



Volume 8 Issue 3

September, 2016

Field Day 2016!

The following articles and pages are reports received by SKCC members on their Field Day operations.....editor

Field Day from AH6AX (Aloha Larry), by Ron, AC2C

For Field Day 2016 we had set three basic goals:

1. Have Fun
2. Enjoy good food
3. Work some QSOs

A couple months before the 2016 Field Day (actually before Dayton Hamvention), Larry and I started talking about what we might want to do for Field Day. I've spent a few years working with the combined CARA/PVRC group as W3AO but decided it was time to do something a bit more fun and relaxed.

So the email exchanges started and we settled on setting up an operation on Larry's house deck. We discussed antenna options, power options, food options, and other operators that could join us. We ended up with a 6-member group:

Larry, AH6AX, SKCC #11165S

Curt, WB8YYY, SKCC #2580S

Jim, WB3MEJ, SKCC #13305T

Dan, W3DF, SKCC #12995S

John, N2JKA, SKCC #15058

Ron, AC2C, SKCC #2748S

We did a test run a couple weeks before field day weekend to test the setup and make sure things would work together. Larry had a new quiet generator, Jim had extension cords, antenna ideas, and ground wires so we were "good to go". We agreed to meet around Noon on Saturday (Field Day #1) and set things up - then have some lunch. Larry's BBQ did a fantastic job and we had a great lunch with many snack options before the Field Day actually started.

We operated Class 2E using the Hex Beam, Carolina Windom, and an Inverted Vee that Jim brought to the outing. We had two stations - Larry's Kenwood TS-590 and Ron's IC-756 Pro III - we run one CW station and one SSB station. Again, our emphasis was on fun, good food, and working QSOs so we often took breaks to "shoot the bull".





We started Saturday at 1800Z and ran until around 0130Z, then shut down and went home. We got back together around 1300Z on Sunday (Jim's XYL provided a delicious Egg Casserole) and we operated through to a bit after 1715Z before deciding to call it quits.

I'm sure that we will not be #1 in the Maryland-DC area, but that was not our goal. We had fun, had some great chow,

and had a few QSOs.....Ron, AC2C



WA3MEJ and AH6AX on SSB



WA3MEJ on SSB

K2QS Field Day



Julian (JB) WA2WMJ #1684 and Marcus N2LTV, pounding the brass for the QSY Society's Field Day station K2QS.

Field Day with KI4STU... and Friends!



I did Field Day with some friends, K4VD, KG4IFR, KM4UDH, and KM4UXN, this year. It was everyone's first Field Day except for K4VD. We operated from Big Meadows Campground in Shenandoah National Park, Virginia. It was a low-key event for us, including a 12 hour break for sleep (interrupted by a couple juvenile barred owls) and breakfast.

For my part, I ran a K1 (mostly) and an FT817ND to an 84' random wire antenna with a 17' counterpoise. Part of my antenna was draped across a truck bed and along the ground ... I tried elevating it, but it would only tune when it was on the ground! I operated exclusively using a straight key ... a HiMound connected to the 817, a J37 connected to the K1, and SKCC LTA #60 standing guard. I brought a new-to-me Bencher BY-1 also, but having only owned it for a week didn't feel confident enough yet to use it.

We ran two transmitters at a time and were completely on battery power. For my part, I used a DeWALT 18 volt battery through a very inexpensive buck converter. My first battery lasted a little bit into the second day, and I don't think I hardly made a dent in the second. All in all, we had 177 CW and 6 digital (PSK) QSOs. Our initial goal was 10 QSOs so we left feeling very accomplished, and

talking about next year.

Detrick
KI4STU

***It's too easy!...."dog gone good op!" "Field Day has gone to the dogs!" "that op had really good ears!" "which one is KI4STU?" "listen for the QRP!" "is that DX I hear?"
.....editor.***

What a great picture, thanks Detrick!

K3WW Field Day

K3WW 1 B battery 1 op...



I almost took a straight key out to the field, but decided to travel light, and none of the SKCC folks asked for my number so all was OK.

When I don't go out with the local club, I set up a pair of multi wire dipoles for 80/40 and 10/15/20 on 35 feet or so of push up mast (4 foot sections) I use my K3 at 5 watts, battery power with a 15 watt solar panel to keep the battery fresh.

Nice and dry this year.. did same thing last

year after not doing the 1B for a while..but worst rain for FD since Hurricane Agnes back in the 70's..had the gazebo wrapped in the same tarps plus clear plastic around the rest and an umbrella over me and the radios and still got damp....this year was a joy.. just a tad chilly around 3 AM..

73 Chas K3WW



Field Day With W8JPF and Friends



I was part of the Delaware Amateur Radio Association (K8ES) team; I joined them last year and participated with them in FD for the first time this year. One picture shows our feature attraction (100 lb. hog) for the Saturday club picnic. The second picture is yours truly operating the 40m/15m CW station.

We operated 4A. Preliminary numbers indicated that we got over 3,600 contacts. We're hoping that we can top 4,000 after all logs are merged.

It was sunny and hot this year, unlike last year when it was cold and very wet. We had a few equipment issues, but that comes with the territory. We had a GOTA station and got several non-hams or relatively new hams on the air. We had a pretty good turn-out and kept all 4 transmitters on the air the whole 24 hours except when the 15m CW station started wiping out the 20m CW station. We went back to 40m from 15m which solved that problem. We didn't think propagation was as good as in

the past.

Saw a lot of bugs; none that could send Morse code. Some I had never seen before and one in particular, with antennas twice as long as its body, kept me company during the early, early Sunday morning shift.

DELARA treats FD seriously with fellowship, getting non-licensed people on the air and scoring a lot of points being high priorities. It was a blast, even with the heat, poison ivy and generator issues.



These guys know how to do the cookin' right!.....editor

TU es 73 de Joe, W8JPF

Field Day With K6III and Friends



I would like to thank Ted for hosting us at the cabin.

That place is a ham operators dream. I could see QST writing a story about the history and passion for communication about the cabin and everyone who has made it happen (maybe called "As the Dial Turns")

I would also like to thank Bob (who I hadn't seen since I was single digit age) for the great companionship and adventure and Teresa for keeping our beds made and our plates and coffee cups full.

As we were leaving Ted told us about the prospects of finding gold down at the river. We so have to come back for that. Ted the next contest you host at the cabin I will gladly trade you 500+ phone contacts for a chance at striking it rich!!

I attached a few pics of the fun we had at Field Day 2016...



I received these pictures from Jerry K6III, I didn't see any operating but I sure see these guys ate well!

In Michigan many guys go deer hunting, never take a rifle nor go out hunting so maybe it's the same thing with California Field Day operators?...ha...editor.

Travels With KG8CO #6362

My friend Brian KG8CO, has had an amazing year of traveling and operating and there is more to come! He was part of the T32 crew this past March, an attendee at Visalia, was at Dayton, Museum Ships Weekend operator at W8B and now just returned from some fabulous European adventures with his wife Rhonda, KC8BNS!....editor.

Friedrichshafen Hamfest

After many years of hearing about the Friedrichshafen Hamfest in Germany, I decided to visit Europe to check it out for myself. About four years ago I met Chris, HB9ELV at Dayton, and since that time we have remained friends. Since I have wanted to check out Friedrichshafen, Chris said, “why don’t you and Rhonda come over for a visit?”, so we did. Rhonda didn’t have any desire to visit the hamfest, so she ended up spending the weekend in Italy with a friend that she went to school with many years ago who happens to be married to an officer in the military and they are stationed in Italy now.



Chris HB9ELV

modeled a few years ago and look almost brand new. A real nice place to have an event of this size. The hamfest used a total of four hangers. One hanger



Outdoor food court was for vendors and radio associations, while the other three hangers were used at the flea market.

Of course most of the attendee’s were from Europe, however, I did run into a few people from North America.

We didn’t stay at a hotel like we would in Dayton, Chris and I and some of his friends slept on cots in one of the Zeppelin hangers at the hamfest.



One of the main halls..a covered “blimp hanger”





Walking around the hamfest I noticed that ARRL, Elecraft, Flex, Vibroplex along with Icom, Kenwood and Yaesu were there plus many other vendors.

While at the hamfest, I was able find a Junker CW key for Ted K8AQM, and believe it or not, I won a Yaesu MD-100 desk microphone (what do you do with one of these?).

73....Brian KG8CO

On to England!



I have always wanted to visit Bletchley Park where the famous WWII German “enigma code” was broken. Rhonda, Chris and I flew to England and made the visit. Imagine my surprise when entering the visitors’ center building and seeing the “official” SKCC membership certificate #15555 proudly on display!





Station and antenna at GB3RS

Royal Observatory and London

I have been lucky enough to have stood at the International Dateline out in the Pacific so I “had” to see Greenwich and stand at the Prime Meridian! Traveling by boat down the Thames was great....the sights! The sights!



The tower bridge! Heads were removed here aplenty! Whack!



HMS “Belfast, museum ship and they have an amateur radio station on board!

Finally we arrived at the Royal Observatory and the Prime Meridian and “official” UTC clock.



It was great to see these sights but then we got to see the sights from London’s famous “Eye”...wow!





That's the "London Eye" and of course from the Eye we looked down on Parliament.

It was time to head back to Switzerland for a bit of touring and my well-deserved cigar break!



Ed...what trips Brian has had this year! What's on deck for another adventure? Rumor has it plans are in the works for a Caribbean trip early next year.....ZF? KP2? SKCC?

Ain't It the Truth!

This was posted to the SKCC Facebook page and forwarded to me by Jeremy KD8VSQ. The WES is great fun and longer hours gives us an opportunity to "get our fill" of operating but those of us who work the entire allotted time do suffer! Looks like Gary, VE3DZP #14702, has the right idea, relief for that old "glass arm."



What better way to stay cool on these hot summer weekends than in an air conditioned shack making QSOs and having fun! You do air condition your shack don't you?

The Weather Stone Story



In 2014 while on a DXpedition to Fiji we ran across this neat “weather forecast” where we were staying. It was really cool!

Earlier this year a group of us were out on T32 (Christmas Island) on a DX-pedition. On our visit we met a couple people from NOAA doing weather balloon testing. During one of our conversations Ted, K8AQM, made a comment about weather forecasters not being very accurate so Stan, AC8W



#2813, made a “weather stone” to help the NOAA people out. All of us got a good laugh (including the NOAA folks).

While in HB0 (Liechtenstein) I noticed another weather stone. The hand writing was different so I assume Stan, AC8W didn’t make this one! As



WETTERSTEIN WEATHERSTONE

Stein
STONE

hängt still	-Kein Wind
HANGING STILL	NO WIND
bewegt sich	-Wind
IT'S MOVING	WIND
bewegt sich heftig	-Sturm
IT'S MOVING A LOT	STORM
nass	-Regen
WET	IT'S RAINING
oben weiss	-Schnee
WHITE ON THE TOP	SNOW
nicht zu sehen	-Nebel
CANNOT SEE STONE	FOGGY
unter Wasser	-Sturmflut
UNDER WATER	FLOOD
fall runter	-Erdbeben
STONE IS GONE	EARTH QUAKE

you can see the terminology is a bit different, I assume it has something to do with geographical location.

What DX location will we find another “weather stone” forecast?

73,

Brian KG8CO

#6362

Very Simple Straight Key

I used to have a very simple "emergency" key with my KX3, just a pushbutton (the TURBO switch from an old PC, remember the days when PC's had a turbo mode ?).

I didn't use it very much because it has a bit too much travel for good keying ...

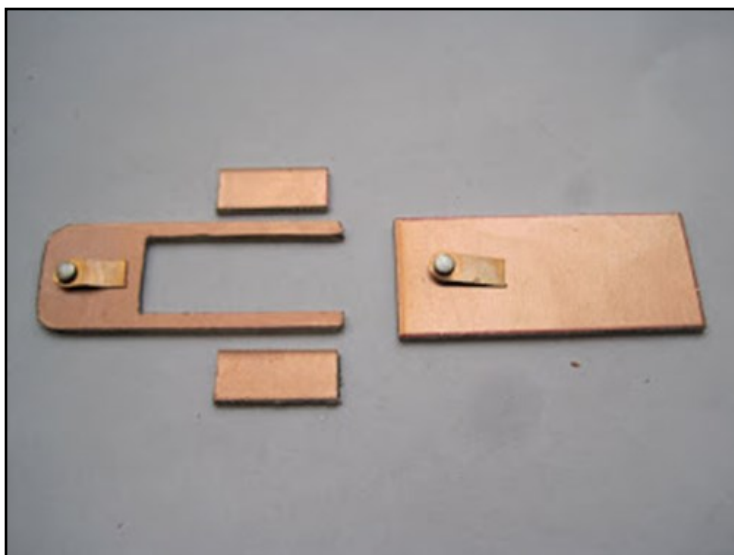
I did make several paddles in the past, all made from scrap pieces of PCB.

One of those was made after the idea of Carel, PA0CMU, for a double paddle : <http://members.ziggo.nl/cmulder/paddle.htm>

Carel based his design on the idea of NB6M for a single paddle : <http://www.amqrp.org/projects/paddle/NB6M%20Paddles.html>

So I got the idea to make the simplest straight key, and still have good results. This is what I came up with ... you need:

- 2 pieces of single sided PCB, approx. 2 x 5 cm, may vary along your taste ...
- Two contacts from an old relay (cleaned with a blue ink eraser)
- Dremel cutting tool
- Soldering iron.....That's it !



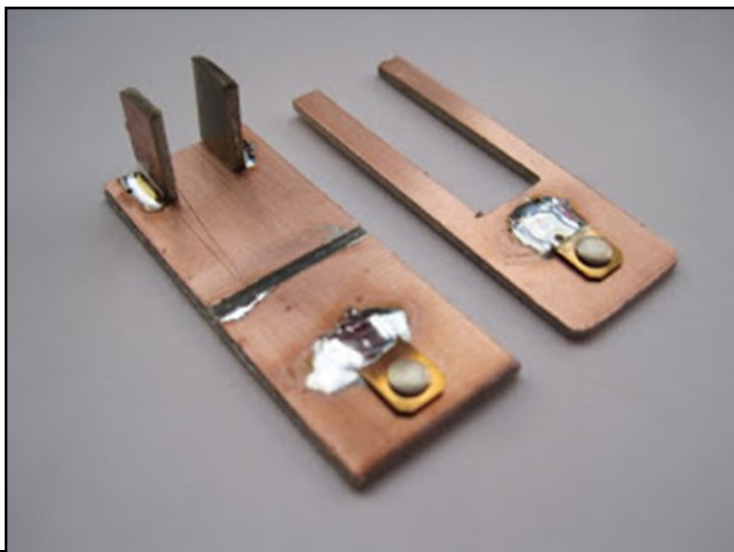
I took a picture when everything was cut to size, ready to start soldering (I didn't make a drawing, just drew some lines without even measuring , hi) .

I took the two small pieces for the side posts from another piece of PCB, but you could actually cut the center piece in two. The excess PCB of these post will be cut off later anyway.

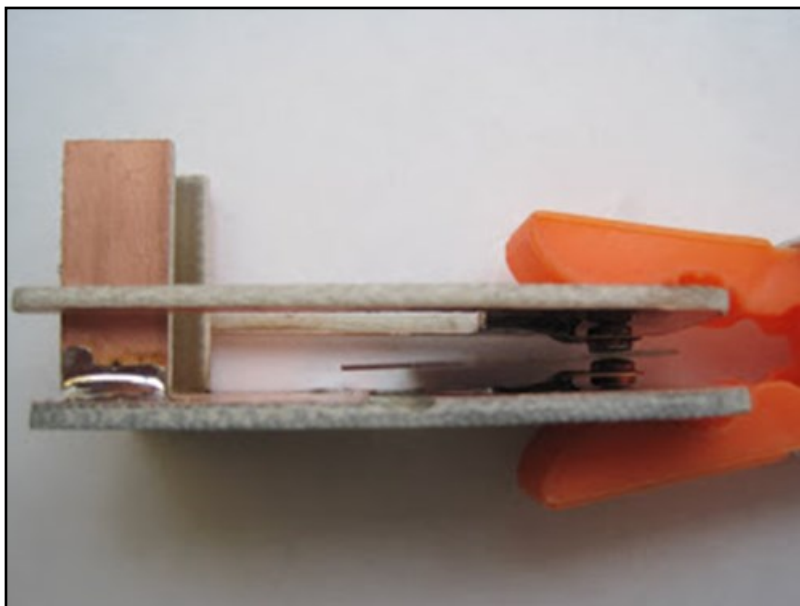
First solder the contact strips in place (take care : don't put solder on the contact points !).

Then mark two lines on the bottom piece and solder the posts in place (this picture is from a second model with wider "arms" for some more resistance).

Also remove a strip of copper to isolate the front contact from the rest (all the rest will be GROUND).



Then put some spacer between the contacts and hold both parts in place with a clothespin, like this:



If you are satisfied, solder the arms in place, they can easily be repositioned later if the contact distance is not what you like.

Then put a capacitor of 10nF over the "gap" and connect a cable with a 3.5 mm jack. For my KX3 I have to use a STEREO jack, but using only the tip and sleeve connections, this may differ for other brand of transceiver.

I made two different keys, one has a fixed cable, the other has a 3.5mm connector, to be used with a separate cable.

I can fit both this key AND a mini single-lever paddle in a film can !

Have fun !

Luc ON7DQ/KF0CR # 14984



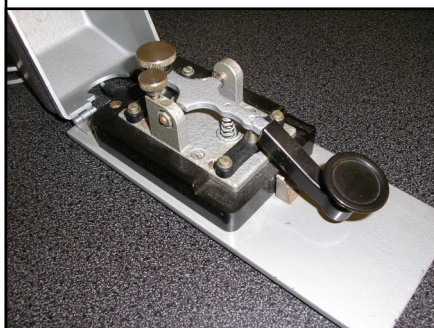
Working With The “Junker”

My friend KG8CO (see earlier articles) brought me “TWO” Junkers from the Friedrichshafen Hamfest in Germany. Below is a bit of the history of the Junker as presented by VK4JAZ:

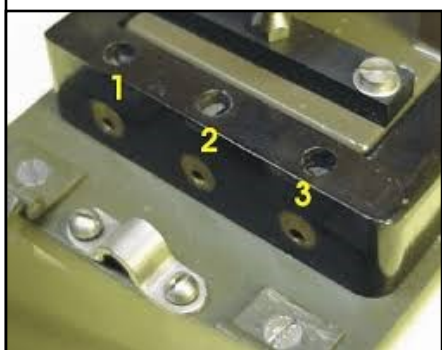
De VK4JAZ...The Junkers key was a product of the Junker family, who were the militaristic land-owning aristocracy of Prussia in the early 1800s. The key was designed by Joseph Junker, a German Naval Radio Officer during the First World War. He patented his design in 1920 and the keys went on to be used by the German and NATO navies.



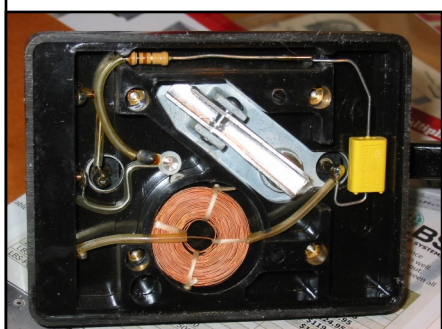
There are three connections at the rear of the key; they provide make or break keying as well as on/off keying. This means that the rear connections are kept closed until the key is pressed which opens the rear contacts and closes the front ones. All this means is that the key has its own form of Transmit/Receive switching.



And this is where a “slight problem” developed. I connected the Junker to my K3 and everything worked fine, but not so on my K2 where one of the Junkers was going to be used. Note those three connections and the “parts” on the bottom of the Junker? I don’t know why everything worked fine on the K3 but with the K2 the T/R circuitry made the K2 transmit turn off with each pressing of the key! Just like it’s suppose to, some sort of T/R switching affected the K2. The solution was simple to make the Junker work on the K2....remove the circuitry and use the two contacts (1 and 2) and all works well.



I was excited to use the Junker in the July SKS. My friend KD8VSQ Jeremy, came over and it was decided to use his call. Jeremy was working on obtaining his “C” so this perfect! The key worked very well and after 50 QSOs in the SKS my arm wasn’t tired at all. The key was a real pleasure to use and it felt very “crisp” in making dits and dahs.



Since I now have two of these keys and my station is a setup for five positions I think the Junkers will be used at the 20 and 40m stations were most of the SKCC activity happens. The other stations will be “stuck” with the Czech key and the SKCC mighty brass keys....poor guys!

If you’re thinking about getting a Junker I suggest you read the reviews on “eham.” I agree with them, the Junker is a finely made key and a fine key to operate with. Maybe someone you know will be going to Germany to a hamfest and will pick a couple up for you too?

NEWS FLASH!...I am really a lucky guy, my good

Cap and resister used for the “TR” switching mentioned earlier.

friend Don, KD8SKO #10953T, knew I had been looking for a Junker and surprised me with now my "third" Junker! So now three of my operating positions will offer a Junker to the operators. All three Junkers have been repainted with "hammered" silver paint, they look and operate smoothly.
73, Ted K8AQM 1629S



HAMTOON



THIS WAS THE BEST HAM FEST, LOOK AT THESE GREAT BUYS. COULD YOU STORE THEM FOR ME TILL MY WIFE IS OUT OF TOWN ?

Dayton 2017

By now you have heard the Dayton Hamvention at Hara Arena will be moved to the fair grounds in Xenia, OH (about 15 miles southeast of Dayton). Nothing is secured yet, but I can assure you, SKCC **will be represented at Dayton 2017!** A booth will be secured, pictures of the SKCC gang will be taken as usual and a good time will be had by all.

See you there!

K8TEZ Larry, #8426T

After a short trip to Cleveland I had the opportunity to stop in Amherst, OH and visit with Larry K8TEZ #8426T. Through the past several years Larry and I had become good friends and operated together as K3Y/8 and run across each other in many SKCC operating



events. It was a real pleasure to visit Larry and to see his “shack,” which hardly is the right word to describe his very neatly laid-out equipment and operating room. Larry has three stations to operate from as well as an assortment of various keys to choose from. The picture shows Larry at his main station, an FT1000. The pictures below were scraped from his QRZ page and show his Ken-

wood TS-599A twins and his TS-820 station.

Larry always has a big signal in the SKS events and as a person who believes in big antennas I am amazed at the signal Larry’s antenna farm produces on the bands. Larry has two Ham Stick dipoles for 12m and 17m and a random 140 foot wire with a counter-poise he feeds through a Dentron tuner to cover the other bands. The random wire counter poise runs



along a creek bed that is always flowing and provides an excellent ground. The dipoles and random wire run off a second story balcony to give some height to his antennas.

For vhf and uhf you can see Larry’s antennas there off the balcony (TV too).

Larry lives in a residential area and has a low profile antenna farm that produces a very good signal as many SKCCers can attest to!

Thanks for the great visit Larry!



Editor....This is the last of the W7VSE war stories I have. If you have or know of any interesting stories of veterans especially those that have some radio aspect to them please forward them on to me.

Coming Home

I am aware that some of the confessions I am about to make in this story might cause someone to come and take away my good conduct medal. But these are true stories as best my 91-year-old memory can recall. I did not tell most of these stories to my kids when they were growing up. Not that I was ashamed of what I did, but I was afraid they would think it was alright to make the same mistakes that I did. So a lot of this will be news to them also.

I spent over 2 years in China and India. My weapons of war were a microphone, a telegraph key and the skill to use both

In late October, 1944, at Chabua, India, I received my orders to fly back to the USA after 25 months overseas. I checked out of the regular tent area and found a bunk in a tent in the transient area to wait for my call on the Public Address system to report to my aircraft. I saw other names listed on the same orders with mine. Some of them were the guys I'd come overseas, and been stationed with for 15 months in China. I decided I would try and wait for their arrival. The only way out of China was over the hump to Chabua, So I knew they would show up there, but I didn't know when.

During the months that I had been back in India, I had traded PX cards with some non-beer drinkers and I had enough cards for four cases of beer. I found a clean aluminum garbage can and scrounged some Ice from the medics. Everyone was helpful when they learned I was going home. I put all that beer and the ice and some water in that garbage can and got ready for a big going home party when the other guys arrived from China. I was a bit too eager in my planning, as two days went by before they arrived. I had been ignoring the calls on the Public Address (PA) system for me to report to the airport for my flight. The ice had all melted and the beer was getting warm and I had just about given up on my buddies getting there, so I started drinking alone. (I didn't want all that beer to go to waste.) But the guys from China arrived and found me and we really had a big celebration party! We ignored a few calls for our flight, and finally got down to the last case of beer. In our inebriated condition, we decided we were ready to show up on the next call on the PA. So we divided the remaining cans of beer among us. Each one of us had full cans of beer in our pockets, our carry on bags, and carrying some in our hands. The crew chief of the C-47 saw this, and naturally tried to keep us from getting on the plane with all that beer, but we were all Staff, Technical, and Master Sergeants and he was only a "buck" Sergeant, so we out ranked him. Also we were obviously not sober. In fact we were feeling no pain. And several of us got right up in that Sergeants face and argued with him. Our drunken logic was that the beer didn't weigh any more in our pockets than it would if we had drunk it. And after quite a round with him, and all of us breathing our beer breaths right in his face, he gave up. He cussed a lot, but let us get on the airplane, with our excess supply of beer. That C-47 had bucket seats for paratroopers, and removable window plugs so they could shoot guns out through the windows. We used those holes in the windows to get rid of our empty beer cans, and heard them CLANG against the tail of the airplane. We drank beer, and whooped it up, all the way across India to Karachi. We stayed overnight there. Next morning, we were all hung over, but we survived.

At Karachi, India, when we were called to our aircraft next morning, we found discovered it was a Curtiss C-46. This newer type aircraft was noted for it's mechanical problems.

Some people called it the “Widow Maker”, because of the high rate of accidents. Might have had something to do with the electric control for the pitch of the propellers. Anyway, we taxied out and onto the runway. There were about 20 of us with out gear on board. We got a clearance for take off, and the pilot applied full takeoff power on both engines. We were gaining speed down the runway. Soon we started lifting off the runway, and I was about to breath a sigh of relief. Suddenly the right engine quit running! Of course the right main landing gear came right back down hard on the runway with a loud SCREECH, and then the left gear did the same. We were past the “point of no return” and unable to get airborne. I knew the terrain off the end of that runway was fairly rough and would probably wipe out the landing gear or worse. At that point, I thought we had “bought the farm.” But the pilot must have stomped on the right brake, and we ground-looped in several circles (I lost count of the spinning) and came to a dust-clouded stop just partly off the runway. The fire and rescue people were on their way out, and our pilot came storming out of the cockpit cursing every one in the military from the president on down. I heard him say, “I’ll never fly another one of these F---ing airplanes again!”

I think this was the closest I came to “buying the farm” in my 2 years overseas. They gave us a ride back to the terminal. About 2 hours later, they had cleared the first plane off the runway, and we got on an identical C-46, with the same Captain and crew, taxied out, and made a perfect take off.

With a few fuel stops, we rode this aircraft all the way across Africa to Casablanca. We flew along the southern beaches of the Mediterranean Sea at just a few thousand feet. Just the right altitude to be able to see the Suez Canal in it’s entirety, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea--quite a sight. We also saw lots of wrecked equipment on the beaches where there had previously been much fighting going on.

At Casablanca, we were put into a fenced military base with barracks, mess hall, etc, and guards posted on the only gate. We learned that there was a hurricane on the East Coast of the USA, and we would not be able to leave until the weather got better. That first day, they gave us all a pass to go into town and we were supposed to be back at a certain hour. When we got downtown, we found Bars, Cafes, and French girls were all over the place. I don’t think any of our outfit got back to the base on time. The Commanding Officer called us in and told us we were “grounded” and restricted us to the base as long as we remained there, and we would have to sign a check-in book, every so many hours to confirm that we were there. We were all saddened by this. But, a little later, one of our guys came in and told us he had found a hole in the fence at the back of the base, large enough to easily get through. So, we made a plan. Some of the guys didn’t want to chance getting caught sneaking out, and we convinced them to sign the check-in book for a few of us, while we were gone. It worked like a charm! We spent many happy hours whooping it up in downtown Casablanca. It’s a wonder we didn’t miss our airplane and really get in trouble. I guess someone was watching over us.

But all good things seem to come to an end, and one day we boarded a silver four-engine C-54, (DC-4) and departed Casablanca. We had some headphones in the cabin of that plane and could monitor the voice radio signals to and from the ground stations. We were headed for St. John’s Newfoundland, but we had to refuel on the Azores Islands.

We flew for several hours and finally we were on top of a solid cloud layer flying in the clear. The refueling station was on San Miguel, the main island of the Azores group. But it was covered with a clouds. There were many other military aircraft also circling on top of the clouds waiting to make an approach through the clouds. Air Traffic Control (ATC) was letting

the aircraft make an approach, one at a time, and each approach took several minutes. When one plane got through the clouds and reported the field in sight, they would clear the next plane for an approach. We must have circled for half an hour, or more, when our pilot calculated that he did not have enough fuel to wait for his turn to make an approach. So, he advised ATC, and we turned around and headed back for Casablanca. We were all disappointed for the delay on our long-awaited trip home. We flew back towards Casablanca about 15 minutes or so, and then the plane made a turn. We looked out the windows and there was a hole in the overcast. Not a very large hole, but you could see the white caps of the ocean below. The pilot decided to try to descend through that hole and fly back underneath the clouds to San Miguel. He coordinated with ATC, they approved his idea, and he started his descent. As I said, the hole wasn't very large, so he started descending through the hole and ended up in the clouds. But he flew a figure eight pattern and kept passing through that hole during his descent. We came out of the clouds about 100 feet off the water! Someone was watching over us—again. The pilot turned the plane and headed back toward the island, but when we got there we found the clouds had completely covered that island. We flew all the way around it without finding a way to get to the airport. We were all biting our fingernails by this time. Did we still have enough fuel to get back to Casablanca? That C-54 was a land based type, and would not float very long, if we ran out of gas, and had to land in the water. But ATC directed us to an alternate field on one of the other islands. I forget the name of it. So, in about 10 minutes of flying time we found that island and landed on a grass runway. We taxied back to some buildings near the grass strip and there was a gasoline truck there. We all breathed a sigh of relief. Soon we found out there was a detachment of British soldiers stationed on that island. Most of them were Sergeants. They kept the grass mowed, and shooed the cows, chickens and other livestock off the runway when the aircraft arrived or departed. There were facilities for the British, and they put us up overnight and fed us. They had their own bar called "The Sergeants Club." We all ended up there after we had chow in the mess hall. The Azores Islands belonged to Portugal. When we looked at the bottles on the shelves in the bar, the writing on the labels was all in Portuguese. We tried a bottle of red wine, and it was OK, but I kept trying to read the labels on the other bottles. One of them had a word that closely resembled "champagne," and I asked the bartender if it was champagne. He said yes. I asked him how many bottles did he have of that and he said he had quite a few. So we started drinking Portuguese Champagne. It didn't cost much, and tasted great! We bought twenty-nine bottles. That was all he had.

The British detachment had a vehicle that closely resembled our US Army Weapons Carrier. The steering wheel was on the right, but otherwise it was just like ours. After quite a few bottles of champagne, we commandeered that British vehicle and proceeded to tour the island. We discovered five towns. There may have been more, but we spent the whole night drinking and driving around that island. We were fortunate that we arrived back at the grass strip just a little before departure time. I still had one unopened bottle of champagne. I put it in my barracks bag and took it with me. Apparently we had enough fuel to get us back to the main island, so, we took off and flew to San Miguel. The clouds were all gone. We landed, and after getting all the fuel the aircraft would hold, we departed for the long flight across the Atlantic to Newfoundland.

There were other transport planes on that same air route, spaced about ten minutes apart. More members of my outfit were on some of them. We had flown for several hours when we heard on the radio that one of the planes was having a problem. It had trouble in transferring fuel, or something, and was losing altitude. That plane was about ten minutes behind us, so the

the pilot volunteered to turn around and fly back to help. We located the plane, it had descended to about two thousand feet above the water, but now everything was functioning properly. So, we flew along several thousand feet above it all the way to St. Johns. If the plane had gone into the water, we could have at least thrown out a raft, and also let the rescuers know the position of the aircraft when it went down. Both planes arrived at St Johns in good shape.

We had departed India in summer uniforms, wearing khaki clothing. When we got off that C-54 at the St Johns Air Base, in Newfoundland, the temperature was somewhere below zero. A cold wind almost cut like a knife as we walked to the terminal. It was warm inside the building, thank goodness. We were only there long enough to get the plane refueled and get a bite to eat, and then we took off for New York City. The weather was nice and we flew down the east coast at about 6 thousand feet, or so. Just seeing the American continent was a joy to us all after being away so long. You get a lump in your throat and want to cry with happiness. And the feeling we got when we passed the Statue of Liberty is indescribable. I don't think there was a dry eye in the plane.

We landed and deplaned. Then we went through Customs. I was worried that they would take my bottle of Portuguese champagne, but, we were soldiers returning home from the war, and they waved us all through without even looking in our belongings. Then we entered a room full of Red Cross ladies. They had all kinds of drinks, snacks and goodies for us. I had not had a glass of milk for over two years, and that dear lady gave me a whole quart of ice-cold sweet milk. I savored every drop of it. She asked if I wanted more, I told her, yes, I did, but I couldn't hold any more.

They had transportation for us over to a hotel that the military had taken over. It was a nice hotel and we enjoyed it, but there were guards on the door to keep us from leaving. We had to be examined by the doctors to assure we were healthy. They replaced our old mildewed clothes and issued us new uniforms. We got rid of our rifles and ammo and gas masks, and other stuff we no longer needed. After a few days, we got a pass to get out of the hotel. Of course we found the nearest bar, and that cold beer on tap really tasted good! We were there for a few more days, and I got to see some of the sights in New York City. Went to Times Square and saw the lights going around the building. Found the Empire State building and walked up the stairs to the top—just so I could brag that I had done that.

Rolf Cramer and I took a quick trip to Washington DC and visited Haddon's Oyster Bar. We sure enjoyed that. We got to see Margaret Haddon and her mother. When we returned to the hotel, the military issued us "30 day delay in route" passes. We could all go home for a 30-day furlough and wouldn't be using any of our regular Annual Leave. So I got a coach ticket and caught a train out of the New York Central depot and headed for Oklahoma. Soon, after dinner, that first night, there were two Canadian gals in uniform in the two seats just ahead of me. I went to find the club car and had a few beers and came back to my seat. I found one of those gals was all sprawled out on my seat and the one next to it, while the 2nd gal was sprawled in their two seats. I had no place to even sit down. So, I just found a little space beside the gal in my seat and snuggled up close and we spent the night together in that Pullman car. I'll let your imagination describe what happened during the night. Next morning the three of us were all smiles and had breakfast together in the diner, and later on the train stopped in Chicago. The girls were getting off there. Both those girls wanted me to get off the train and stay a while in Chicago. I would have liked to have done that, but, after being away from home for over two and a half years I wanted to get home more than I wanted to have fun with those gals.

It's a long way from New York City to southern Oklahoma, and somewhere along the line, I finally ended up on a train on the Rock Island Railroad, which runs through Waurika, OK, my hometown. The last 80 miles from El Reno, OK were very familiar to me. It was a ride I'll never forget. I had rode freight trains up and down that section of railroad several times, and driven many times on US Highway 81, which you could see now and then from the train. So, time seemed to slow down, as we passed through the towns of Chickasha, Rush Springs, Marlow, Duncan, Comanche and Addington. Then there it was, my hometown, Waurika and that old red brick depot. With a happy and thankful heart, I got off the train and walked the last few blocks to our home at 504 South Main Street, carrying my faded blue barracks bag

It had been almost 3 years since I had been home. My grandmother that raised me was nearly 70 years old. I hadn't called to let her know I was coming. In those days, almost everybody left all doors unlocked. I could have opened the door and walked right in but I didn't want to cause Mom to have heart failure, so I just knocked on the door.

When she opened the door, it would be an understatement to say Mom was surprised. She was overjoyed beyond description. I can still feel the hug she gave me. We both shed tears of happiness, and just hugged each other for a while.

Thank you Lord for that special moment in my life that I will treasure forever.

Vic Seeberger
W7VSE

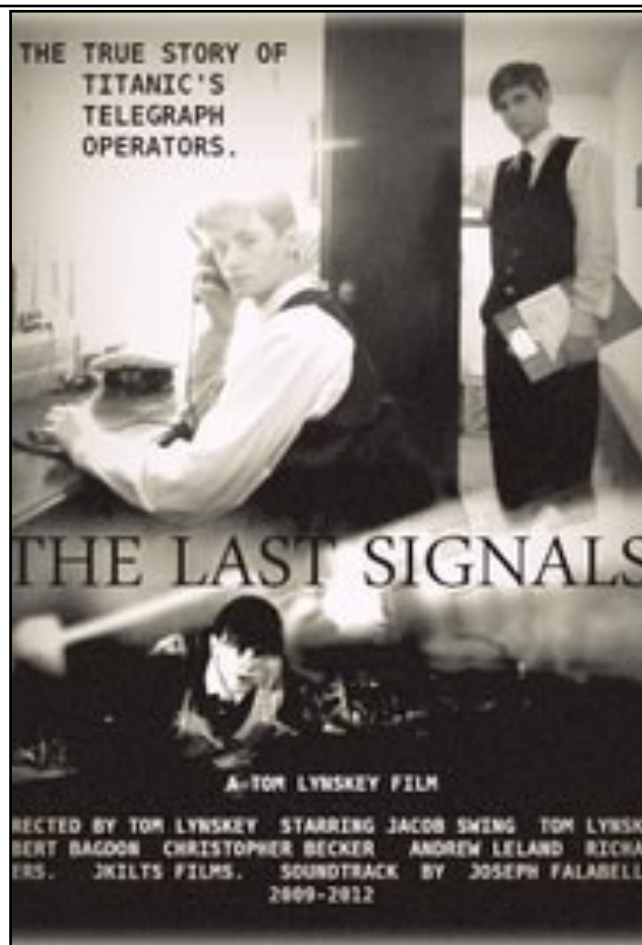
The Last Signals

("TITANIC," INDEPENDENT FILM)

Just "Google" it, it was made on a \$2,300 budget. Director 22 years old. Of course, first case of SOS signal sent. Thought you might find this interesting?

73, Rich K8UV #2250T

Editor: 42 minutes, worth the watch!



Raising A Big Antenna

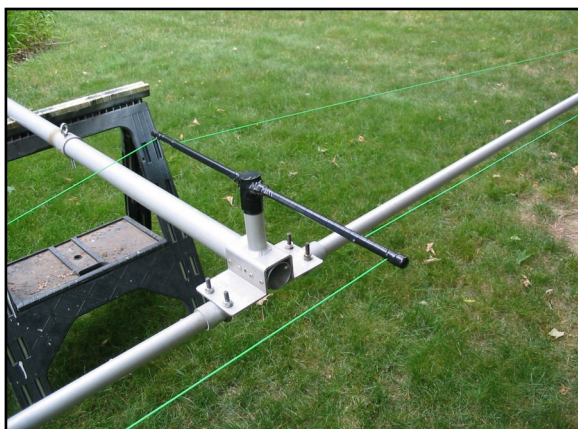
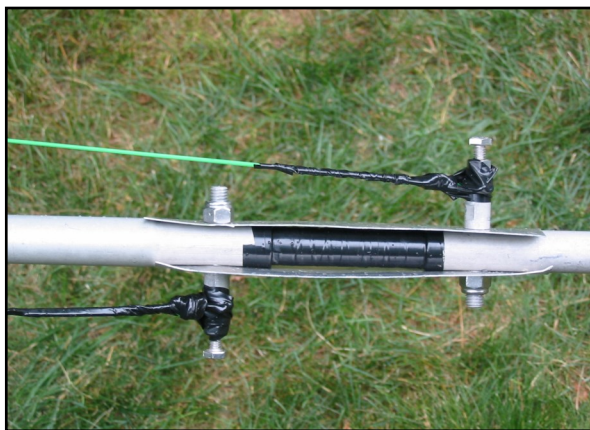
"You just can't have too many antennas!"

I firmly believe that quote, "you really can't have too many antennas." Experience has shown me through my 55 years of ham radio that at certain times different antennas hear differently. Although I chase DX, most of my operating these days is through SKCC. Antenna wise that makes it easier than DXing...low antennas are ok for stateside work!

I recently had the chance to pick-up a Force 12 three element linear loaded 40m yagi that was on the ground and a bit damaged. The price was really right and included a HAM IV rotor, a GAP 160-40m vertical and an old 2m Ringo (all for \$100!). I sure didn't want to put up another 40m yagi as I have three in the air already...what to do?

Tah dah! A 30m 2 element monobander at 35 feet fixed to the southwest would be great for SKCC work! Using EZnec, plans were made and so became an 18 foot boom with a driven and director (more gain than with a reflector but worse front-to-back which is better for SKCC work).

Stripping the linear loading off the 40m yagi and bridging the fiberglass separators, I was able to use all the existing aluminum with just a bit of "tip" aluminum. I cut two strips of aluminum for the "bridge work" and they were secured with the existing bolts that were part of the original linear loading structure. The existing linear loading supports became support for preventing element sway and drooping. Heavy-duty weed whip line is used for the lines to prevent droop and lateral movement. Will they rot in the sun, remains to be seen but black dacron

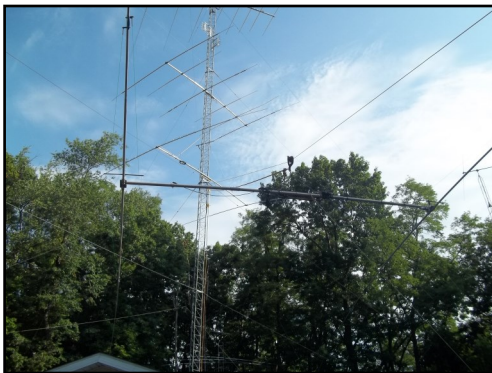


rope might soak and hold water to become conductive and thus upset the swr. You have to admit, the green weed whip line looks pretty cool!

To get the antenna to the 35 foot level on my tower a tram line system was used. We raised the antenna to about the 45 foot level and then lowered it back down to the 35 foot mark with a gin-pole, this allowed us to easily rise above the first set of guys on my tower (105 ft Rohn 45 tower). Although there are several ways to do this, the tram system has worked well for us in the past. The antenna is balanced from a hanging pulley on the tram and is pulled up



via gin pole and rope from the base of the tower. That's KE8CEW Greg, #15805 "anchoring" the rope with KG8CO Brian #6362 climbing up the tower.

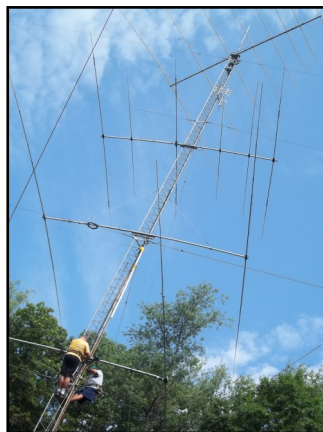


The other two are friends that four cony dogs paid for their-help! Oh yeah, KD8VSQ Jeremy #13072, did all the photography!



So once it's "up the tower"

it has to be secured in the fixed direction. KG8CO and I secured the antenna in place.



That's a 105 ft tower with a 40-10m log at the top, a TH-6 below that, a 2 L long boom 40m yagi and now the 2L 30m yagi. Only the top antenna rotates and the other three are fixed

south west. Does the new antenna work? Very, very well indeed! This is one of my five towers ... "YOU CAN'T HAVE TOO MANY ANTENNAS!"

73, K8AQM #1629S

The Straight Key (and more) As Art

A Few of the Beasts in my Telegraphic Stable

Ted Holland, WB3AVD

Well, I suppose we all like to talk about our most prized obsessions, so I thought I might impinge upon the generosity of our readers to contribute a little QRM to the telegraphic conversation. Now the very fact that my SKCC number is #392 might suggest to the astute reader that I am no longer what might be called a “spring chicken”—and indeed I’ve reached the age where I’ve begun to dream about that upcoming Social Security check which is just around the corner! Yet still, I got this idea about five years ago that I would buy a small lathe and build my own telegraph keys. So out went the check, in came the desktop Sherline tool ... and it sat under my desk for a half year because I was afraid to turn it on! Let’s see ... the last time I even touched one of these things was back in high school shop class in the 1970s (yep ... that was LAST millennium). Nonetheless, ignorance makes up for courage, I suppose, and I blithely set sail into the sea of “home shop machining.” En route, five years have now blown by in the wink of an eye, with the predictable result that I’m now five year’s older anyways, but now have fifty home-built keys to show for the journey. (I took to it like a duck to water, or was that a pig in #\$\$%& ... I can never remember!). And I hope I’m just beginning! I offer the following snapshots of several of my recent devices, some of which have easily consumed several hundred hours apiece! I’m guessing if I sold one or two of these, I could make ... oh ... a dollar an hour perchance!

Photo #1 is a straight key based (loosely) upon some of the pump keys that were used with spark transmitters back about the 1920s and before—when keys were built heavily and often with heat sinks surrounding the contacts because you might be directly switching 50 amps of current and things could get a little warm! This was my first “spark key” and it offers two operating positions, so to speak. The lower paddle is the one to use if you like to operate CW with your wrist on the table; the upper paddle is for use should you prefer a more British-style of sending with your hand completely in the air. For all of the weight which is suspended on the lever (which is made of one-half-inch drill rod), this key can be adjusted to a beautiful light touch, and I’ve used it on the air extensively (it dwarfs my little Elecraft K1).



Photo #2 shows my most recently completed “spark key” – this one technically a “cricket” where there are two levers, both of which go up and down (like two side-by-side pump keys). You can operate this in “manual” mode (say, during a SKCC contest)—essentially operating two straight keys with your middle and index fingers (very intuitive and substantially faster than a straight key alone). Or you can use it with any iambic electronic keyer (think two paddles which move “up and down” rather than “side to side”).

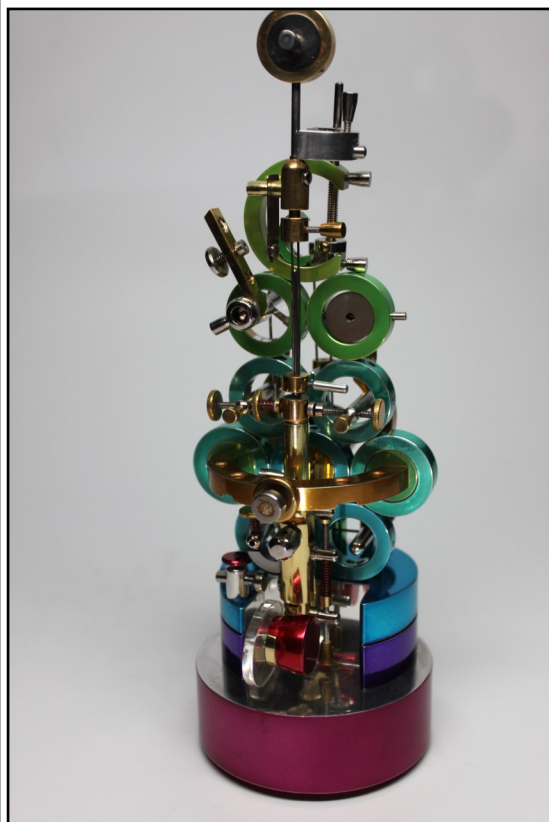


Photo #3 shows a vertical semiautomatic key – a “bug.” This is a version of the Vibroplex-type key which many readers will be familiar with (whereon a vibrating pendulum makes the “dits” of Morse code), only constructed in the much-rarer vertical format. This key presents an unusual innovation—an adjustable pendulum mainspring. Thus there are two “gear shifts” for changing the speed of the key: the usual weight which slides up and down on the pendulum rod, and a slider which changes the flexibility of the pendulum spring itself. I call this key my “Christmas Tree key” ... all of the colors are powder coat finishes which were applied with a small powder coating gun and subsequently cooked in a toaster oven to cure them!

Now, just in case I need to confirm that, as someone famous once said, “our wits are not always in bloom upon us,”

I present Photos #4 and #5, being another semiautomatic vertical “bug” which, in this case, found its inspiration in The Wizard of Oz. (I was reading Gregory Maguire’s series of “Wicked” books at the time; lets blame it on that, and a little too much port maybe!). A few things you might look for: the gateway to the emerald city (and the green-ness of the city itself), the hats on the posts (all of which are operating adjustments) representing the magician, the scare-crow, the witch, and the tin man, the switch lever which represents the yellow brick road, a brown broom-stick for one of the dash contacts ... you get the idea. And the paddle, naturally, is Judy Garland’s ruby slipper (from the classic movie; there was no red slipper in the original Oz books, but Technicolor filming was just new when the film was made ... hence the iconic ruby footwear). Yeah, I know, ... I got too much time on my hands...



And you know how you just get a weird idea sometimes? I was watching one of my buddies send out a text message on his cell phone a few months back, and it occurred to me that here was some finger motion perfectly suited to telegraphy. So have a look at Photo #6 and see if they don’t bear a family resemblance! The double lever crickets work quite well, by the way ... if I hold one of them like a cell phone, I can send CW using both thumbs (though I’m not likely to break any speed records!). Set it down on a desk, though, and use your two fingers in

standard “cricket” mode ... ah ... now that’s flyin’.



‘Nuff said for now, I guess. I’d be happy to send a few more mug shots from time to time if Rag Chewers are amused by these things! Heck, you should see the little ones I wear on my wrist. I had a few military surplus watch bands sittin’ around the shop; couldn’t let those go to waste...

73, Ted WB3AVD

Editor....These keys are amazing! Not only is Ted a skilled key maker but an excellent photographer too!

KD8VSQ’s Retro Station

Who says you have to have the latest-greatest gear to make QSOs today! KD8VSQ Jeremy #13072C has this station making lots of QSOs! That’s a Kenwood TS-520S, external



VFO for split operation, a matching antenna tuner, matching speaker and of course an old Heathkit SB-200. Jeremy does have a “higher tech” station; TS 570 and AL-811 plus trib-ander and various dipoles for 160, 40 and 80.

He’s looking for a 6m and/or a 2m transverter for this gear; anyone have a lead for him?

Frog Sounds QRP CW Kit Build

Luc ON7DQ/KF0CR #14984

This is my attempt at the Chinese "frog sounds" QRP kit. After ordering it for exactly 9.99 EURO, it arrived some 3 weeks later. Everything was in one little plastic bag, and even had 3 sheets of instructions!

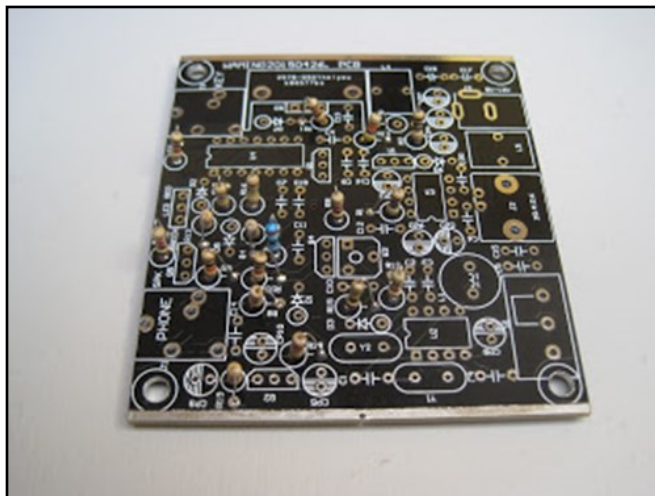
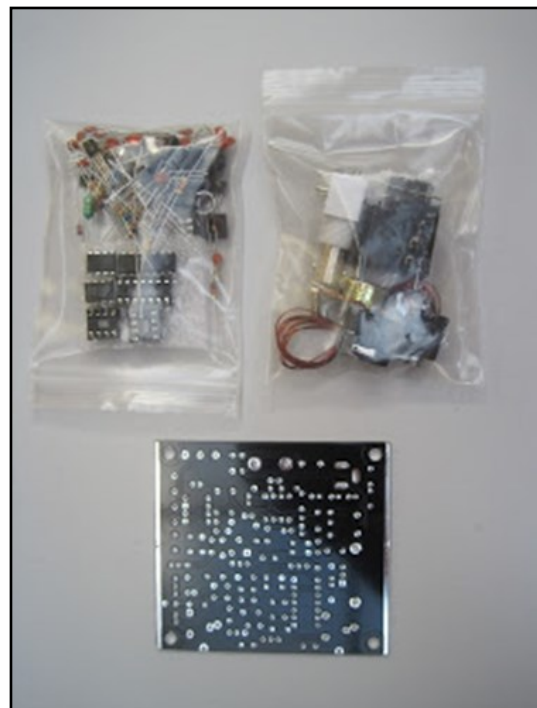


A well-made PC board, and as I found out during the build ... too many components (mostly capacitors and one transistor), and one **missing component**, an electrolytic cap of 1 μ F, not too bad, I have

those in my junkbox. Three sockets are provided for the IC's, nice.

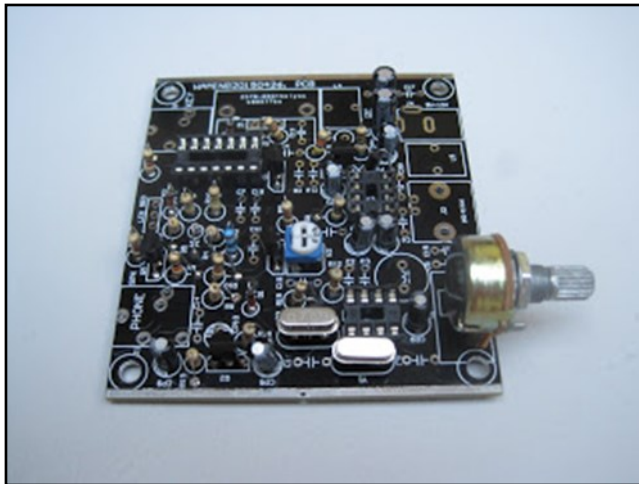
There is no real building order in the instructions, just a placement diagram and circuit diagram.

So I used some common sense and started with all



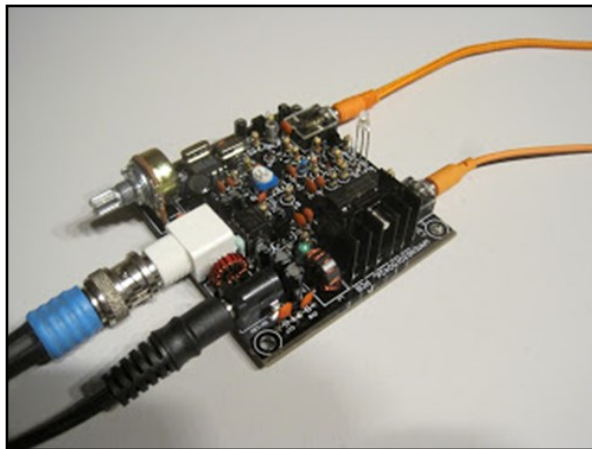
the resistors ...

Then adding the caps and some other stuff ...



And finally all connectors, the final transistor and the two ringcores you have to wind yourself. The final product looks like this, and it took me about 2.5 hours. The orange wires in the picture are not from one lead, I DO have orange headphones AND a mini paddle with an orange lead ... can you tell orange is my favourite colour ? HI (I'm still looking for ORANGE 50 Ohm coax ... anyone ?) Btw, I use the paddle as a straight key by putting it on it's side, there is no keyer chip in this kit. There is a Chinese kit WITH a keyer for around 15 EURO though.

(search ebay for *DIY 51 Super Rock Mite RM Kit CW Transceiver Shortwave Telegraph*)



Does it work ?

Yes it does , but ...

The receiver is quite sensitive, but lacks selectivity as you can expect ...

I connected a 40m dipole and connected the phones output to my laptop running the program [DSP-FIL by Makoto Mori](#)

This program dates back to 2001 but still does a good job ... all kinds of filters down to 70 Hz. The only thing you can't do is keying CW and listening to it on the PC .. because of the delay ! So I used my "orange" headphones, these have an extra audio output jack, and this was coupled to the PC. The sidetone of this kit is around 1000 Hz (and not so stable, still have to check which capacitors are responsible for the drift). So I put the DSP-FIL very narrow around 600 Hz, and when keying I heard myself in the headphones, while receiving I listened on the PC. Problem solved.

I called CQ and after 3 times calling , a G station answered and I got a 559 report ... wow !

So I was curious at what power I really had made this QSO with.

My Bird wattmeter is too inaccurate at this level (I only have the 100W element). So I measured it in the school lab as 820 mW ... Maybe not too bad, they advertise 2W out, but maybe they mean 2W INPUT , and the circuit values indicate it was designed for 1W output.

In the mean time I put the PCB in a nice aluminum box, and printed some labels, then put them on the box with clear Scotch tape.



I also added a audio CW filter I had made long time ago, to avoid the use of the PC as a CW-filter.

73 - Luc ON7DQ/KF0CR # 14984

Dayton Hamvention to Move 2017

[Hamvention®](#) has [announced](#) that Hara Arena, the home of Hamvention since 1964, is closing, but Hamvention will continue. Hamvention 2016, the event's 65th running, was also the last held in the six-building Hara complex. Hamvention 2017 will be held at a new location in the Dayton area, Xenia, Ohio.

"The Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA) regrets to inform our many vendors, visitors and stakeholders that, unfortunately, Hara has announced the closing of their facility," a news release from Hamvention General Chair Ron Cramer, KD8ENJ, said today (July 29). "We have begun execution of our contingency plan to move Hamvention® 2017 to a new home. DARA and Hamvention have enjoyed many successful years working together with Hara Arena and we wish the Wampler family the best."

According to Cramer, DARA and Hamvention have been working on a contingency plan in the event that the deteriorating Hara Arena ever should become unavailable. "We have spent many hours over the last few years evaluating possible locations and have found one in the area we believe will be a great new home!" The announcement said that DARA and Hamvention expect to make a formal announcement soon "introducing our new partner." "We all believe this new venue will be a spectacular place to hold our beloved event," Cramer said. "Please rest assured we will have the event on the same weekend and, since it will be in the region, the current accommodations and outside events already planned for Hamvention 2017 should not be affected. We look forward to your continued support as we move to a new future with The Dayton Hamvention."

Alternative Study Strategies

Prologue

Although this tutorial is primarily intended for use with the WIUL Ham Cram website, most of the suggested alternative study strategies are applicable to the study of any material. Since the inception of the WIUL Ham-Cram.com website, when there was only preparation for the Technician license, I have strongly advocated studying one subelement at a time. I also strongly encouraged the candidate take the sub element's practice exam and if the candidate didn't get at least 85% correct I recommended repeating the process until attaining a test score of at least 85%. (Each license class has 10 subelements which are basically categories.) Despite many years of college level teaching I committed a rookie educator's mistake, which is assuming all people learn the same way I do. I like my information served in small packages with frequent practice test to reinforce my learning. The following is a true story and points out the fallacy of my educational assumption.

An experience with a good friend drove home the point that different people learn in different ways. This critique reviews different study modalities when preparing for an amateur license examination.

My Friend Jim

A good friend of mine, I'll call him Jim, passed his Advance license 34 years ago after three unsuccessful tries. He is retired military and is an avid DXer and uses CW exclusively. He takes pride in his lack of technological sophistication. He doesn't own a computer, cell phone or a GPS. I printed the entire Extra question pool for him in the format used on the ham cram website, approximately 300 questions, using the following style:

1. Question number one.

Correct answer for question one.

2. Question number two.

Correct answer for question two and so on.

After Jim had been studying the print out for a couple of week I offered to bring my computer to his house so he could take a practice exam. "No way," he exclaimed, "I don't want to see an incorrect answer until I take the actual test!" I suggested he intersperse practice tests with his studying but he adamantly refused.

All's well that ends well. There were three candidates taking the Extra exam at Jim's VE session. He was the first to finish and had only one wrong answer the best of the three!

Is this method for everyone? I honestly don't know. You might want to try it and see if it works for you. A compromise might be to study the questions and correct answer until a day or two before the VE test. Then take a practice exam for the entire test (see below) so you get feedback on what you don't know.

Let's take a look at some other learning methods:

Studying Using Multiple, or all, Subelements

Several candidates have commented on their inability to use multiple subelements to create a study session or practice test session and have all the available questions displayed. Mistake on my part, it's possible to do but my explanation is vague.

Here is how to create a study or practice test session using multiple, or all, subelements. Go to ham-cram.com and select either the Technician, General or Extra study session. We'll use the General study session for this example. Figure One show the top of the General study session page.

This General question pool is effective on July 1, 2015 and expires on June 30, 2019			
35	Number of question for this session. Enter "0" for all available subelement(s) questions. 35 is the numbe of questions on the VE test.		
Check to Include	Sub-element	Subelement Title	Question Count
<input type="checkbox"/>	All	All questions in the pool	203

Figure One

The text box in the upper left corner contains the number of questions on the actual test which is 35 for Technician and General exam and 50 for the Extra exam. The first entry in the "Question Count" column is the total number of questions in the ham crams pool for that specific class of license. To select a listing for all questions in the specified ham cram pool enter zero in the text box in the upper left corner. Next, check the first check box in the left most column. Lastly click on the button at the bottom of the page labeled, "Select one or more Subelements for Study."

This produces a listing of each question, followed by only the correct answer, for the entire question pool. Print the output so you have a complete listing of the entire question pool for your target license class. Take it with you and you can study when you get a few spare minutes.

We learn from using our senses: What we see, hear and touch. We won't do much touching using the ham cram site but we could if use material from the Gordon West Radio School. Check it out at:

<http://www.gordonwestradioschool.com>

When you are using the ham cram study mode (Only questions likely to be on the VE test and only correct answers) read the questions and answers out loud so you are seeing the questions and answers as well as hearing them. Ideally, do the prep with a partner and have one person read the questions and the other read the answers. On the next pass have the person who previously read the questions read the answers and the person who previous read the answers read the questions.

Make an Audio Recording of a Study Session

When reading the questions and answers, as detailed above, record them so you can play them back when on a long drive – this is called a commute in California and Long Island. If you make a recording of the entire question pool and are willing to share it with other people, email a copy and I'll put it on the ham-cram.com site with full attribution to you.

Flash Cards

If you learn well using flash cards you can easily make your own. Print out the full question pool for your target license as described above. Get several packs of 3 X 5 file cards and cut the print out into questions and answers. Tape or glue the question on one side of the card and the answer on the reverse side.

When studying with flash cards alternate between reading the questions, out loud, first and then read the answers, out loud. Next, read the questions and before reading the answer try and remember the answer. Finally, read the answer and see if you can remember the question.

When you pass your target test – notice I said when, not if – make the cards available to members of your local radio club.

What Floats Your Boat

If you have come up with any other creative ways of utilizing the ham-cram.com data base please let me know.

Anecdotes

All of the July anecdotes are based upon my personal knowledge. There were likely many more I didn't know about. July was an interesting month. My 9 year grandson Charlie K3CPV passed his Technician after about a week of studying. His brother Will W3WKV aced the Technician test when 11 years old and also aced the General when he was 12. Charlie is to my knowledge the youngest person to pass the Technician test using the W1UL ham cram method.

Also in July, a 78 year old great grandmother, I dare not use her name or call, aced the Technician. She became the oldest person, to my knowledge, to pass a test using the ham cram method.

I'm aware of three people who passed both the Technician and General exams at the same session. BTW, if you pass an exam at a VE session, you can take the next higher license with no additional fee. Again, to my knowledge there are now 18 people who passed both the Technician and General at the same VE session and only three who attempted both and didn't pass the General portion of the duet. All three passed the General at the next VE session. It's distinctly possible there may be many others that I don't know about.

I helped start an amateur radio club, W2SBP, at my high school alma mater. We had nine student members who took their Technician and seven passed. Additionally of the seven who

passed three also passed their General. All of them only had three weeks to prep. A faculty member, Jon KD2LEN, went from no license to Extra in two weeks.

If you have some free time, consider working with a school radio club. It's very rewarding and we desperately need young people in the hobby. When you walk into the typical ham radio club meeting from the back, it looks like a box of Q-Tips. I would really be interested in your personal experiences with ham-cram.com. We just recently passed 43K preparation sessions. Thanks to all of you who helped make that possible.

73 Urb W1UL urb@w1ul.com 609-937-5487

The Gold Dust Twins

Dip..load...dip...load...dip... load, and so it goes. That's what you do with "boat anchor" gear to get the transmitter loaded up. And there are even more knobs on my Collins



KWS1 and 75A-4...aka, the "Gold Dust Twins." As to why they're called the Gold Dust Twins, I'm not sure, maybe because back in their day (late 40s to late 50s), it would cost you a "bag of gold" for them!

This past August I fired them up for the WES where bonus points were given for the number of "tubes" in use. Well...I got to be a "big deal," with 47 tubes in the pair and in the

signal monitor (no side tone, no problem for a straight key but tricky with a bug!)! I got several comments of "Wow, TNX for the bonus." but the best comment came from Dan W9DLN, "You have the boat anchor of an aircraft carrier!"

The 75A-4 is still a class-act receiver, it filters wonderfully and the audio is superb. The KWS-1 was putting out some big-time QRO and after ten minutes of warm-up the drift was "nil" in both pieces of gear. The analog readout compared very well with my K3. Zero beating is an art that I acquired long ago when you had to do such things because no one had a transceiver and was no problem. But there was a problem! Semi-break-in or full break-in hadn't been invented and I had to manually turn my transmitter back to standby to get the antenna switched over to the receiver....I forgot several times and as a result, I missed the first couple of letters of my QSO! ARRGH!

I had other commitments on that day and mother nature decided to end our dry spell with a thunder storm so I only made about 30 QSOs during the WES but it was 30 very enjoyable QSOs. By the way, the headphones in the picture are WWII headphones and go very well with the twins.

See you next year(SKN) and August boat anchor WES.

73, Ted K8AQM 1629S

Celebration in Amherst, Ohio



A gathering of friends and fellow SKC-Cers was held in Amherst, OH to celebrate W8NQT Van, #11509 who is now 11509C. Van is 86 years old and still pounding brass! A gathering of friends celebrated his advancement to Centurion along with tales of valor on the bands and bold faced lies! Left to right in the photo are: K8TEZ Larry 8426T, WB8ZLO Diane, NQ8T Steve 5919, W8NQT Van 11509C, and K8HRD Harold.

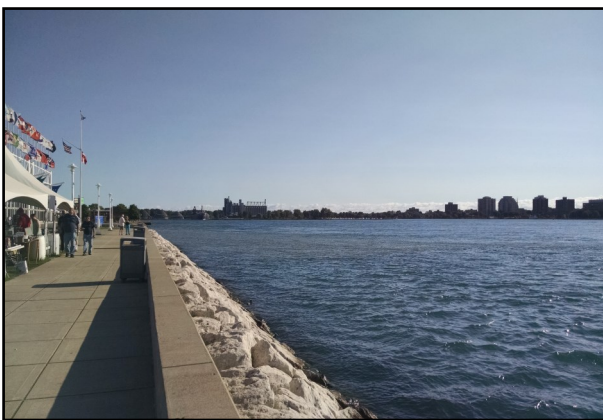
Great job Van, on to your "T".....73, Larry K8TEZ

EMARC Bluewater Swap

Dayton is great but for "spectacular" it is hard to beat the EMARC (Eastern Michigan ARC) swap in Port Huron, Michigan. Port Huron is located at the mouth of Lake Huron and the beginning of the St. Clair River. This is known as the "Bluewater" area. It is well named and worth the trip to the area even if not for a swap! Port Huron is on the border with Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. You can easily cross into Canada via the Bluewater Bridge.



EMARC holds an annual "absolutely free" swap every year the first weekend in August. The swap isn't big, maybe 50-60 folks, but a great place to meet friends and do what we hams do best...."rag chew." Shown in the photo left to right are K8AQM #1629S, N8LJ #9954, KG8CO #6362 and AC8W #2813. The region is called the "Bluewater area" for a reason as you can see in the following pictures. If you're a "boat nerd" you have to visit this area and if you can throw rocks any distance then that's another reason to visit the Bluewater Area!

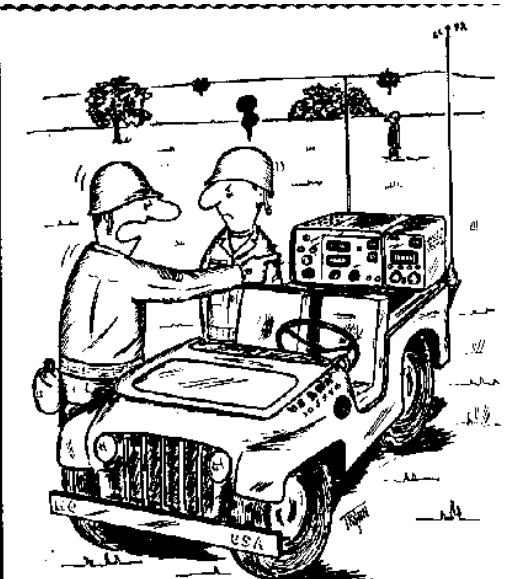


Top left are the “provided coverings for sellers, top right photo is a lake freighter passing “up-bound” into Lake Huron (they announce freighter names and data from a building not shown in the photo) and the lower left pictures is looking north toward Lake Huron (that’s Sarnia, Ontario, Canada across the river). Unfortunately, the “streak” you see in the lovely blue water is where the mouth of the Black River empties into the St. Clair River.

It was perfect weather; blue skies, blue water and only 75 degrees with a fine north

breeze! It was a great time at the swap and a chance to visit good friends.

73, K8AQM 1629S



"I don't care if division doesn't send QSL cards, Kolderup . . . GET ON THAT RADIO!"

SKCC QSL Bureau

Soon the weather will be cold and there is nothing better than sitting in the warm shack and getting ready for an evening of rag chewing, exchanging numbers or being in the SKS. We have a constant pool of new operators who want their new CW QSLs. Many don't know about our wonderful and “cheap” QSL bureau run by Jeff, K9JP #3008S. All the information about how to use the bureau can be found on our web page. The bureau also caters to those DX members in our club and is a very useful and inexpensive way to exchange QSLs. With postage going up “forever,” chasing paper QSLs can be expensive, checkout our well-run bureau.

73, es “QSL via the buro”

Ted K8AQM 1629S

SKCC Success in the 2016 Friendship Radiosport Games Chris Rutkowski, NW6V #_14374

Editor....If you follow the reflector you saw this post by Chris; quite an accomplishment and presented here.

“Ahem - a little brag for SKCC - and me :-)

Last March I posted I was prepping to compete in the high speed Telegraphy (HST) portion of a European-style Radiosport Contest, the 2016 Friendship Radiosport Games https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friendship_Games https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friendship_Games, being held here in Portland this summer.

Well, I won a Gold Medal for Team USA in the CW contest!



The HST contest had three parts, copying, sending, and a simulated pileup. I won the sending portion outright - I practiced quite a bit - so winning felt pretty good. But to my great surprise, I placed second in the pileup simulation, and third in copying, winning Gold overall.

I didn't get a final sending "speed" result - scoring was done with a combination of elapsed time, penalties, and percentages based on relative performances. Which included a TEN second penalty for a - gulp - error. But my straight key speed on 5 character groups of mixed letters and numbers was somewhere around 25WPM - equivalent to about 30 WPM plain text.

The rules divide the sending competition into three parts - the first must be sent by straight key, the second by straight key or bug, and the third by straight key, bug or paddles. I practiced with all three key types (see the picture of my practice setup) but learned that top competitors often go with a straight key for all three sections, because changing types increases errors

- which kills your score.

My favorite straight key, and the fastest so far - is a beautiful Marconi 213 replica made by Alberto Frattini. Warmed up, I can send plain text at 30+ WPM with this wonderful device.

I also use a Begali Blade - the shape of the knob and the feel require more wrist action to get properly formed characters, so it's a tiny bit slower, but better to get warmed up for going even faster on the Frattini.. It has a very different touch (in the same sense that two pianos or two guitars can have a very different touch).



I keep the N3ZN paddle hooked to the rig (a really expensive CPO) and set at 32 or 34 WPM, the bug is around 30/32, and the HST is hooked to a Winkeyer set at 40. Those speeds were all set to support the goal I set of moving my straight key speed up from the low twenties to 30+.

I use the N3ZN to pace myself - I'll send a single word, a call, a few

characters (sometimes something longer) at high speed with the paddle, then immediately try to send the same thing with the straight key - then back to the paddle, then to the straight... striving to make the SK sound "the same" as the paddle - sort of dragging myself up out of inertia to the desired target speed. That has been quite effective. I'll surprise myself by sending with the paddle - and sometimes it will be like, holy smoke is that fast - and other times - more frequently now... I find myself just sort of buzzing along in sync.

My ultimate goal? 36. Why 36? Legend has it McElroy once demonstrated 35 to a gathering of hams... :-)

Doing well in the copying test came as a big surprise to me - I hadn't actually written down code in decades - not since taking my Extra exam back in the early eighties - at which point I found writing 20 WPM a challenge. So I had no expectations. Well, I dropped out of copying at 30 or 32 WPM - again on mixed letter/number 5 character groups. All I can figure is that all that time spent focusing listening to my own sending, for accuracy, translated to more focused listening of others, too.



The pileup test simulates operators calling you as though you were a DX station. The calls come complete with QRM, heterodynes, speeds all over the map, chirpy signals, you name it. The winner copied 25 calls in the allotted 3 1/2 minutes - I tied for second at 22.

This is Team USA:

left to right Dale Hunt - WB6BYU, Kevin WA7VTD, Chris NW6V, and Tree N6TR

Overall, this was a BLAST - I highly recommend this to any CW lover. But the best part wasn't the competition - it was the friendships forged with hams from other nations who are as passionate about friendship and goodwill as they are about CW. Hearing what these fellows went through to make this happen back in the Cold War days left indelible memories.



Chris NW6V operating HF

Please, join in next time. You may be surprised at the possibility to fun. And winning a Gold Medal for Team USA, on the final night of the Rio Olympics, was pretty sweet.

73 Chris NW6V SKCC #14374

Editor.....What a great achievement for Chris, for Team USA and for amateur radio! Well done Chris and thank you for sharing your victory.

A Real “Down-Under” Straight Key

Straight keys come in many forms and it's not the form of the key that counts it's the forming of the code. I received this photo from John VK2IAU #15943 with the following explanation.



My home brew straight keyer is made of 4 hacksaw blades , a piece of 51 yrs. old hardwood fence paling , and some pieces of second hand stainless steel marine hardware , as you can see it is as ugly as a hat full of crushed spiders , but does the job when I am under its control.

You may consider that some SKCC members who enjoy home brew would like to view my keyer

I can actually claim to be a bit rusty when it comes to TX cw

72 form VK2IAU John # 15943 / QRP ee

CQ Comm

I received this interesting note from John, VK2IAU the other day:

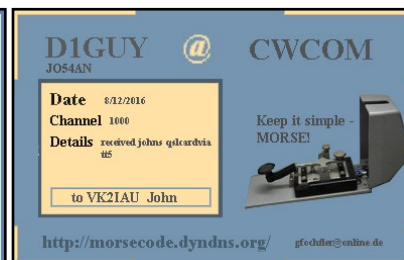
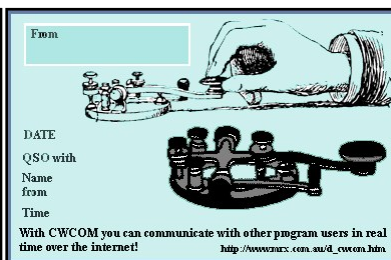
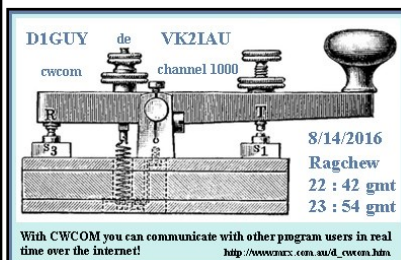
“On the 8TH August 2016 (my yesterday) I was having a qso on CWCOM with an SKCC member , I was not aware of SKCC , and he educated me about SKCC and what I found was a CW related organization obviously well organized and coordinated, so this morning I became a Member of SKCC , I have been a licensed amateur radio op for 23 yrs. and I really only became an amateur because of my passion for cw (I do occasionally use SSB). My usual mode of operation is CW/QRP/DX and my fists No. is 9091. For the past 10 yrs. I have also enjoyed a free and excellent internet live CW program by VK1EME , and some of the CWCOM users are amateur radio ops who because of various reasons are not able to rig antennas etc. , as they put it, they can get their daily CW fix on CWCOM, so my thoughts are that there may be SKCC members who find themselves in a similar situation and who could continue enjoying their daily CW fix on CWCOM.

*I am 77yrs. young and fully retired now for 20 yrs. so I am not trying to sell something , just throwing my 2 bobs worth in because it may benefit some of our amateur radio fraternity. 73 / 72 from VK2IAU John, #15943
So now off to explore the bells & whistles of SKCC”*

More news from John:

*“There are a few CWCOM users who are members of SKCC , and today on CWCOM one of our ops is MGY who is 13 yrs. old (strange world fer he is 13 yrs. old and I am 77 yrs. young hi hi), anyway he was interested in becoming an SKCC member (?? swl) so this young bloke real quick off the mark just like an Olympic sprinter , and he said he had applied fer SKCC membership before the ink had time to dry on my CWCOM window , he says he is from USA , and he is under the wing of CWCOM user NK8O CHAS , and since MGY start using CWCOM about 3 months ago his cw tx is very good .
72 FROM VK2IAU John / QRP EE”*

From Germany a CWCOM operator who has worked John sent me a few of the QSLs used by CWCOM operators. Now the question becomes, “Who will be the first SKCC member to obtain an award using just CWCOMM?” After all, the CW is manually sent and it seems to meet the requirements for SKCC Awards.



I “Googled” CQCOM and got a lot of data on the free program. Many times traveling with the XYL and being gone for two or more weeks I suffer “CW Withdraw!” Many times

times traveling with the XYL and being gone for two or more weeks I suffer “CW Withdraw!” I can’t put an antenna up anywhere nor travel with a transceiver (wife says, “vacation, not DXpedition”... darn! CWCOM is a program on the computer (which I am allowed to bring!) that with a small key I could get my CW/QSO fix right from the room if internet is available...and it usually is.

The program is easy to download, requires only minimal computer power and space. There are at least two YouTube videos on the setup of the program so setup and installation can be easily accomplished.

It won’t replace actually being on the air but it is “live” QSOing and a chance to survive “CW withdrawal!” Oh yes, did I mention is it an amazing training program for just practicing CW and can be found in our “files” area of our web page?

Thank you John for sending this information along, it may be extremely valuable for those of us who travel, work or just can’t put an antenna up where we are!

Hope to catch on the air or at least on CWCOM.

73, Ted K8AQM

WB8PTL Radio Museum

Imagine working with hundreds of boat anchor radios; cleaning, restoring and operating them nearly every day and being paid to do it! Definitely ham radio heaven! Such is the position Rich, K8UV #2250T finds himself in. Rich works for Brian, WB8PTL # 14754 who is a professor at University of Michigan and enjoys collecting radios, stereos and other electronic equipment. The WB8PTL Radio Museum is being developed in Ypsilanti, Michigan and recently myself, Jeremy KD8VSQ #13072C and his father Greg KE8CEW #15805 paid a visit to the museum. We caught Rich(K8UV) working on a restoration of a Collins military radio similar to the Collins 51J3 used during the Vietnam era. Rich took a break from his duties and gave us the million dollar tour of the two building facility. We saw early turn of the 20 century radios,



pre WWII, WWII, Korean and Vietnam era radio gear including speakers for these era radios. It was amazing to see the test gear from these time periods, the posters and brochures and hundreds of tubes needed to get this gear going. There were crystal radios, console radios, juke boxes, stereo receivers, tape decks, turntables, phonographs and even some very old and strange looking TV sets, all part of the museum! There were Hallicrafter, National, Collins, Heathkit, Gonset, all in the ham radio line; there were Crosby, Zeinith, Philco and several

brands I had never heard of in the broadcast radio selection. I won’t even attempt to mention all the stereo gear brand names but they were all the classics...not the off-brand Radio Shack

types.

Left to right, KD8VSQ, K8UV and KE8CEW standing in front of some of the Hallicrafters gear.

More Hallicrafters and National gear shown in the picture below. Rich explained that all the gear shown here is working and functional. If you know your boat anchors then you know this gear covers pre WWII and post WWII.



The bottom photo is a collection of “some” of the extra test equipment Rich has access too should he need it. That’s an R-390 receiver sitting there to the bottom right with the older AM radio and the “boxed-look” phonograph. There are rack after rack of this gear and Rich works and plays with it all.

My favorite rack of gear can be seen on the next page. If you know “boat anchors” then you can understand why I like this rack of gear. If I could “hang-out” there with Rich I would have a hard time walking away from here. I’ve always wanted to operate a National SP-600 and the SX-101 is no slouch either! How about that HRO, they have all the coils!





With all that “tube gear” tubes are needed!
No short supply here, that’s two full isles of tubes
available for Rich to keep the rigs humming along!

Thanks Rich for the great tour...you certainly
are one lucky guy to be hold-up in “ham radio heav-
en!”

By the way, the entire place is solar powered
and they have so much power they sell back to the
local energy company!

73, Ted K8AQM

PS There are railroad tracks running behind the
building. I suggested Rich run a wire out to the
tracks and tap into the rail just see what kind of 100
mile random “long” wire would receive...could be
interesting!



Editor

Thanks to all you members who have contributed
material for this issue of “The Rag Chew.” It’s great fun
putting the newsletter together when I get such great sup-
port.

Anyone can send just about anything to me and I’ll
be happy to include it in the next issue, you don’t have to
be a journalist nor ace photographer. If you think the ma-
terial is interesting then I’d bet that most of us would too.
Please help make the newsletter represent all the club.
Thanks es 73,
Ted K8AQM #1629S

