



Volume 6 Issue 1

March, 2015

K3Y 2015 Wrap-up

Thanks to everybody who made this year's K3Y event a success. That includes the coordinators, operators, the web and infrastructure guys, and of course all who contacted the K3Y stations.

Propagation conditions were not as good this time as they were last year. The DX and low power operators probably know this better than anyone, so special thanks to them for the extra effort needed to get some hard-won contacts logged.

All in all, there was plenty of straight key CW on the bands throughout the month, which was the main goal of the event—an extended SKN.

You can check the web stats & sweeps here: <http://www.skccgroup.com/k3y/K3Y-statistics.php>

Additional offline stats, sweeps, etc. are available as text file listings here: <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/skcc/files/K3Y2015/>

Both of these will be updated in coming days as late logs come in. (The offline stats may be slightly different since they do not count K3Y/x call signs that are logged.)

If you are missing any QSOs that you think should have been logged, please contact me or the area coordinators and we will look into it.

QSL cards will be sent out via the SKCC QSL Bureau, probably by the end of the month. Anyone who is a member of the bureau (SKCC Bureau) will get a card automatically. You can also request a card by sending Jeff (K9JP) Bureau QSL manager, an SASE with your call and "K3Y 2015" written on it. The QSL bureau is here:

http://www.skccgroup.com/member_services/qsl_buro/

Next year will be the 10th Anniversary event!

73,

Drew - AF2Z

K3Y Planning Group

Unofficial K3Y Results for 2015

Taking information from the K3Y stats page:

- There were a total of 219 different K3Y operators
- 29,542 K3Y QSOs were logged

Me and CW

By Richard Booth (KK6LAX, SKCC #13397)

This article is simply a statement of my experiences and preferences as they apply to the CW world. It is not my intention to step on the toes of others who have had or are having a completely different CW experience.



My foray into Morse Code or CW began shortly after my induction into the Air Force in late April of 1971. On one of the uneventful days of basic training myself and two other airman were whisked away to a non-descript building on Lackland AFB, issued a set of headphones, a pencil, and a pad of paper, and given a simple set of instructions, i.e., copy what you hear and don't stop until we tell you too. We were then given the morse code characters for E, T, A, and N. We practiced these characters for a few minutes and then the testing began. For about 10-15 minutes, we were sent these 4 characters at a

very slow speed rate in differing combinations of 5 character groups. At the end we were promptly whisked back to our basic training flight. Two days later, I was whisked away to another building, given a pencil and pad of paper and a list of people that I was to contact to get current names, addresses, and other miscellaneous pieces of personal data. I was put in a cubicle with a phone and told not to come out until I had all the information on the list provided. Luckily for me, a single call to my mom provided all the data on the list in excruciating detail. Whew...so far so good! At the end of basic training I was promptly put on a bus and sent off to tech school at Keesler AFB (Biloxi, MS), where I was assigned to and attended morse systems school at Thompson Hall for 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, for 6 months. We did not learn morse code by the Koch Method (which by the way is a great way to learn and practice), but rather by what I call the "brute force" method. We sat at old typewriters and began listening to code characters until we could copy them proficiently. Once we had the character patterns learned then we started hearing code at faster and faster rates. In order to graduate from tech school we had to pass 18.6 GPM or WPM with no mistakes. The testing at the various speed levels consisted of being sent a total of 100 5-character groups. Now the military has a great motivational program, which for those of us who experienced it, is quite unique. In the case of morse systems school, the saying that floated around the school about once a week was "learn code or go to cook school!" That pretty much says it all.

Now, there are differences in the number and types of characters learned in morse code. For instance, in my tech-school days we did not learn characters like "period, comma, slant bar, or question mark". We learned the alphabet, the numbers, and only two other



special characters, i.e., colon and semi-colon. We copied the “?” mark as “imi”. That’s because the typewriters we used did not have a “shift key”, and there were no lower case letters (all letters were typed or displayed as upper case). In addition, if you practice it, you can actually type “imi” quicker than trying to use the standard shift key and hitting the “?” symbol.... at least I think so. In addition, we were being taught to copy with no mistakes, because our work was in the realm of signal intelligence, so accuracy was of the utmost importance.

About half way through tech school, we were finally told what all the paper work was about that we had compiled in that little cubicle. It was the preliminary background data for our security clearances. Once your security clearance (Top Secret level) was approved and if you had passed the minimum code speed requirement, then off to your first duty assignment you went. The next 3 and one half years were spent at two great duty assignments, one in Texas (Medina AFB 6993rd Security Squadron) and one in Alaska (Elmendorf AFB 6981st Security Squadron) under the USAF Security Service Command. I had the opportunity to meet and work with a great bunch of people, see some exciting intelligence gathering techniques, and make some lifelong friends. I was fortunate enough to be able to sit a “morse search” position for most of my military career, which meant I had the opportunity to copy an extremely wide variety of CW signals, and yes, even some Hams from time to time when things got boring!

After doing the job, or sitting “rack”, for almost 3 ½ years, I was honorably discharged, and I swore to myself that I would never listen to another “dit” or “dah” as long as I lived.....never say never! 38 years later I got my Tech License and just recently I passed the General exam. After getting my Tech license, and at the prodding of my Ham radio mentor (WA6SEU), I re-acquainted myself with CW, starting listening to some practice files, and began making some very slow speed contacts in the 10M band. Wow....CW can actually be fun when the pressure relief valve is open! I am back to a copy speed of about 12-14 WPM, but my sending is a little slower. But, I am finding the slower speed to be much more enjoyable for me personally. From time to time I hear CW operators telling their contacts that speed is the goal (along with accuracy of course), and to learn to copy using your brain and then respond.

Well... I guess I would have to “agreeably” disagree! Since retiring, my motto has been to make decisions that uncomplicated my life, including my hobbies. So I am perfectly happy

plodding along at 10-12 WPM enjoying my CW contacts, making new friends, having great QSOs, and maintaining a very low stress level. So I will leave you with this,.... when I was in the Air Force, I had a close friend who told me one day, that if I had been born “ditless” my last name would be “Toot”, you figure it out!!



My station is located in northern California approximately 27 miles east of Redding, in Shingletown, at the foot of Mt. Lassen National Park. Station elevation is 3460 ft. AMSL. Currently using a Kenwood TS-570S (100 W) with an AlphaDelta DX-CC (80m-10m) antenna mounted at approximately 50 ft above ground level. My 2m and 6m antennas are co-located at about 28 and 22 ft respectively.

See 'ya at DAYTON! – May 15 – 17, 2015

de AH6AX

Larry Wandel

See 'ya at DAYTON! – May 15 – 17, 2015. Yep, it's a comin'... and sooner than you think! "IT" is the annual pilgrimage to the Hara Arena at Dayton, OH, for the ham's mecca; HAMVENTION 2015 for three days of amateur radio's latest technology, gadgets, and goodies!

Nearly 500 vendors (including the big guns: KENWOOD, YAESU, ICOM, ALINCO), Ham Radio Outlet, Universal-Radio, Quicksilver Radio, and on and on and on.. (that, folks, was just a 'sample'...). The SKCC booth will, once again, be "manned and ready". Planning has begun and a call is being sent out (via this article, the SKCC web page, the SKCC sked page, and 'word-of-mouth') to all SKCCer's that are planning to make the pilgrimage to Dayton. Ron (AC2C) who, unfortunately, won't be able to make the trek this year, is securing the booth, and Ted (K8AQM) has volunteered his laptop and keys – to dazzle the "uninitiated" with our CW – ('ya gotta be there to see it!).

Our intrepid regulars, Scott (N3JJT) and Curt (WA2JSG) and Tom (K9DAC) will be there. .I, "Aloha" Larry (AH6AX), will be there, sans luau shirt. I have agreed to coordinate the scheduling of the booth and; as such, I am seeking volunteers to spend an hour or two (or... whatever you can spare – we know you are there to see the show and we'll give you a place to 'take a break' from the crowds (and, if you haven't been to Dayton – there are CROWDS!) at the booth during the show. We also welcome Jim (WA3MEJ), and Al (N4OW) as early 'volunteers' – Jim is a recent member, but has a long background in CW; Al is coming up from Florida for a first, in a long-long time, return to Dayton' and has agreed to provide an hour or two during the show. Welcome to both of them – and to all of you who make the trek this year!

If you can, to please send me an e-mail, lpwandel@comcast.net, with any particular hour or two that you can contribute or, if you don't have a time in mind, that you are willing to help, with how much time you can give to the effort. I will respond and attempt to coordinate a good spot for you. We need to provide for 2 people at the booth at all times during which the show is open. We'll have the brochures and keys to play with.

"Ok.. , but whatta I gotta do while sitting at the booth," you ask (good question, Bunky!) We are there for three reasons: 1 – to introduce potential members to the "joy of CW" and belonging to SKCC, 2- to provide a 'home base' for members who are enjoying the show – sorta the "clubhouse" for a few days, and 3 - to demonstrate that CW is alive and well (with over 13,500 members – as of this writing)! So, come out, bring your best sales pitch (actually, no sales pitch needed – the free membership and camaraderie demonstrated at the booth is a good sales point). We want to make the potential (and regular) member feel welcome!

Whether you contribute time, money, or both, none of this would be possible without the generous donations from our members. The Booth reservation itself costs nearly \$600 each year and is made possible ONLY through direct donations from our members. Your contribution and volunteer efforts are sincerely appreciated and help to keep the SKCC free and fun for all of us.

All-in-all, we are looking forward to another fun time to be had by all. And, the opportunity to lighten our wallets as we drool at the new ham goodies.... Let's see, new amp, new rig, new antenna, new tuner, new HT. (What? I only have a hundred bucks to spend? Aw, Honey... can I please buy a new _____(fill in the blank) at Dayton?

lpwandel@comcast.net

Why Christmas Was Delayed!



You no doubt noticed you never got those “goodies” for the shack you asked Santa for this year. Well, Santa was “delayed” this year in the Midwest and Northeast. While delivering gear to “deserving” hams in the South, Santa had a bit of trouble while making his run. Rumor has it that this photo was caught by a passer-by down in the Dallas area (blue skies and all that). You can clearly see this is a big antenna and the owner is a big-time

DXer-operator. Although no call sign was evident, the address was clearly stated as:

11939 Midlake Drive.....

A Google search discovered this to be the QTH of the DX King and SKCC Senator K5ZOL, Bob! Arrgh!

What I and the members of SKCC want to know is how you got Santa free from this mess and what you plan to do about all our missed Christmas gifts that never arrived to our shacks! Next year put a red light at the top of that tower so “Rudy” and Santa can avoid this mishap and we in the northern areas will get our well deserved ham goodies for Christmas! For shame Bob, poor Santa...and Rudy too!

World's Most Accurate Pie Chart



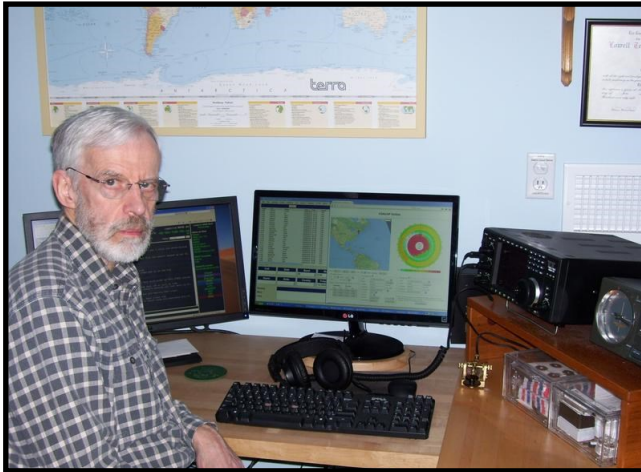
N8CC Wisdom

My “friend” Jeff N8CC, #7541 is a technical wiz... this is his late “unforgettable” (unforgivable?) statement...”World’s Most Accurate Pie Chart”

This is the same guy who said, “explaining technical issues to K8AQM is like riding a mule in the Kentucky Derby and expecting to win!”

Well Jeff I do know the difference between “pie I have eaten” and “pie I have not yet eaten” ... I don’t need a pie chart ... so there! I think about 3000 calories...maybe more??

TF/WK2S de WK2S



My wife Pat and I traveled to Iceland in June, 2014 and had a great time sight seeing and hiking in this alien but beautiful place. After we were home we chatted about all the wonders of Iceland, volcanoes, glaciers, hot springs, visible tectonic plates, and more. One thing we never saw was darkness, which meant no chance to view the famous aurora borealis. I half joked that maybe we should return during the winter when it was almost always dark and we would have a better chance to see the Northern Lights. Pat was interested in the unique knitting technique of Iceland

which produced lopapeysa, literally warm sweater. The thought occurred to me that maybe I could get SKCC on the air from Iceland!

The first thing I did was to check out what was involved in operating outside the USA. As it turns out, not much for casual operation. I found an English web page at the Icelandic Radio Amateurs site (<http://www.ira.is/display/Eng/Operating+in+Iceland>). This explained that we have reciprocal arrangements which means if you can cross your license class to one in Iceland and if you are only staying a short time, you are good to go. Thus TF/WK2S was born.

I had had a few passing thoughts about portable operation but never seriously considered all that I would need to acquire. Well, mounting a (very) mini-dxpedition could be fun and what better excuse would I have to buy more ham gear?

Quite a number of SKCC'ers use the Elecraft KX3 so that seemed a good choice. Equipped with the optional roofing filter, antenna tuner, and internal NiMH charger the KX3 looked like just the rig I wanted for portable operation. Of course power supplies for both mains and automobile operation and battery charging would also be needed. Then headphones, a key, and an antenna and I was all set. I thought I should have a key that could be used anywhere so I looked at various leg strap arrangements but they were all pricey and not quite what I wanted. It then dawned on me that my J-38 with a new base would work. I removed the original base and fashioned a new one out of some 1/8" polycarbonate left over from a house project, added a Velcro strap, and gave it a go. Worked well.

For an antenna I checked out LNR Precision and liked the look and price of the PAR Trail-Friendly EFT-10/20/40 Endfedz. I figured (correctly as it turned out) that the KX3's ATU would be able to tune it on most bands. I think that ATU will tune almost anything.

By this time I had enough stuff to start back yard trials. The wire was strung from a bush to a lawn chair and my first contact was VE2PID (Pierre) on 40m. It really worked! Other bands loaded ok and I was happy.

October rolled around and we were heading for England to visit and do some walking. This looked like an opportunity to field test the rig and see what I had forgotten. An email to RSGB brought a friendly reply from G0NBI that all I needed to do was follow UK regulations and sign M/WK2S.

I had a lot of trepidation as I approached TSA security at Newark Airport. The radio and almost all the paraphernalia were in my carry on backpack. The pack went through the scanner and not a word was said! Later, operation from Barnstaple (IO71xb) and near Pulborough (IO90sw) was fun with most contacts to the south and east. The operation did point out some equipment shortcomings, mainly the need for a good way to feed out a window, and the desirability of an easily movable antenna.

I figured the antenna directionality could be addressed with a Buddipole so I added that to my kit. Again, back yard tests were very promising. The window feed was addressed by opening up a section of RG58, peeling back the insulation and laying the inner conductor and the shield next to each other on a piece of gaffer tape. Nice and flat.

My pile of stuff was growing all the time. Finally Pat looked at it and decided to get me organized to make all my truck packable. I should mention that when we travel she does all the packing; I lift heavy things.



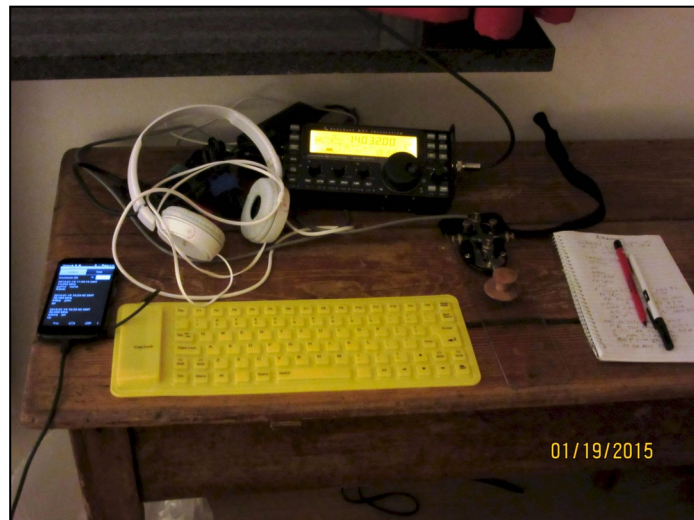
After some discussion and trials, Pat designed and sewed a kit to carry the whole portable set up. It is compact and tidy.

The original idea for the trip was to try and see the aurora so we scheduled as near to the January 2015 new moon as we could. Light pollution was also a consideration so Pat found us a B&B about an hour's drive north of Reykjavik. In the town of Borgarnes, the B&B (HP94am) was on the sea facing south west. To me it looked ideal. Before booking we checked with

KX3 Go Kit - Lift by the handles & drop into a backpack. Large tile is 14"

the innkeeper and she graciously said an antenna would be no problem. I'm not sure if she really understood the request, but we were set.

Once again it was time to run the TSA security gauntlet. I decided to check everything except the minimal needed to operate. That would be carry on. Once again TSA didn't blink. So we were on our way.



TF/WK2S Rig setup KX3, Piglet WiFi to Android phone. USB keyboard on phone for logging. J-38 with home make knob.



End fed antenna next to B&B

Bottom line? It was as much fun as I had hoped and I will make the attempt again. I've been thinking about SOTA...

Ed note.....

Traveling is always an "experience" but setting up as DX is great fun! Art did it "right" and with careful planning had a great time!

Darn, I don't know how I missed him!

We expected Iceland to be chilly, and it was, but the winds were a bit more than I had planned on. The B&B was indeed a great place to operate from, but I quickly decided that in gale force winds antenna survivability was at the top of my list. All thoughts of the Buddipole outdoors were abandoned, and any idea I had of using it indoors were dashed by the metal roof on the one story building. So the end fed wire was strung from a tree outside our window to the top of the Buddipole mast. The NE to SW alignment was not ideal, but it would have to do.

My first contact was F6HKA, Bert on 12m. What a relief! Hearing a friendly fist in a strange land is very re-assuring. It helps of course if that friendly fist has a great station and good ears. More contacts followed, mostly on 10m. With the KX3 cranked up to 10 watts and the antenna poorly placed, I was surprised and grateful for each contact.



Antenna location, Buddipole mast on left. Looking Southwest with ocean behind. Difficult expose due to low sun angle.

Comanches, Mohawks and Chippewa – Oh My!



These days, most Amateur Radio gear is identified with nothing more interesting than simple alpha-numeric designations like a Kenwood TS-570, Icom IC-7410, or Elecraft K3, but the naming landscape was far more colorful and romantic back in the day. Heathkit chose the Native American to anchor their Amateur Radio product line Heathkit, for example, chose to celebrate Native Americans with a variety of offerings for the Amateur market. Among those were the Apache transmitter and matching Mohawk receiver, the Cheyenne transmitter with the companion Comanche receiver, and a nifty little general coverage receiver called the Mohican. And it didn't stop there either. The Heathkit 6 Meter transmitter was named the Shawnee, and its rhyming 2 Meter cousin was the Pawnee.

Continuing the theme were Heathkit Kilowatt amplifiers Warrior and Chippewa. And the VHF offering of the day was the Seneca. I have no clear explanation for the interesting Native American naming convention used by the former manufacturer from Benton Harbor, but I always enjoyed hearing those names on the air as a station would describe his rig. I was a youngster back then, and the mention of an Apache or Comanche always triggered thoughts of Roy and Trigger, or Hopalong and Gene, and a scene from a western would often play out while I vicariously rode the range while riding the airwaves.

And Heath didn't hold a monopoly on creative license back then either, not by a long

shot. The Hallicrafters company made a short-lived line of high-powered transceivers which paid homage to the weather. These included the Cyclone, Tornado and Hurricane. The later of these may be the only 2 KW transceiver ever produced.

The Clegg Company, out of New Jersey, was a big player in VHF gear throughout the 60s and chose names that were literally out of this world. Imagine hearing something like this on a 6 Meter roundtable during the day. “Your Thor 6 is really punching through today, Old Man, I’m running a brand new Venus here.” “Your turn, Bob, and let us know how we’re sounding on that new Interceptor receiver of yours.” No, I’m not making this up. And heaven knows what Clegg was thinking when they named their 6M/2M transceiver the Climster Zeus.

The E.F. Johnson Company is another that obviously had a host of wacky creative talent in the product naming division during the 50s and 60s. I had the pleasure of cutting my teeth in Amateur Radio on a Johnson Viking Adventurer. Other wonderfully named gear from this pioneering company included the Viking Invader, Viking Ranger, Viking Valiant, Viking Challenger and the Viking Pacemaker.

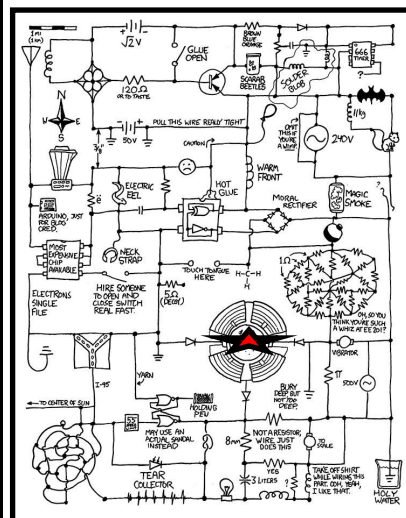
Lafayette Radio had their Voyager transmitter, Swan Radio had the Astro and Cygnet transceivers, and Gonset offered the Commander, Communicator and Sidewinder to the Ham market.

And no conversation about the nostalgic names of gear from yesteryear would be complete without including the many fabulous offerings from the Ten-Tec arsenal of Amateur products. The extensive Ten-Tec product line has included, or still includes, the Argonaut, Argosy, Century 21, Corsair, Delta, Eagle, Jupiter, Omni, Orion, Paragon, Pegasus, Rebel, Scout and Triton. And to their credit, Ten-Tec maintains a warm and friendly naming convention even to this day for many of their products, perhaps the sole practitioner of a practice that is quickly fading into the noise.

I get it that all things change. Change, in fact, is the one great constant of our Universe. But I still have a warm spot in my heart for all the wonderful names of the past. And lucky for me these names aren't loss to the historians either. All I have to do is crank out a CQ on 40 Meters most any evening, and then sit back and listen as the Apaches, Mohawks and Chippewas come back from the ether.

Hi Ho Silver!

73 es de Bill WA4FAT



Dayton 2015 Map Released

Again SKCC will have a booth and gathering place for everyone to meet, greet and try some keys. I got this map from a very reliable source for the displays, booths and dealers at this year's Dayton.

I can see the main arena on the map but I'm having a bit of trouble finding our SKCC booth. I know where we were last year but this year the booths are more difficult to spot on the new map.

Perhaps if I take a break and enjoy a couple more very tall and cold 807s all will become clear. But if by chance you spot the SKCC booth before me, please send me an email (CBA) indicating the location!

73. G00FY

New SKCC Straight Key?

Got this flyer from Wes AC8JF, 10511. Wes posed the question that if someone had one of these beasts would it qualify as an acceptable mechanical keying device for SKCC use?

THE YETMAN
Typewriter - Transmitter
Sends Perfect Morse by Keyboard



Makes Operators Expert Senders
TWO MACHINES IN ONE
Visible Writing Typewriter and Telegraph Transmitter

The YETMAN TYPEWRITER-TRANSMITTER CO. is manufacturing this combined machine at North Adams, Mass., where it owns outright a four-story factory building with as complete an equipment for typewriter manufacture as there is in any part of the world.

The manufacturing end of the business is in charge of Chas. E. Yetman, the inventor of this machine. Mr. Yetman is Vice-President and General Manager of this company. He will devote his whole time to the factory end of the business. His assistants are the ablest men to be found in the typewriter field.

The Yetman Typewriter-Transmitter

Especially designed for Telegraph Operators so as to avoid the severe nervous and physical strain which hand-senders are up against.

You can send perfect Morse with the Yetman
You can do more work with less effort
You can be an expert sender
You can regain your lost grip

Machines absolutely guaranteed are being manufactured daily. There is money in the Yetman Typewriter-Transmitter for you. Write us and we will tell you why.

Yetman Typewriter-Transmitter Co.
Box 25, North Adams, Mass.

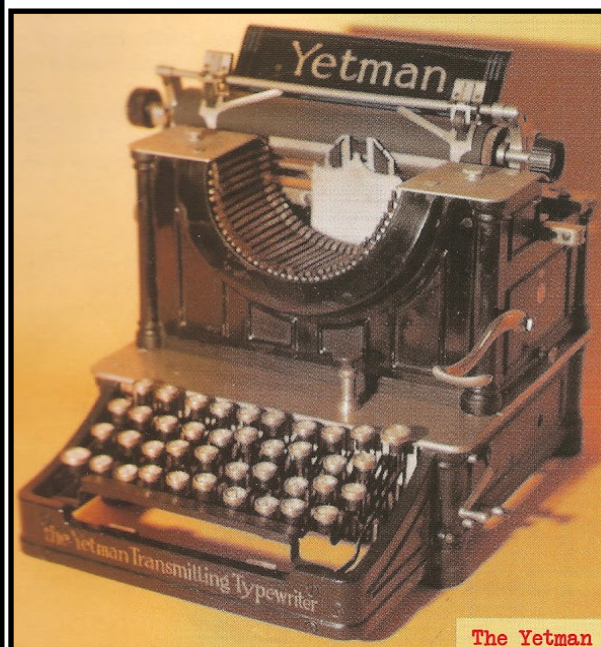
“Hmm, Very interesting.” said the man. I had to read and read through this to see what I could make of it. No mention is made of any power source that I can read here and of course I’d never heard of this machine nor seen one in my 54 years of ham radio. Since I see no mention of a power source I’m inclined to say “yes, it would be allowed.”

I did some internet searching and ran across some very interesting “facts(?)” regarding both the inventor and the company manufacturing the machine. What an interesting story and mystery surrounding this machine! If you have the time you may want to check into:

http://oztypewriter.blogspot.com/2012/09/on-this-day-in-typewriter-history_27.html

What a great and interesting story this was.

By the way, the machine only “transmits” typing into cw, it does not copy cw as some claimed. Wonder if it sends International Morse or Continental Morse?



K3Y/4 Multi-Multi... de N8KR



Nothing says FUN more than running multi-op multi-transmitter for K3Y . . . And that is exactly what Tim - K9TM and Ken - N8KR did this past January. Tim and Ken have known each other for many years while living in northwest Ohio. . . but what are they doing in 4-land???? Ken and his wife spend a few months every year just south of Tampa. Tim and his wife are looking ahead to retirement and have purchased a home on the Myakka River in Port Charlotte, about 40 miles south of Ken. Since both Tim and Ken are active with SKCC, they decided to take a K3Y/4 time slot and have

some fun. Tim quickly built two dipoles: 20 and 40 meters. He has a Kenwood TS-590 and Elecraft KPA-500 amp. Ken (and wife) showed up about two hours before their scheduled time with his Kenwood TS-570 and Tokyo Hi Power amp. Assembling the station was simple, each with a laptop for logging, straight keys and Tim's band pass filters to eliminate any inter-mod. The two hours of operation went quickly. It was 82 degrees outside and the view of the water and palm trees was stunning! They commented to each other on the people they were working and where they were from, always asking how many contacts each had. When the two hours were over, they had smiles on their faces with the great fun they had . . . and 102 contacts total: each had 51!

So, take it from Tim and Ken . . . if you really want to have a great time, get together with a fellow SKCCer for a special event (SKS, WES, ...etc.) and do a little multi-multi.



New "WAS"

Tony K6ELQ, 10250S has set himself a goal, "WAS." But it's not the standard "Worked All States;" Tony is in search of the "Worked All Senators" goal. Although not an "official" award, you can see Tony will constantly be working toward this goal as there are continually more Senators added to the SKCC numbers! I received an email the day after achieving my "S" asking for a QSO. Great idea Tony!



K6ELQ's modified **Tennadyne T-10** log yagi for 10-20 meters at 60-feet and for 30/40 meters an **ObtiBeam OB1-4030** Rotary Dipole mounted 10 feet above the log yagi.

A short, loaded inverted-V for 80 meters is mounted 8 feet below the log yagi.

K3Y/8 160m QSOs

If you worked K3Y/8 on 160m then you most likely worked KD8SKO, 10953T. Don uses the 160m version of a G5RV and enjoys the less hectic pace of 160m. Being a ham for only two years, Don has developed a very good fist and is using both a straight key and a bug...rumor has it he “occasionally” uses a paddle when not enjoying SKCC activity.

Along with his FT-840, Don has recently purchased a Kenwood TS-520s and enjoys



using that as his main SKCC activity rig.

Don is a regular of the multi-operator, multi transmitter team operating at W8TQE 2944T.

Don is also working toward his Senator award.

DIT DIT

de K5ZOL

Almost all of us use it as a final good-bye at the end of a QSO, Dit Dit. Where in the world did it come from?

Back in 1961, I began to hear novice stations sending Dits to the rhythm of “Shave and a Hair Cut, Six Bits,” but without the Six Bits, i.e. Just Shave and a Haircut. (I was still haunting the novice bands then as I didn’t yet have a VFO to go with my general ticket.) Eventually I understood that they were calling and listening for a “dit-dit” in response. After two or three runs of “Shave and a Haircut,” if they got a dit-dit, they’d send it again and if they got another properly timed dit-dit in response then a QSO would ensue. I believe QST had an editorial about that time gently admonishing novices to call CQ rather than use the suddenly popular “shave and a haircut” method.

Not long after that I sold all my ham gear to finance a little more college education and don’t know when “Shave and a Haircut” died out. Perhaps another Old Timer can give us “the rest of the story” as Paul Harvey used to do.

In the meantime, I’m looking forward to more QSO’s with all of you.

73 de K5ZOL

South Dakota Calling...W0EJ

Ed....Normally South Dakota is hard to work for WAS, but in SKCC it is one of the “easiest” states to work because of the continual cw operation of Bill W0EJ, SKCC #10440S.” Here’s Bill’s story. Thanks for being there Bill!

I had hated CW when having to learn code to get license and swore never to use this antiquated mode. In the late 1970’s while at sea on the Forrestal and bands not open to the states so we could run phone patches I started playing around on CW. A good friend of mine, Bob WA3UBA (sk) that ran a lot of patches for us and lived near Donna and me in Mayport, FL, used to come over and we’d start taking turns making CW contacts and this led to my love of Morse which is my preferred mode now.

In 2004 after returning to the States from Asia my main focus turned to CW DXing working for DXCC-CW and some casual CW contesting and NAQCC sprints. Then I decided to try straight key for the point multiplier in NAQCC sprints and the mechanically generated Morse grew on me quickly. Just after retiring and moving to South Dakota to be near our families, I joined the Prairie Dog Amateur Radio Club in Yankton and met Brian AE0P SKCC 7589T who introduced me to SKCC. In March 6, 2013 I joined SKCC and started having a ball right off the bat. March 29, 2013 I earned my C, April 18, 2013 I earned my T, October 14, 2014 I earned TX8 and recently December 30, 2014 I earned my S. Although I have a monthly meeting in Sioux Falls that conflicts with WES weekends, WES remains my favorite SKCC event followed by K3Y/0 which I’ve operated /0 in both 2014 and 2015. Brian and I own 9 of the top 10 scores for the state of SD.... That being said, competition here is pretty slim, hi. I never professed to be a good OP, I just like to have fun.

My first straight key was an old Ameco and I am not sure where I even got it but it was a long time ago. It was too light so I disassembled a chrome Bencher single lever paddle and mounted the Ameco to that base. Much better but when I got excited I sometimes would bend the lever of the Ameco straight key and so began my search for a “better” straight key.

In my search I’ve tried the J-37, J-38, VizKey Camelback, Vibroplex Standard straight key, Czech key and NT9K Pro Pump before finding and falling in love with my N3ZN ZNHN straight key. Finally!! This ZNHN is the original all brass version which I don’t believe is available anymore, very heavy and bullet proof. My only issue was I didn’t care for the knob as it seemed too much like a knob on a kitchen cabinet. I contacted Tom at VizKey and bought one of the knobs he used on the Camelback and now my ZNHN is perfect to me.

Also I’ve tried a bug, found a beautiful 1950(my birth year) Chrome Standard and got OK with it but have an intermittent “dit” problem that is most likely me. I also have a VizKey vertical bug which is pretty sweet but since finding my ZNHN, I pretty much only run straight key for SKCC, NAQCC and FISTS work. For my non-mechanically generated Morse, I use N3ZN’s ZN9A iambic key which is all brass as well.

I have the beam and tower in the barn that I keep saying I will put up next summer but to date, I only operate on a Hy-Power 160M OCF Dipole, 268’ long up 35’ oriented E/W and a 10/12M dipole up 25’ oriented N/S. I seriously hope to get the 43’ vertical and the Mosley CL-67 up this coming summer especially since the beam has 40M capability.

I bought a J-37 on eBay and liked it but again found that I wanted something with a beefier base. (I never said I was a good CW OP, hi) Eventually I mounted that J-37 onto the base of a lamp I made (attached). My next project is a J-38 straight key and a 4-400Z tube mounted on a lamp base that has my callsign inlaid and a Pixie 7.030 MHz transceiver in the bottom of the base so the lamp will actually be a QRP rig. My other lamp projects are turning D-104 mics into lamps, sure don't need them for anything else. ☺ Arguably some Ops think my efforts are better spent making CW focused lamps but I figure if I don't operate phone, why not convert microphones and put them to good use?



Radio Humor

You can find all sorts of radio humor on the internet, here are just a few:

EINSTEIN ON RADIO

"I am often asked how radio works. Well, you see, wire telegraphy is like a very long cat. You yank his tail in New York and he meows in Los Angeles. Do you understand this? Now, radio is exactly the same, except that there is no cat." __Attributed to Albert Einstein

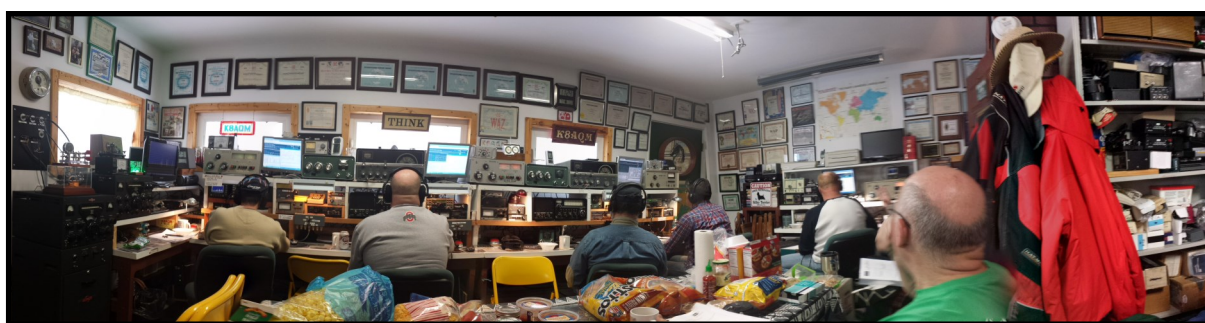
OF GENIES AND THINGS

A ham operator is operating Field Day alone at a deserted beach. He is taking a little break from the action, walking around on the beach and notices an antique brass bottle mostly buried in the sand. He digs it out and discovers it's a genie bottle! He manages to get it open and a genie appears. "Thank you for freeing me, O Master!" said the grateful genie. "I will grant you any one wish you want." The ham thinks about it and says, "OK, I got it. I live right now in a restrictive neighborhood. I would like to have a 500 foot tower with all sorts of antennas, despite the homeowners association." The genie looks worried. "O Master! That's a big order. The power of these HOAs and their CC&Rs is most powerful! In fact, they are more powerful than even I, O Master! I would beg you to please choose something else for your wish." The ham says, "OK, let's do this." He goes over to his ham station and pulls out his log books. "See this entry? This is a contact I once made with K8AQM. I would sure like to get his QSL card after all this time." The genie looks at the logbook. Then he says, "Now regarding that 500 foot antenna tower, do you want it galvanized or stainless steel?"

2015 K3Y/8 Multi-Multi Operation

The Adrian Amateur Radio Club, W8TQE 29441T again operated K3Y/8 as a multi operator-multi transmitter event as K3Y/8. It has become an annual club event and is bigger than our Field Day operation! Five stations were active with eighteen SKCC members participating and operating and three non members helping out. Those operating during the two day weekend were:

N3JJT 225T	KD8BBK 2443C	AD7TN 10763	K8KIC 2938T
K8KS 4444T	KD8VSQ 13072	AC8JF 10511	N8AMM 3198T
W8IQ 7557	KD8TTM 11614	N8KR 7559S	K8AQM 1629T
KU8L 5380T	K8TEZ 8426T	N8LJ 9954	NU8Z 11237
AC8W 2813	KG8CO 6362	K8MU.....	W8CQU.....
W8TTH...			

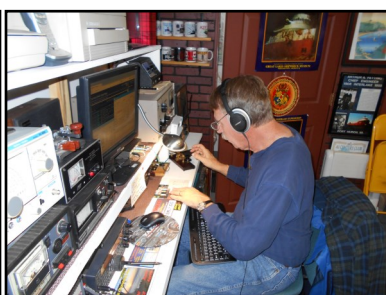


Above is a panoramic view of the shack showing four of the five stations and the “chow” table. We had chips, wraps, popcorn, nuts, salsas, chili, drinks, (sodas, coffee and 807s!) and chicken potpie during the weekend. No one went away hungry!

Left to right: N8LJ on 15m

N8KR on 30m

AD7TN on 40m & KD8TTM



Tony KD8BBk discovered a mic!
What do you do with this?

KU8L at the key

Scott N3JJT



But it wasn't all just making QSOs! It was "socializing," relaxing, eating and pulling pranks!



K8MU reading about the new N6BT "Bravo Five" antenna.



KU8L and KD8BBK enjoying chicken potpie!



N3JJT hiding behind the chili pot and crackers.



K8KIC, K8TEZ KD8TTM and K8AQM. K8TEZ "bragging" to K8KIC about eating K8AQM's turkey wrap sandwich!



KU8L, K8AQM, N3JJT and KD8BBK...all guilty!



KG8CO on the phone with 5KW of RF in the shack and no RFI!

But the best prank was pulled by Noz AD7TN! Here Noz is sitting at the table behind



NU8Z who was running 40m (beam and KW). Noz had his KX1 with a 52 ohm resistor antenna and rig running 10 milliwatts or less. Noz called K3Y/8 (aka NU8Z); after NU8Z requested "several" repeats on that weak signal, the call got in the log. NU8Z realized who/what had happened turned and fired at Noz, "THAT'S YOU!!!!!" The place broke out in laughter as we all knew what was going on except NU8Z! What a great prank!

It was a great time and lots of fun operating as a group in K3Y/8 for 2015. Club activities are always more fun than single ops because of the great interaction among the ops. Oh yes, we made quite a few QSOs during the operation, 656 straight key and bug QSOs. We used, J-38s, J37s, Navy flameproof, SKCC keys (3) and Czech keys; bugs including, Vibroplex, TAC Hole-in-the-Wall, MacElroys, Vizkey right angle (a big hit, N3JJT brought it), Johnson Speed X and a "Dub Bug (two right angle bugs on one mount for fast/slow operation...by N9ZXL).

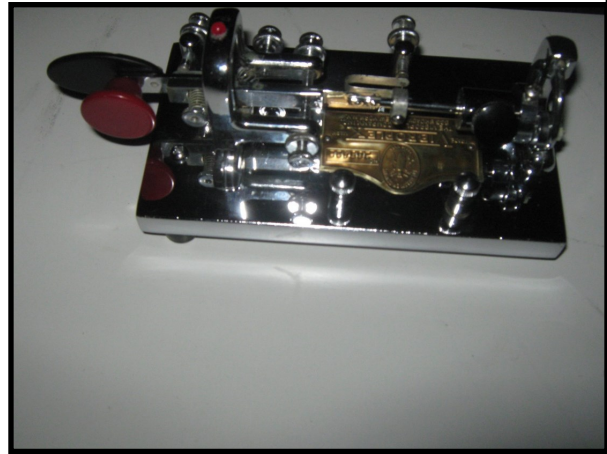
Can we top this year's operation next year? We sure are going to try, the guys are fired up!
de W8TQE, K3Y/8 multi-multi team

Battle of the Bugs

Learning CW and not having any keys Bill KD8TTM (#11614) and Jeremy KD8VSQ (#13072) decided to find themselves BUGS! Searching Ebay and Craigslist they found a few keys and bugs for sale and went to seek them out. Jeremy got himself a Vibroplex Champion and Bill got himself a Vibroplex Original Deluxe Model. Both had seen better days but with a bit of work both turned out quite nice! Here are the before and after pictures of what they did:



KD8TTM's "original" purchase



KD8TTM's "refurbished" bug



KD8VSQ's "original purchase



KD8VSQ's "refurbished" bug

Some like to keep bugs "original" but It seems these bugs now have "new life" and would be a pleasure to operate. Note the KD8VSQ bug, Jeremy used corncobs in a polisher to bring the chrome to a sparking finish while KD8TTM used the old Navy method of lots of elbow grease and plenty of Brasso! Since this picture, KD8TTM has also replace the black paddle with a matching red paddle. KD8VSQ has added a very special dit extender made by "Norm's Fabrication" (W8TTH) (Normsfab.com) for his Champion and W8TTH also makes an extender for the Vibroplex Original which KD8TTM has recently purchased.

Now the challenge is for these two ops to become familiar with using a bug and start enjoying QSOs with other members. Both KD8TTM and KD8VSQ are members of the Adrian Amateur Radio Club (W8TQE) and part of the multi-multi K3Y/8 team.

CW Before SKCC

Dave K2MTW #13596

I was a wireless CW Radio Operator with the Buffalo New York Police Department, with seventy nine stations - in twenty five states coast to coast. Buffalo NY call letters were KEB-23 with a call up sign using the letters BJ - used in call /contact Buffalo NY with traffic. Cleveland used CV, Detroit Michigan used DM - East Lansing MI was EL St Louis used SL -

Detroit Michigan - DM was used as the East Coast Net Control as I recall - and they would send out important police radio messages in the early evening to Ohio, Michigan and New York.

Daytime frequencies were: 5195 Khz as a calling frequency - with a QSY to 5135 or 5140 to send or receive traffic messages. The letter 'Z' instead of the amateur radio 'Q' code - where 'ZTH' I think was used instead of QSY - meaning change frequency to... ZTH - 35 or 40 meaning QSY to 5135 or 5140

In addition to calling on 5195 Khz Buffalo also monitored 7935 Khz during daytime operations. That frequency was near a Canadian military channel that transmitted a Radio Teletype (RTTY) test signal all day with the letters 'RY' that are electronically opposite on RTTY and caused me to develop a splitting head-ache while working the day shift. I had a RTTY set up at home on 20 meters and tuned in around 7935 Khz and printed the RY's from a Canadian military call sign. Somehow, I was able to contact that station and asked them why they drive me crazy on 7935 - and they said something about military secret - Eight hours of RY's will drive you crazy!

On the afternoon shift (4 PM - Midnight) - Buffalo changed over to 2804 Khz as a calling frequency with several additional channels near by for receiving and sending police traffic - 2808 Khz and 2812 Khz - if I remember.

For those CW operators who think they are pretty good, run the following word in Morse code and it will drive them up the wall: Try this for fun- **BEST BENT WIRE RESET** If you can copy this at ten words per minute or better - you ARE good!

More Radio Humor...

YOU MIGHT BE A HAM IF.....

1. YOUR WIFE SAID, "LETS GO SEE AUNT ANNA", AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID, "LETS GO SEE THE ANTENNA".
2. YOUR WIFE SAID, "COULD YOU CUT THE GRASS?", AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID "POUND THE BRASS! "
3. YOUR WIFE SAID, "WE'VE BEEN INVITED TO BREAKFAST", AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID "HAM FEST"!
4. YOUR WIFE SAID, "SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE CHECK BOOK", AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID, "LOG BOOK"!
5. YOUR WIFE SAID, "IS MY SEAM STRAIGHT?", AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID, "IS THE BEAM STRAIGHT?"
6. YOUR WIFE SAID, "TURN ON THE FAN", AND YOU THOUGHT SHE SAID, "CHANGE THE BANDS". kc9rxc

KC9W Randy, #5277S

Ed note....If you haven't worked Tennessee nor KC9W then you just haven't been on the air in the last year! It's a pleasure to get on the air for rag chewing, SKS or WES and have a QSO with Randy and have Tennessee for a multiplier.

The following is an introduction and bio of one of SKCC's most active amateurs.

EARLY SIXTIES I WAS EXPOSED TO AMATEUR RADIO AT MY MOMS COUSINS BASEMENT SHACK-CLARKE - W9BQL, NOW A SK WHO HAD WHAT LOOKED TO ME LIKE A SPACE SHIP CONTROL ROOM IN HIS BASEMENT. HE WOULD HAVE ME SIT THERE AS HE CALLED CQ CQ INTO HIS MICROPHONE. THERE WERE LIGHTS AND DIALS EVERYWHERE. HE CALLED SEVERAL TIMES AND THEN A CRACKLY VOICE ANSWERED HIM. IT TURNED OUT THAT THIS OTHER VOICE WAS IN VERY NORTHERN ILLINOIS NEAR THE WISCONSIN BORDER AND WE WERE IN A SOUTH SUBURB OF CHICAGO. THIS WAS AMAZING. THIS WAS SOMEONE WHO WAS OVER ONE HUNDRED MILES AWAY. THIS WAS MAGIC. WITH WIRES, LIGHTS, DIALS AND TUBES WE WERE ACTUALLY TALKING TO SOMEONE WAY FAR AWAY. THESE VISITS WERE REPEATED MANY TIMES. MY MOM WENT TO HIS HOUSE BECAUSE HIS WIFE TAUGHT CERAMICS. I TAGGED ALONG SO I COULD SEE CLARKE AND HIS RADIOS. TIME AND TIME



AGAIN HE TOOK ME WITH HIM ON HIS MAGIC CARPET AND WE WOULD VISIT OTHER HAMS OFTEN FAR AWAY. THAT WAS THE START OF MY INTEREST IN HAM RADIO. THAT SPARKED MY INTEREST. I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL AND MY INTEREST RAN TOWARDS ELECTRONICS. I GOT A POLICE SCANNER. I WAS HOOKED. I LIKED THIS RADIO STUFF. I WAS INVOLVED IN OFF ROADING AND MOST OF THE GUYS HAD A CB RADIO IN THEIR TRUCKS, MYSELF INCLUDED. ON SOME DAYS I COULD HEAR PEOPLE ON THAT CB RADIO THAT WERE IN TEXAS. I WAS IN INDIANA, THIS WAS WAY TOO COOL! THIS ONLY HAPPENED ONCE IN AWHILE AND I WAS TOLD IT WAS BECAUSE OF "SKIP". STUFF BUT IT O HAPPENED EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.

IF YOU WANTED TO GET IT MORE OFTEN, YOU NEEDED TO GET A "HAM" RADIO. WELL I HAD A NEIGHBOR WHO HAD THESE WIRES AND ANTENNAS ON HIS HOUSE. I KNOCKED ON HIS DOOR ONE DAY TO ASK IF THAT WAS A HAM RADIO ANTENNA AND IT WAS OF COURSE . I LEARNED THE CODE. COLLECTED STUDY GUIDES LEARNING THEORY. AFTER A WHILE I DECIDED I WAS READY. I TOOK THE RIDE UP TO CHICAGO AND TOOK MY NOVICE TEST. SWEATY PALMS AND VERY NERVOUS BUT YES, I DID IT! I WAS A HAM! MAN, I WAS ELATED. NOW TO WAIT FOR THE PAPERWORK TO COME. WHILE WAITING I NEEDED TO GET READY SO I WENT TO A LOCAL HAM FEST. OF COURSE MY BUDGET WAS SMALL. I GOT A TEMPO ONE AND A DOUBLET AND A ANTENNA TUNER. I SPENT TIME HANGING UP MY INVERTED VEE AND RAN THE RIBBON LINE THROUGH MY BEDROOM WINDOW AND HOOKED IT ALL UP AND I WAS GLUED TO THE RADIO LISTENING TO ALL THE MAGIC OF STATIONS FROM EVERYWHERE COMING INTO MY HOUSE. I WAS HEARING RUSSIA AND AFRICA AND ALL SORTS OF PLACES IN THE STATES. FINALLY MY LICENSE ARRIVED, I WAS NOW WD9CNH. HOW COOL WAS THAT!

YEARS AND "EVENTS" LATER.....

DUE TO ILLNESS AND BEING BED RIDDEN, I HAD TO HAVE A SMALL PROFILE RADIO TO RESIDE ON A BEDSIDE TABLE. I DECIDED ON THE VERY SMALL ELE-CRAFT KX3. THIS GENTLEMEN, IS HOW I DISCOVERED QRP OPERATING. I HAD ALWAYS RELIED ON GOOD ANTENNAS AND AT LEAST 100 WATTS. I TRULY DID-N'T EXPECT MUCH FROM A LOW POWERED RADIO. BUT ONE THING WAS SURE "IT WAS SMALL" I WAS NOT REALLY VERY CONVINCED THAT I WOULD HAVE MUCH SUCCESS WITH THIS LITTLE "TOY" RADIO. IN FACT I NEARLY SENT IT BACK AFTER I OPENED THE BOX. I JUST COULDN'T BELIEVE I HAD JUST SHELLED OUT SO MANY DOLLARS FOR THAT TINY RIG. HECK MY POCKET BOOK THAT WAS ON MY TABLE WAS BIGGER THAN THIS HAM RIG. THEN THERE WAS THE PROBLEMS OF AN ANTENNA.. I HAD BEEN TALKING TO AN OLD FRIEND ON THE COMPUTER AND HE VOLUNTEERED TO SEND ME A G5RV ANTENNA HE HAD BUILT FOR HIS CLUB'S FIELD DAY. I HAD TO FIND SOMEONE TO HELP ME GET THE ANTENNA UP. A FELLOW DIALYSIS PATIENT HAD A SON WHO WAS A HAM. SHE TALKED TO HIM AND HE GOT IN TOUCH WITH ME. HE AND A FRIEND CAME OUT AND HUNG A G5RV ANTENNA FOR ME. I HAD A VIBROKEYER SO I COULD GET ON THE AIR. THIS WAS APRIL OF 2014. I GOT ON THE AIR AND THE FIRST SEVERAL PEOPLE I TALKED TO WERE SKCC MEMBERS. THEY SEEMED TO ENCOURAGE ME AND WERE WILLING TO TALK BEYOND THE NORMAL REPORT, NAME AND QTH CONVERSATION THAT MANY SEEMED TO ONLY WANT TO HAVE. AFTER SEVERAL QSOS IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT I HAD LONG AGO GOTTEN AN SKCC NUMBER. I PULLED UP THE GROUPS WEB PAGE AND READ SOMETHING ABOUT THE GROUP. WHO THEY WERE AND HOW THEY WANTED TO PRESERVE THE OLD WAY OF SENDING CODE. THEY ALSO SEEMED TO HAVE LOTS OF THINGS GOING ON FOR A PERSON TO DO. I ALSO SPOTTED A LINK TO SOMETHING CALLED A "SKED" PAGE. THIS OF COURSE IS THE K3UK SKCC SKED PAGE.

I TOOK A LOOK AT THAT AND WATCHED IT FOR A FEW DAYS TO SEE WHAT FOLKS WERE TALKING ABOUT AND JUST HOW THINGS SEEMED TO WORK. I COULD TELL JUST BY WATCHING THAT THIS WAS A CLOSE KNIT GROUP THAT SEEMED FRIENDLY TOWARD ONE ANOTHER AND REALLY WILLING TO HELP OUT NEW GUYS OR GUYS WHO WEREN'T NEW BUT MAYBE WERE NEW TO MORSE CODE. THIS SEEMED LIKE SOMETHING THAT WAS RIGHT UP MY ALLEY. I BEGAN TO HALTINGLY MAKE CONTACTS. I MADE IT A POINT TO SEEK OUT SKCC MEMBERS. I FOUND THEM VERY WILLING TO TAKE THE TIME TO HAVE RAG CHEWS WITH ME. MY CODE SPEED WITH A STRAIGHT KEY WHILE STILL PRETTY SLOW, BECAME MORE ACCURATE. MY WRIST AND ARM GOT TO THE POINT WHERE THEY WEREN'T WORN OUT AFTER ONLY A FEW MINUTES OF TRYING TO SEND THE CODE. I STARTED TO LEARN ABOUT THE WAY THE SKCC GROUP WORKED. I BEGAN TO LOG MY CONTACTS ON A LOGBOOK WRITTEN BY AN SKCC MEMBER. I HAD NEVER USED A COMPUTER LOGBOOK BEFORE. EVEN THOUGH I HAD READ THE INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW THE LOG WORKED I STILL HAD QUESTIONS. I HOOKED UP WITH A FELLOW HAM WHO REALLY HELPED ME UNDERSTAND HOW THE LOG WORKED BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY HOW TO USE IT TO HELP ME FILL OUT APPLICATIONS FOR THE MANY AWARDS THE GROUP OFFERED ITS USERS. THIS WAS GETTING BETTER AND BETTER. IT SEEMED LIKE AT EVERY TURN I WAS MEETING ANOTHER FRIENDLY HAM WILLING TO GO OUT OF HIS OR HER WAY TO HELP ME. IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS AT THE BEGINNING OF MAY I GOT MY CENTURION AWARD. I NOW HAD A LETTER TO PASS OUT WITH MY NUMBER. I FELT LIKE A MEMBER NOW. ABOUT A WEEK LATER I HAD MADE ENOUGH CONTACTS TO GO FROM CENTURION TO TRIBUNE. THIS WAS FUN! AS THE DAYS WENT BY I PROGRESSED THROUGH THE LEVELS OF TRIBUNE. THINGS LIKE SKS AND WES CAME UP. I DECIDED TO TRY MY HAND AT IT. I SURPRISED MYSELF AT NOT ONLY DOING PRETTY WELL BUT DOING PRETTY WELL WITH LOW POWER AND A SIMPLE ANTENNA. AS THE DAYS WENT BY I MET MORE AND MORE SKCC HAMS. WHAT A GREAT BUNCH. I MET FIRST ON THE AIR AND THEN IN PERSON BILL WB4DBO WHO HAS BECOME A WONDERFUL FRIEND. THEN I WENT IN SEARCH OF A STRAIGHT KEY. A GENEROUS SKCC BUNCH FURNISHED ONE TO ME.

THIS WAS REALLY FUN. I FOUND MYSELF LOOKING FORWARD TO THE TIMES I COULD GET ON THE RADIO. AS THE DAYS AND WEEKS WENT BY I WAS REALLY AMAZED THAT I ACTUALLY DID PRETTY WELL WITH MY LOW POWER IN THE SKS AND WES EVENTS. I WAS MEETING MORE AND MORE MEMBERS. I WAS BEGINNING TO RECOGNIZE CERTAIN OPERATORS BY THE WAY THEY SENT THEIR CODE. I COULD TELL IF THEY WERE ON A STRAIGHT KEY OR USING A COOTIE. ONCE AGAIN I WAS BEGINNING TO BE ABLE TO JUDGE HOW BAND CONDITIONS WERE. I WAS RELEARNING WHICH BAND AND WHAT TIME OF THE DAY WOULD PRODUCE THE BEST RESULTS FOR ME. THE SKED PAGE BECAME MY FRIEND. I BECAME A REGULAR I GUESS.

I WAS ALWAYS IN SEARCH OF A NEW MEMBER. IF I RAN ACROSS SOMEONE ON THE AIR WHO WASN'T AN SKCC MEMBER I MADE IT A POINT TO TAKE THE TIME TO TELL THEM WHY I THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD IDEA FOR THEM TO LOOK AT WHAT THE GROUP MIGHT HAVE TO OFFER THEM. AFTER ALL, THEY

HAD DONE SO MUCH FOR ME, HOW COULD I NOT SHARE! I ACTUALLY FOUND A FEW HAMS WHO LIKE ME HAD JOINED SKCC A LONG WHILE BACK JUST FOR THE SAKE OF JOINING AND A COUPLE OF THOSE FELLAS ARE NOW ACTIVE MEMBERS. AS MY LOGBOOK GREW LARGER, I FOUND OTHER AWARDS I MIGHT BE ABLE TO QUALIFY FOR; I NOW HAVE "WAS" AND "WAS-C" AWARDS, THERE ARE ONE OR TWO-WAY AWARDS I ALSO NOW HAVE. SO MANY THINGS TO DO AND TRY!

I WAS CONTACTED BY BILL W0EJ, TO HELP ESTABLISH A QRP DISTANCE AWARD. I DIDN'T DO TOO MUCH TO HELP BUT I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN CERTIFICATE NUMBER 8, INITIALLY IT WAS 1500 MILES PER WATT AND NOW I HAVE MANAGED TO INCREASE MY MILES PER WATT TO 18500 MILES PER WATT.

THE LATEST THING THAT HAS CAUGHT MY EYE AND SOMETHING THAT REALLY APPEALS TO ME IS THE MARATHON RAG CHEWERS AWARD, THIS IS A LONG RANGE GOAL I WILL KEEP TRYING FOR AS LONG AS I AM ABLE. SKCC HAS REALLY DONE FOR ME EXACTLY WHAT MY WIFE SUGGESTED THAT RADIO MIGHT DO FOR ME AND THAT IS TO STEM THE TERRIBLE DEPRESSION THAT COMES FROM BEING HOMEBOUND.

I HAVE FOUND THAT MY FIVE WATT MAGIC CARPET WILL TAKE ME TO FAR AWAY PLACES. I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY TALK TO HAMS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF BOTH THE ATLANTIC AND THE PACIFIC OCEANS. AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA HAVE YIELDED MANY SATISFYING CONVERSATIONS. I HAVE HAD SOME REALLY GOOD CHATS WITH A HAM WHO'S WIFE RESCUES ANIMALS IN THEIR AUSTRALIAN HOME. IMAGINE HAVING A KANGAROO ROAMING THROUGH YOUR SHACK! I HAVE EVEN RECENTLY BEEN ABLE TO WORK THE NUMBER ONE MOST WANTED DX ENTITY WITH MY FIVE WATT POWERHOUSE. YUP, I AM IN THE LOG OF K1N NAVASSA ISLAND ON 20 METERS, KNOWN AS "AMPLIFIER ALLY." SO MANY NEW PLACES, SO MANY NEW FRIENDS, SO MANY NEW CHALLENGES MADE POSSIBLE FOR ME BY FIVE WATTS AND AN ORGANIZATION THAT PROMOTES STRAIGHT KEY CW.

TO SAY THAT SKCC HAS GIVEN ME A NEW LEASE ON LIFE IS NOT OUTSIDE THE REALM OF A "TRUE STORY". THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE A PART OF SKCC AND THOSE MANY HARD WORKING PEOPLE BEHIND THE SCENE WHO MAKE THIS ORGANIZATION RUN SO VERY WELL HAVE MADE HAM RADIO FUN FOR ME AGAIN. THE MAGIC OF RADIO IS STILL THERE FOR ME. THE CARPET... A FIVE WATT RADIO AND A SIMPLE WIRE ANTENNA IS THE TICKET AGENT FOR ALL THIS MAGIC - A FREE HAM RADIO GROUP NAMED SKCC!

72, ES CU ON THE BANDS!

RANDY KC9W, #5277S

More Radio Humor...de AC6V

FAMOUS Movie DX QUOTES....

"Do ya feel lucky QRPer -- Well do ya" -- Eastwood
"All the shacks in all the towns in all the world, and the FCC walks into mine." -- Bogie
"Here's QSLing you kid" -- Bogie
"All ya gotta do is - whistle -- To key or to key not" -- A mike test by Bacall
"Had to work em OM -- he'd be out that door and gone" -- E.G. Robinson -- Key Largo
"Round up the usual jammers" -- Claude Rains -- Casablanker
"You came back - to a pileup like this" -- Magnificent Seven
"I cudda been on the honor roll Charlie" -- Brando
"We're on a DXpedition from GØD" -- The Blues Brothers
"I love the smell of ozone in the morning" -- Apocalypse Now
"Louie, I think this is the beginning of a beautiful pileup" -- Bogie
It's 6,000 miles to Heard Isle, we've got a "full gallon, half a pack of cigarettes, it's dark and we're wearing sunglasses." - - ELWOOD:
"Key it!" -- JAKE
Surely you can't be serious about DXing? I am dead serious, and don't ever call me Shirley.
"Use the Force 12 Luke" - - OB1
AND OF COURSE: "Frankly my dear, I don't give a QSL." - Gable

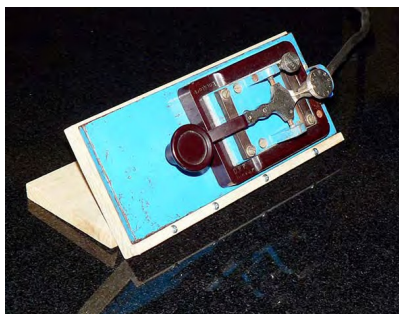
Ham Radio Lies

I am just running a few watts, oops, there goes the circuit breaker.
I usually copy code around 40 wpm but have an ear infection so using phone now.
Love code but had my Vibroplex stolen so have to use phone.

Great Books and Their Subjects

Two Years Before The Mast -- A no-rotor station
The Rise And Fall of The Sun Spot Cycle- - SFI Blues
Gone With The Wind -- A Quad Story
Much Ado About Nothing -- DXing Exposed
War and DXing-- DX Contesting Exposed
Don Quadotee -- Attacked a 160 Meter Quad
Of Man And Mouse -- Computer Fiction
The Sound and the Fury -- Pileups Explained

Key Atilt....de K5OK



I found a Junkers key and was very glad to have a nice straight key again after many years of using a bug and iambic keyer. Well, I found that after 50 years I have a stiff wrist, or glass fist. Explaining this to a guy at work, he mentioned a keyboard he had to solve a similar problem. As we talked, I noticed as I rotated my hand, the wrist would tighten-up first on one side then, as I rotated, the other side would tighten-up. But at a 45 degree angle tilt everything was loose. So I built a stand that is angled 45 degrees and mounted the key on it. To make it

left or right handed, just turn the key around.

CTKC Disease!

Do you suffer from CTKC disease (Chronic Telegraph Key Collecting) or excessive CW operating? If so, read further, as this note I received from Gary(W5GW) may offer some advice. ...de AC2C



“As many of you know, I’ve been toying with the idea of building an automatic telegraph key hub. This hub will sense the type of telegraph key, whether it be straight key, paddles, bug, Cootie, or the like and then make an automatic connection to one of my transceivers. Finally, this ‘smart hub’ will issue a command to the transceiver so you can rapidly change keys while sending and not loose a character.

One limitation of such a hub would be the numerous wires between all of the keys, the hub, and the transceivers. At last count I have about thirty some odd telegraph keys and having numerous

wires to and from a hub may result in a fertile nesting ground for the mice I already have in the shack. My XYL tells me I need to get around to that problem someday. But in the meantime K1N is up on 12 meters and I want to try out my old Dow Key rotary bug and snag them.

Sorry, I digress. But neglecting this minor problem of the wires wouldn’t it be fun to make a contact on a Dow Key, shift mid-report to Kent paddles, and then finish up with a Bega-li Sculpture Arrow straight key? Ah, the dream of it all.

My friend Gene (K5PA) suggested a way around the wire problem by developing a remote client that would attach to each key and then, using a wireless transmission media send a unique code to the hub as well as the Morse code. While this idea has merit, initial testing of a prototype showed severe interference with a Bluetooth stereo speaker belonging to a teenage girl across the street. That, and a visit from the county Sheriff, quickly nixed that idea.

Contemplating this problem after returning from the Sheriff’s office – after giving a deposition that I was not an alien as my neighbor had claimed – another method to solve my hub design came to mind. As I key my transmitter, it causes the touch switch in the XYL’s Chi-na cabinet to activate. My XYL has grown accustomed to having a light show accompany the melodious music I create in our stereo system at all hours of the day from my CW operating, but it has caused our cat Bailey to develop a severe personality disorder. Nonetheless, we have trained Bailey with sufficient treats and extra food servings so he has overcome this personality disorder, but now he has an eating disorder.

Sorry for the digression, but back to the China cabinet and the telegraph key hub. I could simply have multiple transceivers of a sufficient power to radiate and activate the China cabinet and then use that to activate and key a larger transmitter. Unfortunately, this didn’t eliminate the number of connections, but it did open up an interesting avenue of possible future collective bargaining with the XYL whereby I could dramatically increase the count of transceivers in my radio arsenal. Visions of a ‘key for every radio and a radio for every key’ almost

took precious time away from operating as on-line searches to see how to best fulfill this dream. Unfortunately, reality soon prevailed since the cost to acquire said system so I could take full advantage of my growing telegraph key collection would have resulted in depleting my retirement savings and having to move into my son's home. Another idea shelved, at least for now.

Along the way, the XYL began to tell me my problem about telegraph keys was getting out of hand (no pun intended, she said – when I laughed at her little play on words). We rarely have words of discord, but she got a bit miffed as I handed her some treats to feed Bailey as I went into the shack to put my Navy flameproof key on the air for the first time that week. I knew the tempo of my sending and the accompanying light show from the cabinet would soon pacify her. Her voice echoed down the hallway as I heard, “Really Gary, you are becoming fixated, I’m serious, I’m going to organize an intervention if you can’t get a grip...”

I decided to look back into some early radio history and see if any ingenious amateur radio operators and the medical profession had tackled the issue of excessive key collecting. While I didn’t have a problem, perhaps I could offer up some temporary medically approved solution that would keep peace since there are three recent key purchases in transit that I surmised might cause a bit of friction with the XYL.

While many solutions were novel and may have appeal to some, the idea of hosting a telegraph key intervention or exorcist ritual to divest myself of my beloved keys seemed rather severe and totally unacceptable. While I could find no stated evidence, it does seem that Ed Armstrong developed FM radio in an attempt to rid himself from this strange malady of excessive telegraph key collecting and operating CW.

Encouraging one to explore other forms of communication may offer a temporary remedy; however, there was no proof of a permanent cure. While the development of Single Side Band was cited in an obscure AMA journal as a last ditch effort, even that proved non-effective. Recent medical evidence suggests that the CW fixative disease (known as CW-itis) and its related disease, CTKC, are not curable and may even be on the rise.

But wait, I don’t want to cure my diseases, which I don’t have, by the way; but if I did, I’d wish to embrace them. This I firmly resolve, as I unwrap a mint condition Viz side-swipper recently acquired on eBay. Again, I decide to delve back into history some more.

I find in 1935 there was a radio phenomenon discovered called the Luxembourg Effect. This strange force caused radio signals on one frequency to be modulated in the ionosphere by a stronger radio signal on a different frequency and then be detected on an even different third frequency. Again, I’m back to multiple transceivers and my dream of a radio for every key, but this time I’ll include even higher power amplifiers. That, with a properly chosen amplifier transmitting a continuous carrier will serve to allow me to not only key the ionosphere as the hub (not a true cloud, but certainly close), but to also rapidly QSY to my hearts content. Yes, the cost will be high – to say nothing of the impending FCC violations – but I’m sure the advances I make in exploring this new concept will be worth it, and my son has lots of room in his home.

In the meantime I’m relying on using antiquated 1/4 in. jacks and plugs to place a desired telegraph key into operation.

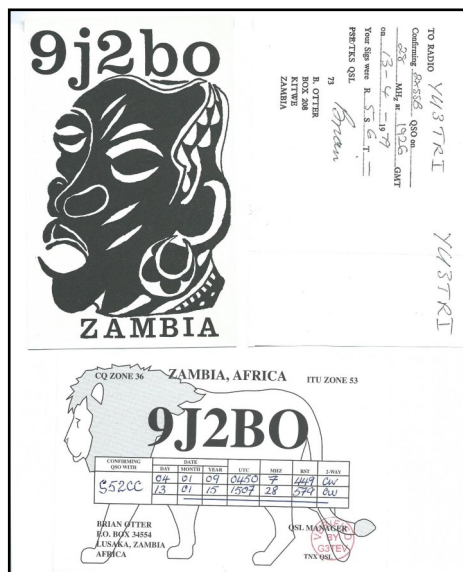
Hmmm, I just read England has authorized limited human cloning, I wonder if I could offer up myself as a test subject and would they consider giving me sixty arms and make me ambidextrous?

Well, I must go now, I hear the FedEx truck coming up the driveway, perhaps it ? is the Vibroplex Zephyr I just bought on qth.com.

73 es CUL dit dit!

ED notes....I think there are "many" SKCCer inflicted (infected?) with CTKC! And just how many keys are you willing to admit to?

S52CC and 9J2BO



Ed note...I received this message and picture from Vince S52CC, 36 years is a very long spread of QSOs!

I always read »cover to cover« the Rag Chew newsletter. I just remembered the article by Brian, 9J2BO #9892 in the December 2014 issue as a few days ago I received his card for our January QSO(cw) which was a proper rag-chew. I immediately dug out his card for our first QSO(SSB) – in the distant 1979 under my first personal call YU3TRI. I think it is interesting, 36 years ago we worked.

Good wishes & 73,

Vince S52CC SKCC 5011T

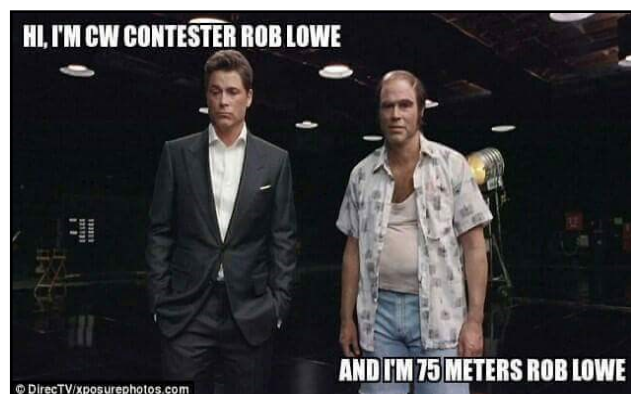
.....Ed note...I too worked 9j2BO in 1979!

Photos Too Good Not to Share!

From Larry K8TEZ 8426T, I got this photo and although the text was difficult to read, I think Larry was sending me a picture of his new QRP transmitter. Unusual 2.5 watt tubes Larry! At least the shack will be warm in those cold Ohio winters!



And from Jeremy KD8VSQ 13072, this picture:



Been too many TV commercials of the Rob Lowe stuff lately but I do get a chuckle out of this one.

TKS guys.....

February SKS With WS8KCC

For the February SKS K8KIC, KD8SKO, KD8TTM and K8AQM got together to work on the WS8KCC "S." WS8KCC is the club call for the Ohio-Michigan CW Club. The call of course is obviously "special," but the operators are even more so. There are now six "official" members to the club and others can/will be added as merit dictates. It's really not possible nor fun to send, "name is Ohio-Michigan CW Club" so we've come up with the double entendre, "OM" meaning both Ohio-Michigan and of course "old man" in our vernacular. All this being said, we have:

OM 1 N8KR 7559S	OM 3 K8KIC 2938T	OM 5 N3JJT 255T
OM 2 K8AQM 1629S	OM 4 KD8TTM 11614	OM 6 KD8SKO 10953T

A totally unglamorous group to be sure! KD8TTM was OM 3.5 until he mastered the code but is now an "official" OM and has a few cw QSOs under his belt! And where are OM 1 and OM 5 you wonder; they live in Ohio. OM 1 is N8KR and he is our leader, OM 5 is N3JJT and he is too far away for a "*two hour cruise.*"

We operated the SKS on three bands with each operator using his own "OM" name, OM 6 was the 20m op, OM 3 and OM 4 ran 40m while OM 2 handled the multitudes (not!) on 80m. We even had two other SKCC members visit, KD8VSQ 13072 and WB8NPI 10916.

We had a great time and made a good start on the WS8KCC "S."

80m.....26 QSOs

40m.....41 QSOs

20m.....39 QSOs

Of the 106 QSOs, only about a dozen operators returned our names as "OM #", most ignored the name and most likely used their logger to verify the QSO. I hoped they got the correct state in the log!

Thanks to everyone who helped us move along to our quest for the WS8KCC "S." You'll hear from us again!



Read Your Way to Better CW and More Enjoyment

Curtis Gidding KC9UNL SKCC #8667

Of course it takes more than reading to improve your CW! It takes learning via the correct method, practice and practice, and hours of online operating. However, that doesn't mean you wouldn't benefit by reading books, newsletters, internet articles, and other forms of media also. Here are some interesting places to start your learning path.

I have found that there are many sources to improve your knowledge of CW, Keys, Telegraphy history, CW learning methods, and much more. One of the best places to start for a broad coverage of Telegraphy (CW) is to visit www.radiotelegraphy.net. This is a great site for learning all types of information about the subject and you will definitely want to bookmark it. While you are on the internet, be sure to check the product reviews at www.eham.net. The reviews for the subject of Telegraph keys gives you some good ideas when trying to select which key you would like to buy next. Of course there is also a CW Forum at that site which is very useful and entertaining.

When the ARRL published the book, *Morse Code Operating for Amateur Radio*, I was quick to buy a copy. Although the book very effectively covers the subject and would be helpful to mostly people who have very little knowledge of the Morse Code, it leaves much to be desired. It is my opinion that the cover price of \$17.95 is overpriced.

Some the best reading can be found by reading the *K9YA Telegraph*. This publication is an e-zine which is published by the Robert F. Heytow Memorial Radio Club. To subscribe to the FREE publication you can visit www.K9YA.org. You can read some sample issues and subscribe on this site. The issues are so good that I save each one after they are downloaded on my Storage Drive. If you haven't seen the *K9YA Telegraph* by all means do it.

While on the web page for the K9YA Club, be sure to click on the K9YA link. You will then find another link, "Books". At this site, you will find a listing for *The Art & Skill of Radio-Telegraphy* by William G. Pierpont, N0HFF. This is one of the best and most complete books on CW that I have found. It is my opinion that every serious CW fan should spend the \$20.00 to get a copy in his shack. The book contains 34 Chapters and a total of 235 pages. One of the best chapters is titled **How Fast? The Wrong Question ----How Well!** The lessons learned and the appreciation that will be gained by reading this book is almost limitless. Don't miss it.

Another interesting point - - on February 21, 2015 I was tuning the 40 meters and found several operators calling "CQ FE." Sure didn't know what that meant but after some looking on the internet, found out that they were looking for others who were participating in the CW Fun Event. This is an activity that allows a CW operator to determine his accuracy at both receiving and sending CW. What a great concept! Check out www.cwfun.org

