then we visited friends in Lake Alfred, FL. My friend Bernie and I played golf on Tuesday and Wednesday. We drove all the way home on Thursday.

Another friend here in Virginia had a tee time on Friday at my Golf Course, so that shot most of Friday.

As you can see by my very small log I was only on from 1912 UTC until the end at 2359 UTC on Saturday.

But I worked Glenn, W9FFU who at the age of 94 may be the oldest one in the Event. So, I may lay claim to working the oldest ham during the week - Hi! 73, Stan - K4UK

Glad you found time to get on and "Exchange some ages" Indeed you can lay claim (With FISTS EU member G4PRL) to have worked the most senior member of the week!

From Roy. G4PRL

Hello Rob,

Greetings from South Devon.

Well I have just been enjoying the "Age Week" event that you organised, it was great, just about one of the nicest fun ham radio events that I have ever taken part in.

I very much dislike "5-9, 73" contests, but this is the type of thing that ham radio should be about if you really want to enjoy the hobby, so thanks a lot Rob, great work. I could not dedicate as much time to the event as I would have liked, but as you will see I was able to get a few contacts

in most days. I found that the most common age seemed to be 73;
however the average age was nearly 71.

I also noticed that nearly all my contacts were with the south of England and hardly anything up north and definitely no GMs at all.

As you will see that apart from one QSO on 20 mtrs all my other QSOs on 80 mtrs were using QRP, I was using my FT817 @ 5 Watts to a W3DZZ antenna, and as you can see all were good solid contacts. Judging by the on air contacts this has been a very popular event and has generated quite a lot of activity on the FISTS QRG, and so for that reason there are a good number of members keeping their fingers crossed that it will again be part of the calendar for next year? So well done Rob, and many thanks. Please find my results attached to this e-mail.

73 de Roy, G4PRL, FISTS 8997

Hello Roy. It was a pleasure to open my mailbox and find your entry and report inside.. I've had the pleasure of meeting Roy (As I have many other members) at the Donnington Radio show on two occasions. Where we've enjoyed a lengthy chat....Thanks for your kind words and enthusiasm for the event, and of course, congratulations are in order for working the most senior member during the event, along with K4UK...I hope you'll be joining the event next year...

From Derek. MØDRK

Hi Robert,

I am pleased to send you my log for Fists Exchange Your Age Week. I expect that by now you'll have received many messages to say what great fun it has been. Many fists

members were heard that are usually not heard on other Fists activities and that was very nice. You certainly picked a winner with this one Robert. Many thanks to all stations that I worked who gave me points. Good to work Roy in Scarborough again with club points to be earned.

Thank you for a great week, take care, see you again soon. Derek
MODRK

Always a pleasure to hear from you Derek. Again, thanks for your kind words and support, the event was certainly well received by all.

From our friend and one of the "Doyens" of the FISTS activity scene; Peter G4LHI
Hello Robert.

I attach my report & claim for the "Exchange Your Age Week". I must firstly, on behalf of all the participants of this event, congratulate you Robert for introducing it to your 2009 activities calendar & we all hope it will remain a regular event? It certainly was very popular with old & new members, I for one worked three new members (QSL cards via Fists buro in next batch tnx guys) & many older callsigns that I had not heard for years, it was reminiscent of the good old days when members were "number crunching" as dear old Geo called us when we were collecting for our Century & other Awards hi!! Incidentally, I did not hear any Century numbers exchanged, is this a dying art?? I certainly enjoyed the event & it was so nice to hear such a lot of activity from members again, I was sorry when 2359 came on Saturday, but then we did have the "Ladder" on Sunday to enjoy, those of us that were not too worn out from the week's efforts hi! I was lucky to have 138 QSO's and with 268 points for 3's, 2's & 1's total of 268 plus the total ages column of 9071 added

to this giving me a grand total of 9339 points, subject to Roberts scrutiny hi! I think the average age for my log was around 34 years old, but there were a few younger members joining in, so I'm sure their average age could be well above that with them having a ball with us "oldies" hi!

I must say very many thanks to all members & of course a few non members, that joined in & made this a wonderful event, was a great pleasure to enjoy the chats, & certainly no rubber stamp type QSO's, just what is needed by our Fists Club activities. That's all for now, see you next time & "Keep Pounding the Brass"

73/88 de Peter G4LHI & Jean

As ever Peter, thank you for your kind words, support, and enthusiasm for the event, and all the other activities in the calendar. As I've commented earlier, the event was well received and will certainly remain in the events calendar for 2010 and beyond.....

From Graham G3ZOD. Who comments;

I wasn't able to spend a lot of time on the air during the week, but it was nice to meet up with some new and old faces. Andy F6CNI deserves a special mention; although a non-member, he was nevertheless being a good sport and giving away points with his very impressive 500 milliwatts!

73 de Graham (Gra) G3ZOD FISTS #8385

Hello Graham.. It's nice to hear that 500 milliwatts was making the trip in these times of low activity. I'd noticed that F6CNI had made his way into other entrants' logs too!

A warm welcome to Daryl G0ANV Who comments;

Hi Robert,

Here is my entry for the EYAW activity.

Had great fun. Worked old friends and made some new ones too.

Good all round week.

73 de Daryl. G0ANV Fists nr. 2270

Good to have you on board Daryl...Thanks for your kind words.

From Errki OH7QR

Hello Robert,

Please find attached my log. I think that the event was a great success. Most participants were on 80M which is not good band for me. But anyway I got 13 QSOs. There were some who didn't want to give their ages although I gave mine. I am too tactful and didn't ask anybody's age if he didn't give it voluntarily, Hi. 73 Erkki OH7QR

As ever Erkki. Thanks for your support. Glad you managed to meet members on air; I'm surprised that no-one migrated to 20m where they would have found you waiting patiently on 14.058. Glad you enjoyed the event...

From Peter G3JFS

Hello Robert, Welcome Back.

Attached is my log for the Exchange Your Age Activity Week. After a slow start with only 6 contacts in the first two days I had more time for operating during the rest of the week and finished up with 86 contacts in the log. Although I sent a lot of CQ calls on other bands the only members I worked were on 80 metres where I had 51 contacts with 35 different members. Many of the non-members worked were QRP stations who, as I have mentioned in previous reports, take advantage of the increase in activity just below their calling channel during our activities.

Many people commented on how much they were enjoying the activity week and I am sure that much of this was due to our own 'FISTS Casual Contesting Style' of operating that encourages 'proper' contacts rather than rubber stamp ones. Many of mine lasted for 10 – 15 minutes with a few up to 30 minutes and this trend was noticed when listening to other stations.

Overall I think the event was a big success and will become a regular fixture on the annual events calendar.

73 Peter, G3JFS Fists 8985

As ever Peter. Thanks for your concise round up of your weeks activity. G4PRL and G4LHI echo your sentiments regarding how far removed we are from the "rubber stamp QSO's" Long may it continue....

From Pol G3HAL (Who as a matter of interest, was, after G3AHS the next most senior FISTS EU member active during the activity at 87 years) who comments....

Robert

Herewith as attachment my log for the Age Week Contest. It was especially interesting because, having no Serial Nos. we had no idea how the others were doing. Hope to take part next year.

Pol Parrott G3HAL 8367

Pleased to hear that you found the activity interesting Pol. Look forward to receiving your log next year.....

And From Mike G4NCU

Hi Robert,

Attached is my log for the first exchange your age week and may I say what a great fun week it was, I do hope this event stays on the annual fists calendar. It was good to see the event well attended, and once again I met up with old friends and quite a lot of members not worked before, my only regret not being able to get on air every day.

73. Mike G4NCU Fists 6061

A pleasure to hear from you Mike. And pleased you managed to get on for the event. As you'll have seen, your thoughts have been echoed by all who sent in their logs...With the amount of members active during the event, it did make a fun weeks activity...Lets hope that the 2010 EYAW yields even more members on air and perhaps more will send a

log in for scrutiny!.....

From John, 2EØJCY.

Hi Robert,

It was a very enjoyable week and I got some much needed cw practice.

I met quite a few members for the first time and can't wait for the next one. So hope it becomes an annual event.

Regards

John 2EØJCY 13253

Hello John. A pleasure to receive your first ever entry in one of the society's activities, I hope you'll continue to join in whenever you find time to do so... Glad you enjoyed the event and as you'll have seen in the earlier comments, EYAW will become a regular event in the calendar.

Our final comments come from a member who you may have heard me mention before; Bryan GØGSY. Due to unusual shift patterns at work Bryan will sacrifice sleep to come on and support events during the year.

Robert.

What a wonderful event! Must be the best yet! Never heard so many FISTS on air, and some that haven't been on for a long time! This event is a must for next year! It was great fun, thanks a lot.....

Could only come on during the afternoons due to my work at night.

Take care..73. Bryan.

Thanks for your kind words Bryan. Always a pleasure to receive your entry....

All that's left for me to do is publish the results of the first EYAW... I've added in the right hand column, the average age of each member's log.

EYAW	TOTALS	2009
CALL	SCORE	AV. AGE
G4LHI*	9339	65.7
G3JFS*	5505	64.6
G3HAL*	5000	64.7
G0GSY	4567	65.9
G4NCU	3843	70.5
G0ANV	3393	70.2
2E0TEK	2625	70.8
M0DRK	2162	59.8
G4PRL	1751	70.8
2E0JCY	1600	74.1
G3ZRJ	1101	66.9
G3ZOD	916	68.5
OH7QR	736	64.9
G8XGQ	494	80.3
K4UK	372	72.6

(* Denotes award winner)

Congratulations to Peter G4LHI for an excellent winning score. Also to G3JFS, and G3HAL so closely spaced in second and third position. A mention must go to GØGSY who managed a very respectable fourth place score in spite of him arranging his sleeping requirements with the event! And the QRP operators who did a fine job!..

Thanks to all of you who came on and supported the event, worthy of a mention is Roy, G4SSH who activated many of his arsenal of call-signs from Scarborough Special Events Group to give away points to members...

To pick up on a few comments raised by participants...Reminiscent of the old days" "Our casual operating style" These are but two of the many thoughts aired by members who have been surprised by the activity.... I think that this is one of the main reasons why so many friendships are made within FISTS.... The ability of us not to take another members number for whatever award we may be collecting for and run! Another being the ability of us to help newcomers to the mode and help nurture their ability through their first steps on air! A hope that the mode will be perpetuated for a long time ahead! I'm sure Geo. would have been pleased and proud to have heard all the activity from members during the EYAW event!

Who'd have thought that, in the second half of 2008 when I sat down to look at something to replace MKW, and came up with EYAW, that it would have been received with such enthusiasm and support from you all.....

**That's all from me for this edition of the BP round up, before I go
I will remind you all of my new address;
87A Whitehall Road,
West Bromwich.
B7Ø ØHG**

The Last Word

Well its been a short edition this spring , and its rather late too, I must say that I am now out of articles for the next edition and so please consider sending me any stories, articles, reviews, photos that you may have been holding back Remember its your newsletter , I'm only here to edit it not write it .

I would be interested in hearing from members about where they see/ want the club to head over the coming years, some people have asked for us to make the club a Online only club with no paper newsletter option. While I agree it would allow us to greatly reduce the subs we would lose many members that do not have or want internet access so as long as I'm here that's not going to happen. Some people have asked for us to scrap the subs fee and make the club free for all like a few other CW clubs out there. Well again I don't think it would be fair on just the few people that help run the club to pay for all the expenses that we would still incur (web hosting, domain renewals, awards certs, membership forms etc. I feel that since we have a small fee it will discourage people that are just club name chasers from joining and members are more likely to be actively interested in what the club stands for and CW in general. I know that younger amateurs seem interested in many different aspects of "Ham" radio and its difficult to get them to use CW, anyone any thoughts on how we can encourage these youngest into the world of CW?

We will have a improved web site later this year (Its being worked on now) and it will get updated more often too, it will allow online ordering for club sales and allow members to pay for their subs on line too.

Anyway have a nice summer, its starting not to bad and I will speak to you again soon, don't forget to send in your articles ASAP,, Thanks
73 & 88 from Paul & Anne

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