



Volume 12 Issue 1

The official newsletter of the Straight Key Century Club
"The Rag Chew"
Editor: K8AQM

March, 2020

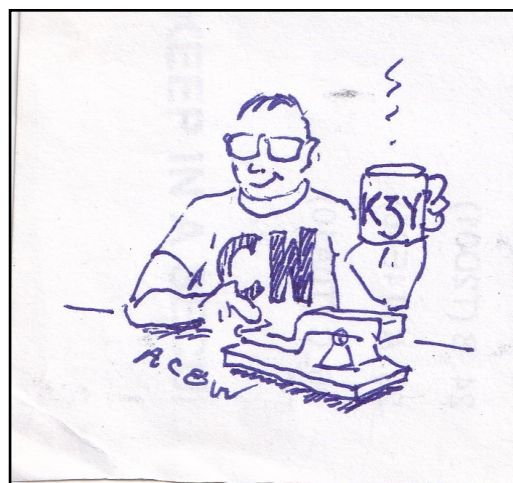
K3Y 2020 Wrap-up

The SKCC 14th Anniversary event in January was our most active ever! Thanks to all of the many callers who kept K3Y stations busy with straight key, bug and cootie contacts. SKCC was a constant presence on the bands throughout the month.

Well over 39,000 QSOs were logged by nearly two hundred K3Y event operators around the world-- an increase of more than 6,000 contacts over last year. Regional Coordinators scheduled more than 2,600 time slots for operators and uploaded over 2,000 log files during our "Straight Key Month".

You can see the K3Y Operator totals as well as your own stats by clicking the Sweeps & Stats link at skccgroup.com/k3y

K3Y QSL cards will be sent out via the SKCC QSL Bureau by early March. Members of the Bureau will receive their cards automatically. Others can request cards by sending a SASE (or, for non US members only, a PayPal payment). See the "QSL Card Request" link on the K3Y page link above for more info. Looking ahead... Next January will be SKCC's 15th Anniversary! Please make plans to be a K3Y operator during this milestone anniversary. Having a large number of special event operators is essential for the continued success of this increasingly popular event.



Drew - AF2Z
K3Y Planning Group

K3Y STATION OPERATORS JANUARY 2020

The world-wide team of SKCC members who made this year's event a great success:

U81 K1ARR K1EDG KCILZX KD1RT KE1AF KN1H N1FG N1CKE
NF1O NM1W WINU W1TAG W1ZAH W2RAN WA1BXY
U82 AA4AZ AF2Z K2FW K2IZ KD2E N28O W2LCQ W2NRA WA2J8G WB2NVR WK28
U83 AC2C AF3Z AH6AX K3DRJ K3EW K3M8B KA1F8X KB3VOU
N3MVX N3YUG N4RDT NN3E WA0CIE WA3GM
U84 AA4XU AE4Y K1EEE K4FYI K4RZD KA4UPI KB4OQJ KC4HCH KC5F KE4OH KN4NVU
K84KCC N4IDH N8KR NC4RT ND1J ND9M W1DV W1JC W4L8V WA8OJR WM4Q
U85 AD5VC AF5XF K0RO K5HEM K5L8U K5PE K5ZOL KA5TJ8 KC7QY
KG5OWB KM5PO NE5DL NM5Z W5ALL W5MIG WB5K8D W15H
U86 AA6AC K6ELQ W1EJ W6JIM W6LAX WB6IZC WD6TED
U87 AF9W AC7CC K5TRJ K7QB K7QBW K7RLN K7TKT KF7D8 KC7JEB
KJ7GNB N7LKL N7TM8 NA7C W6KCP WA7NB WA7RCT WD7J8
U88 AC88V K3YP K8PQC KA8HFN KD8YQX K88KCC
N8KQ_N8X1 W3ND W8HOG W8RF WB8JAY
U89 KC9IL KD9GDY KK0I N8KR N98E N19M NV9J W9DLN
W9HT W9LW W9TE WA9BBN WA9ZDC WB9EAO
U80 AD0AB AE0BA AE0HY AG0H K0FD K0FG K0NIA K4FYI/0 K8UDH KD0WW N0CVW
N0IP N0Z8 N3PDT NW7U8 W0EJ W0RLY W0VTT W0YB8 W9KMK WB0PYF

Alaska KL7IDA KL7IH WL7WH
Hawaii KH6ZM
Pto.Rico KP3W KP4RD KP48J

Africa Z86JB
Asia 4X1WQ JJICKN JR2IUB
Europe CTICFQ DF7TV DK3DUA DK5TRI DL9YC8 EA5IHK F4CJH
F6EJN F6HKA G4PVM GB0KEY ON7DQ_O808
N.America HP28M VE1AHX VE1MAM VE3RDE VE4DL VE6CCM VE9VIC WB9EAO/VP9
Oceania DU3GKT ND9M VK1MCW VK2GAZ VK3TP VK4BJ8 VK4CC
VK4EI VK4WM VK5CZ VK5LJ VK6CX VK7CW ZL2AIM ZL2BLQ
S.America LU7DD PY2FRQ_PZ5JW

Great job, K3Y Op's!

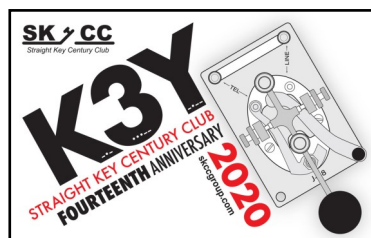
SKCC
Straight Key Century Club



K3Y QSL Card Winners 2020



The winner is design #3, by Derek, KJ4BQS Nr. 20999



Second place goes to design #1 submitted by Derek, KJ4BQS Nr. 20999



Third place goes to design #28 submitted by Chus, EA1AOQ Nr.14515T



Fourth place goes to design #32 submitted by Chus, EA1AOQ Nr.14515T



Fifth place goes to design #13 submitted by Gary, VE3DZP Nr.14702T

There were many wonderful designs submitted this year for our K3Y QSL. Here are the top QSL designs for our 2020 K3Y celebration. There were more than 30 entries this year and all were great candidates for the membership to vote their favorite.

You can claim a commemorative QSL card confirming contacts you have made with K3Y stations. One contact for each US call area, KH6, KL7, KP4 and six DX continental regions will be confirmed, up to 19 QSOs for the complete sweep. Contacts are chosen automatically.

Members of the SKCC QSL Bureau will receive K3Y cards soon after the event, no request necessary. If you are not a member of the SKCC QSL Bureau you can request a K3Y card by sending a SASE to the bureau. Be sure to write your callsign and "K3Y" clearly on the envelope!

If you live outside of the USA you can receive a K3Y card by making a payment to the SKCC QSL Bureau via PayPal. See the link below for details.

You may also want to QSL K3Y operators individually. This will depend on their personal QSLing policies. The SKCC QSL Bureau can forward your cards to K3Y operators **only if they are members of the SKCC QSL Bureau**. Otherwise, see QRZ.COM for individual operators' QSL policies and addresses. Visit the SKCC QSL Bureau at: www.skccgroup.com/member_services/qsl_buro.

What the Format of Your K3Y QSL Card Will Look Like

The *Straight Key Century Club* was created by Tom Peterson, KC9ECI, on January 2nd, 2006. Tom was promptly joined by Melinda Alsobrook K14CIA, and Gordon Benjamin N6WVK. Tom began signing up new members; Melinda launched the information campaign; Gordon secured the club domain and web site. Now, on its 9th Anniversary, SKCC is more than 13,000 strong and continues to attract new members at a steady rate. The club remains dedicated to its founders' goals of promoting the art of hand-sent Morse Code via manual telegraph keys.

For more information please visit our website at www.skccgroup.com

SKCC K3Y 2015 - 9th Anniv.

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QSL: AF2Z MODE: CW 2-WAY

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Station	Date	UTC	Band	RST	Operator	Station	Date	UTC	Band	RST	Operator
K3Y/0	1/02	0134	40m	559	KE0N	K3Y/KH6	1/02	0428	40m	559	KH6ZM
K3Y/1	1/02	0122	80m	599	KX1NH	K3Y/KL7	1/03	2012	17m	559	KL7IDA
K3Y/2	1/02	0119	80m	599	W1DV	K3Y/KP4	1/02	0228	40m	599	KP4SJ
K3Y/3	1/02	0211	80m	599	K2DEP	K3Y-AF	1/02	2309	20m	569	EA8BVP
K3Y/4	1/02	0149	40m	599	W4RQ	K3Y-AS	1/24	1452	15m	339	4X1WQ
K3Y/5	1/02	1515	20m	579	NE5DL	K3Y-EU	1/02	1600	10m	579	F6HKA
K3Y/6	1/02	0035	20m	559	W1EJ	K3Y-NA	1/02	2021	20m	559	VE1PVH
K3Y/7	1/02	0206	40m	569	K7TKT	K3Y-OC	1/11	0022	15m	449	VK4EI
K3Y/8	1/02	0141	80m	599	W3NP	K3Y-SA	1/02	2235	20m	579	PS7AW
K3Y/9	1/02	0104	40m	569	NV9X						

(Back of card)

Meet “Nan” (Renan) PY2FRQ

If you were chasing K3Y stations in SA then “Nan” was one of the only three SA stations operating as K3Y. He accounted for 306 SA QSOs.

I think it was a good participation, the best band here is 20m and that was confirmed, however, the surprise was 15m, between K3Y stations, K3Y-SA was the one who made the most contacts in this band, a total of 157 QSOs, work that shared with Gabriel LU7DD.



Nan installing his TH-3 trib-ander

There were days when the noise was very strong for me, I noticed stations calling, however, it was not possible to copy, SRI to the HAMs that I couldn't hear and there were some that even combining in Sked, there was no QSO, or because I didn't copy or because the propagation didn't help. That was the case with Mike K8NS, we tried 10m until the last day, he even heard me, but nothing here!

Mike did a good job, QSOs at 15M, 17M, 20M, 30M and 40M. One station that surprised me was that of Art WA7NB (and its small antenna), it was who I heard most easily in the low bands ... and high bands too, hihi.

Rino VE9VIC, insisted and we also get in touch, Sked Page is a great tool. Sometimes I had to ask for some AGN, because 2, 3 or 4 stations arrived at the same time, a small PILE-UP, it seemed like a CONTEST, it was very good to operate K3Y-SA, I recommend it to everyone, if I were not a K3Y I would not have done so many QSOs.

I started the event with the intention of reaching the Centurion, I ended up winning the Tribune, now there is a long way for the Senator, I count on everyone's QSO!

I thank Pete NM5PS (he invited me, so complain to Pete) and everyone who participated in the event. I will be active in SKN and maybe in some more events.

73, Renan “Nan” PY2FRQ

Eu acho que foi uma boa participação, 20M aqui é a melhor banda e isso foi confirmado, no entanto, a surpresa foi 15m, entre as estações K3Y, a K3Y-SA foi quem fez mais contatos nessa banda, num total de 157 QSOs, trabalho que dividi com o Gabriel LU7DD.

Houve dias em que o barulho era muito forte para mim, notei estações chamando, no entanto, não era possível copiar, SRI para os HAMs que não copiei. E teve alguns que até combinando em Sked não conseguimos o QSO, ou porque não copiei ou porque a propagação não ajudou. Foi o caso do Mike K8NS, tentamos 10m até o último dia, o Mike até me ouviu, mas aqui nada!

Mike fez um bom trabalho, QSOs em 15M, 17M, 20M, 30M e 40M. Uma estação que me surpreendeu foi a do ART, WA7NB (e sua pequena antena) foi quem eu ouvi com mais facilidade nas bandas baixas ... e nas altas também, hihi.

Rino VE9VIC, insistiu e também fechamos o contato, o Sked Page é uma ótima ferramenta. Às vezes eu tinha que pedir um AGN, porque 2, 3 ou 4 estações chegavam ao mesmo tempo, um pequeno PILE-UP, parecia Contest, foi muito bom operar o K3Y-SA, recomendo à todos, se eu não fosse um K3Y, não teria feito tantos QSOs.

Comecei o evento com a intenção de chegar ao Centurion, acabei conquistando o Tribune, agora há um longo caminho para o Senador, conto com o QSO de todos!

Agradeço a Pete NM5PS (ele me convidou, reclamem com o Pete) e a todos que participaram do evento, estarei ativo no SKN e talvez em mais alguns eventos.

VY 73 DE PY2FRQ



Nan t his station operating as PY2FRQ K3Y/SA



Definitely wanted by many for K3Y sweeps!

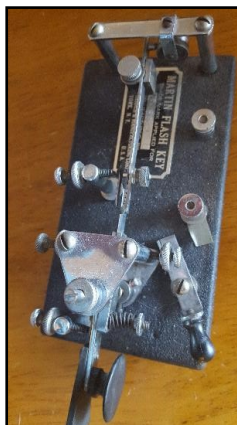
November Brag



I am really enjoying SKCC and the many members I have had QSOs with!! I am also enjoying reading these Brag comments and especially seeing the various pics added to them. Hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!! 73, Kenny AF4QK



Thanks for the contacts. Always a great pleasure to work take part in this activity. Still worked lots of new members. Thanks also to Larry AH6AX for the bonus points. 73 and see you next month. Bert



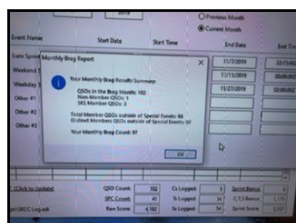
Enjoyed making some contacts early in the month before flying off to Seattle for Thanksgiving. Looking forward to some e-layer propagation in December and K3Y in January. Happy Holidays everyone. 73, Dan



Thanks to all for the Brag QSO's. I hope everyone had a good Thanksgiving and have a great Christmas Holidays. 73, Ric



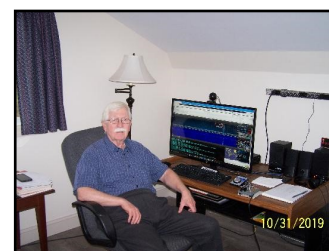
It was a good month! 73, Tom KB3CVO



Sorry first timer. Forgot to check the box. 73, Robb KC1LZX



I mentioned to my kids about how I was using up my paper and pens copying all of this CW this month, and for my birthday they gave me 12 pads of paper and 48 good pens. Now



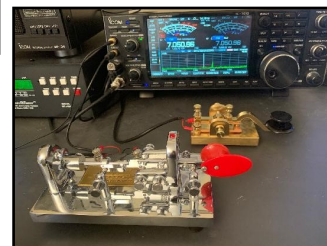
Another good month for Brags. Finally got my 160 meter Sloper up, so a few top band QSOs. Thanks for all the contacts and Happy Holidays to all!! 73, Dave KB1WOD



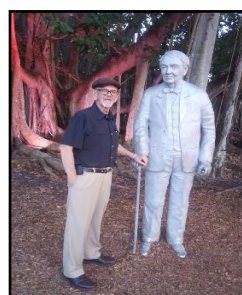
6 FUN years in SKCC and I have worked 3000 members. (Brag helped a lot getting there) Where are the other 18356 ? Best wishes to all for a Happy Holiday Season. 73, AL N4ow



My QTH is like a Mamas and Papas tune from the 60's, "All the leaves are brown, and the sky is gray", so shorter dog walks - and MORE TIME TO PLAY AT THIS HOBBY!!! 73, Frank



Had a great time in November. The new 'T' helped my total a lot. I'll be looking for even more this month. 73, Chris N0CC



Thanks for good chats! 73, Rich W4RQ

November Brag II



Sorry to have been absent from Brag for so long. Raising two young granddaughters and running a business tends to rob me of my free time. 73, Bill WA4FAT



Not on as much as I would have liked, either for brag or WES. Worked several non-members and had some nice QRS rag chew QSOs. A surprising number of thunderstorms for November. 73, Les WB5JWI

A Message from "Rudolph"



Thanks to the hundreds of boys and girls that contacted me during the Christmas WES.



I asked Santa to load his sleigh with my j-38 and red Christmas bug and I pulled the sled through the 160 meter band all the way thru the 20 meter band.



Here is the rig I was using and if you are one of the good boys and girls that have an envelope on file in the QSL bureau, I will be sending you a special commemorative qsl card.



My pal Olaf has been practicing and came along with me and hopes that he will be an ELF in next years' event.



. Merry Christmas to all till next year. 73, from Frank (Rudolph) AA2XB, SKCC 1681S

December Slow Speed Saunter

A very nice turnout for the December SSS. Great numbers for AC1GF and N8KR.



Overall results

Rank	Callign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	Score
1	AC1GF	Bob	19396T	NH	66	66
2	N8KR	Ken	7559S	FL	52	52
3	VA3RSA	Richard	21258	ON	32	32
4	KS9KCC	AL	12000T	IN	25	25
5	KC1LZX	Robb Zarges	21122C	MA	24	24
6	K4ALGC	RL	660S	KS	21	21
7	KC5F	Steve	21902T	NC	16	16
7	WA2JSG	Curt	3018S	NJ	16	16
11	K9KHK	Karl Heitz	20224	NY	16	16
15	K7TKT	Brian	6605T	ID	14	14
11	W4LSV	Barry	2795S	TN	11	11
12	NAAPJ	Brian	11673S	GA	9	9
12	NQ8T	Steve	5919T	OH	9	9
14	N9WVM	John	4462S	IN	8	8
15	K8HFN	Larry	2046S	OH	7	7
16	W4WVC	Lane	17812T	NC	6	6
17	AD0YM	Mike	16040	MO	5	5
17	K0GI	Jack	2376S	WI	5	5
19	K8AQM	Ted	1629S	MI	4	4
20	VE2KZW	Robert	16248C	QC	3	3
21	K8N	Steve	6759S	IN	2	2
22	KM4T	Barry Wyatt	16929	SC	1	1
22	K8TJS	Allen	5172S	TX	1	1

Participants and QSOs by SPC

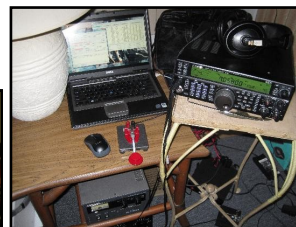
FL 1/52	GA 1/9	ID 1/14	IN 3/35	KS 1/21
MA 1/24	MI 1/4	MO 1/5	NC 2/22	NH 1/66
NJ 1/16	NY 1/16	OH 2/16	ON 1/32	QC 1/3
SC 1/1	TN 1/11	TX 1/1	WI 1/5	



Not much time to operate but had some great rag chews. 73, Ted K8AQM



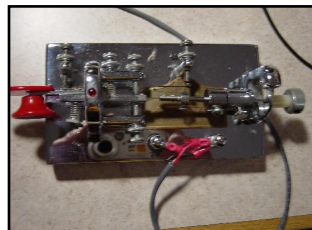
Not as much time to spend this month, but still a lot of fun. 73, Al KS9KCC



While conditions on 20 and 40 left a lot to be desired, there was activity and my ears got a good exercise! Worked a number of new calls which is good! My humble portable FL station is appreciated with these nice warm/hot temps! 73, Ken N8KR



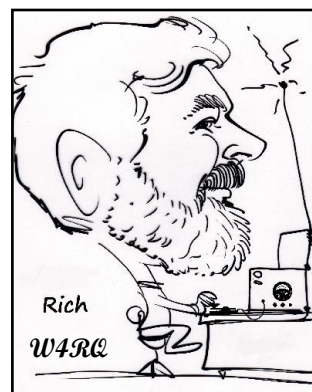
I am a 62 yr old cw beginner. This was my first SSS, and I only had a couple of hours Sunday afternoon, but I did manage one contact with K2LT (16906). As I told Lee, this is new and a thrill each time I make a CW QSO. Look forward to many more events in the future as I'm slowly getting over my nerves when sending. 73, Barry KM4T



GREAT opportunity for practice and garner a few new ones. TNX to all for your patience! 73, Steve NQ8T



Operated at a different location this time (same state, county, grid as my home location), running my old IC-7000 at 50w into a G5RV/JR at 18ft high. Big ole Kent Straight Key. Fun time. We should do this every month (oh wait, we do hi hi). See y'all next month on the SSS. 73, Curt WA2JSG



Rich
W4RQ

SKCC Logger Pro

ID	Date	Time On	Time Off	Call	Name	Freq	Band	Mode	EST-Tx	EST-Rx
00071	2019-12-01	21:42:44Z	21:49:02Z	KC9JA	Wesley	7.052500	80M	CW	299	299
00072	2019-12-01	22:10:18Z	22:16:02Z	W4RQ	Rich	7.050500	80M	CW	299	279
00073	2019-12-01	23:00:12Z	23:14:24Z	N4PQJ	Sam	3.551200	80M	CW	589	519
00074	2019-12-01	23:16:02Z	23:22:06Z	W1ZAH	Frank	3.553000	80M	CW	589	519
00075	2019-12-01	23:21:41Z	23:41:51Z	KC9JNP	Scott	7.114000	40M	CW	599	599
00076	2019-12-01	23:53:38Z	00:03:21Z	WB2MJH	Len	7.051000	80M	CW	599	569

Members: 0/16 (2/10) (Click to Update)

Radio.com IC-V230 Connected

Log File: C:\SKCC\logger\log\ICQ5-W4RQ-A-01-dec-2019

QSO Count:	17	Cs Logged:	1	Sprint Bonus:	0
SPC Count:	16	Ts Logged:	8	C.T.S Bonus:	280
Raw Score:	578	Ss Logged:	12	Sprint Score:	836

This is a corrected score for my first SKCC SSS. I bumped it up by one by squeezing in my last QSO with WB2MJH, Len in NY. We started at 23:53Z but ended slightly over time. I checked with Rich W4RQ and he said it counts. As you can see from my log photo, the QSO times tend to be lengthy at QRS speeds. I had lots of fun and thanks to all my contacts with numerous "welcome to SKCC" mixed in with the QSO exchanges. 73, Richard VA3RSA

My Novice Bug

I passed the Novice exam in 1962 when I was in the 8th. grade. I bought a used Heathkit DX 20 to use with my Heathkit AR-3 and got a good deal on a second-hand Stewart Johnson Bug (\$5.00). My antenna was a homemade folded dipole made from twinlead.

Minutes after my license arrived, I was on the air with a brand new call sign, WN8EKR, in Parma Ohio! I didn't own a straight key at the time and wanted to sound "cool" (an 8th. grader with a bug and zero experience ☺) with my Stewart Johnson, so 7.186 mhz. was a bit "confused" for a few hours with my questionable sending!

I passed the General Class exam and still used the same bug that saw duty in the 1963 Novice Roundup. Then later in 1964, a girl at school captured my attention and I sold my Stewart Johnson Bug to a friend for \$4.00 to finance a date!

My dad's job was transferred to Niagara Falls and I became a WB2. My interests centered on contesting and a Vibrokeyer served the need, however, I truly missed my first bug!

I didn't know the name or model of my Stewart Johnson because they manufactured them without any labels or tags! In November of 2000 I found an advertisement in an old QST identifying my bug and immediately posted my desire for a Speed - X, 510 made by the Speed - X Radio Manufacturing Company on the Key Reflector. My first response included a picture of what appeared to be a new Stewart Johnson, but my offer to buy the bug was met with a courteous reply. The collector said "he had never sold any of his instruments". He wanted to work a trade, but I had only a few paddles and a Vibroplex which were gifts from my wife. I thanked him for his kind response and kept looking.

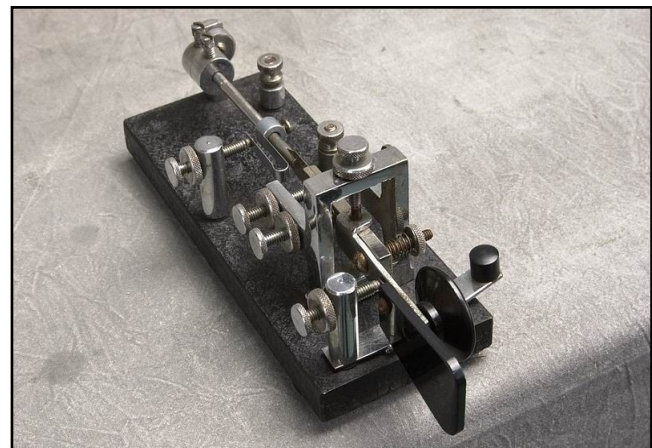


On the fourth Saturday in December I found a note in our mail box from our letter carrier stating she had attempted to deliver a package addressed to me, however, since we were not home the package would be delivered on the following Tuesday. I didn't recognize the sender's name or address until Sunday evening (checked the callbook) when I exclaimed to the family "It's my bug!".

I'm a Math teacher, so I had the following Tuesday, December 26, off. At 6:01 AM, Monday I called our local post office and explained my dire need! We live in a very small rural town and I knew most everyone. The supervisor said I could come and get my package before they officially opened. She asked me if I would mind opening the box at the post office and allow them to share the joy of this kindhearted gift! We opened the package and I showed everyone the beautiful bug and read the included note. John, W2NI, said "he knew

the bug meant a great deal to me and I should consider it a gift, never to be repaid"! The letter carriers certainly felt the kindness and happiness!

I use it occasionally and the feel brings me right back to those first years of WN8EKR/WA8EKR!



73, Jay, K2ZT
#5567

December WES



Rudolph had a great weekend. He used his j-38 and his red Christmas bug, made by the atoz co. in 1908. They thought they could get around the patent by calling it an improved vibroplex. But they got sued. Thanks to the 91 stations that "talked" to Rudolph and thanks to those that tried but were in the noise level. Rig is a Kenwood TS 450 and Carolina Windom antenna. 73 to all and Merry Christmas, Frank AA2XB



Little time but fun. Used my OHR 100A on 80 and my Small Wonder Labs DSW 40 and DSW 20 for those bands. Bert F6HKA actually heard my 3 watt DSW 20! The little blue rig in the picture is the DSW40 that got me most of the contacts from member to S. Merry Christmas and 73 to all. Peter

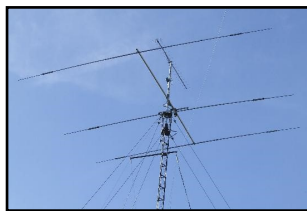
73, KI0G, Bob



There was some wild propagation during this WES. Long range propagation on 40m and then in an instant nothing but short skip. Made 80 QSOs on 20m, 17 of which were with Florida stations. Propagation was definitely to the south at my Qth. Worked 44 states and 8 countries. Best DX was OA4BJO and FG8NY on 20m. Best stateside QSOs were with Wyoming, Utah, and RI, all on 40m. First time ever working Wyoming during a WES. I missed W1ZAH for all the bonus points. I didn't search out any bonus stations except during the last 2 hours of the contest. That's when I found KA5TJS and N8KR for bonus stations number 13 and 14. I never work call area 3 stations on 20m, except for K3WW, but this time I worked K3ESE and K3EW on 20m. Very weird propagation this WES. Last, but not least, is a picture of my very patient dog. He missed 2 of his walks because of the WES. I promised to give him extra walk time starting tomorrow. Thanks for the contacts. 73, Bob AG1GF



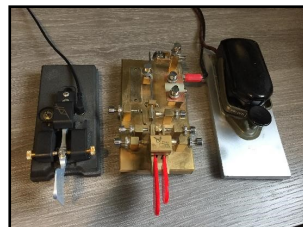
Operated from a nearby park Saturday and Sunday morning, the low temperatures discouraged most people to go to the park and most of the time I was by myself. If I knew it I would have brought a bigger antenna, hi hi. A little of elevation and clearance from the buildings works wonders and with 40W and a couple of hamstick antennas for 20 and 40M, had a lot of fun making contacts all the way from France to CA and WA. Thank you Bert, F6HKA and thank you Tony K6ELQ. Saturday had better conditions than Sunday, and both 20 and 40M where in great conditions on my location. Thank you all so much for all the contacts. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I hope Santa bring you all new radio toys! 73, AC2RJ, Ruben.



WES really fun but little spread. only 2 times 4 hours of operation from 13 to 17 GMT. Only with the 20 m band except 3 qso over 40m. Thanks to Scrooge and Grinch for the QSOs. Merry Christmas to all and best wishes for 2020. 73, Bob F6EJN



That was a great way to spend a December weekend! My best rate was 30 QSOs during the 0100z hour on Saturday night. Band totals: 80m (53), 40m (61), 20m (23). Total time on air: 7 hours. The view 'from the cockpit' appears below. Many thanks to Dave, N19M for managing the WES and for the bonus station concept. It was a great deal of fun being one of the elves. I put many new callsigns into my log, and hopefully, spread some cheer to all of the contestants who worked me. 73, Gary AF8A

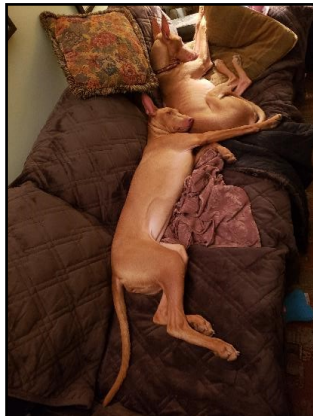


Conditions not too bad. 20m and 40m in good shape. Very surprised when VE0XDX replied my CQ. I really didn't think I'd contact him. He was the last I needed. Very great theme. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everybody. See you now in K3Y event. 73, Bert F6HKA

December WES II



Very little heard on Sunday and QSOs (6) were all on Saturday, with 4 on 20m and 2 on 40m. Thanks to F6HKA (two bands) OK2VWB VE3FP WM4Q GM0EUL. 73 John G0RDO



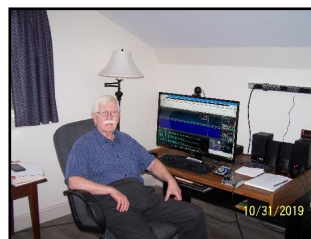
I really had a great time with this WES, since it serendipitously coincided with everyone being away, and me being left alone to play on the radio! I had one contact on 10m, a bunch on Top Band, and many in between. Activity was fast and furious, at times, on Saturday, but Sunday seemed to have far fewer operators. My setup was the wondrous K2 at 5W to a 20m EDZ up 50', or an 80m dipole up 70', the key is the inimitable TBFB cootie, by W1SFR. 73, Lloyd K3ESE



Another very enjoyable WES just dipping in and out and working anyone who turned up while I made my mini paddles. Used the Bug this time and I'm continuing to improve with it. Fun as always, Happy Christmas all! 73, Peter GM0EUL



Enjoyed 20m & 40m with "new" E.F. Johnson Speed-X bug now with N5HCW gift HB weight. Lots smoother than a Vibroplex. 40m got really strong later last night just as everyone was going to bed. (Sigh) Much fun. 73, Don K3RLL



One of my best! Had a great time. Even got some 160 qsos. Thanks for a great WES!! 73, Dave KB1WOD

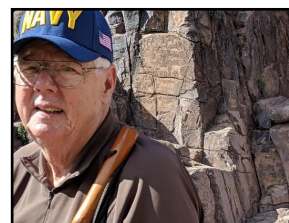
Only had 30 minutes of op time this weekend but had a ball on 20 meters, working Scrooge and great QRP sigs from N4OW and NA5N and several others. Dragged out the 40 year old HF-380, and my favorite 60 year old SK, an RAF Type 51 like used in the Vulcan bomber, sitting there next its brother I'm hoping to rebuild, allegedly rescued for the runway crash of XM576. If you are aware of any donor keys or parts for a Type 51, please ping me. Happy Holidays to everybody, see ya SKN. 73, Scott KA9P



WES at Christmas time is always fun. 73, Mike K1EEE



Limited time again this month, ARRL 160 is one of my favorite events. Tricky catching the bonus stations this year...Maybe I would have heard more if we didn't have a big light display in the neighborhood. 73, Chas K3WW



Operating portable from Mesa, AZ. Limited to 20 mtrs only. TS 530 & J38 key to a HB vertical mounted on car port. QSOs: AA5VE, W0UY, K2FW, AC1GF, AD0AB, AD0AB, WM4Q, W4FOA. 73, Daryl K9QEW/7



Well, what fun. Only bad thing of running 240mw is getting stepped on all the time. A real challenge. Used my homebuilt MightyMite running a 2N2222 transistor at 12V and it got a good workout. Very solid little transmitter. Stayed around 7.500-7.550. One contact in FL worked out to 3516 miles per watt. Also used my Kenwood R-1000 receiver. Bandwidth is little wide making things even more difficult. Hope to see you next go around. 73, Steve K2DEP



New hat with SKCC logo arrived just in time for Christmas! 73, Brian K5CIS

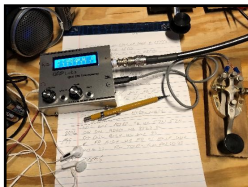
December WES III



Wow, lots of fun this year guys. Thanks for those who found me. Ran 70 watts on my IC7410 to an 80 meter inv vee. Got 4 DX stations this sprint. I would have been on more but a good buddy called and asked me to help plant his Christmas trees, REALLY! He got 500 and is starting a tree farm. That killed most of Saturday. 73, Allen KA5TJS



Fired up the old Icom IC-761 for this WES. Sorry if it was off frequency. Enjoyed the event. Gives this new CW Operator some good practice. 73, Randal KG5IEE



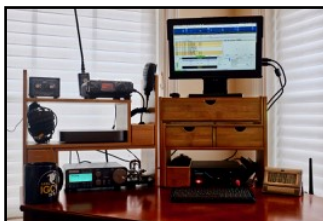
I always enjoy SKCC events. This one is special. I made one contact with my newly built qcx 40. Thanks Adam, VE3FP. 73, Rich N3KQN



That was fun. Since everyone was chasing the elf's and overlooking a lot of CQ's I instead chased all the kids calling CQ that were overlooked. Managed a couple of hours air time with the K2/10. I had to run the full 15 watts to finally grab the Grinch and Snowflake. Bands seemed in pretty good shape but still got a lot of 539 and 339 reports. I'll take em all as long as I'm copied. heh heh Everybody have a Merry Christmas and Holiday season. See ya in the New Year in K3Y!!! 73, Randy KB4QQJ



Great fun again. Conditions not bad. My goal was 100 Qs and made 92. Watch out next time. Loved the Christmas theme. It was an interesting challenge hunting down the 15 specials. After getting 10/15, the going got really tough so that was my total. Waiting with anticipation to see what we'll be doing next year! 73, Chris N0CC



Recently reorganized my corner shack through the use of expandable desktop organizers. The MacMini computer and 10.6 inch HDMI display took over the digital work from an old laptop and gives me more desk space for operating the straight key. 73, Al KC4ZA



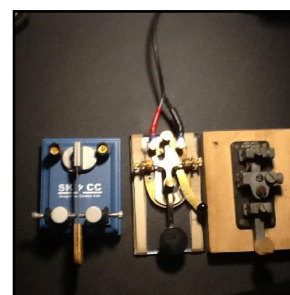
Only played a short time ... but I wkd Scrooge ... hooray! To all my radio friends and associates I wish Happy Holidays, Merry Xmas and improved radio propagation next year. 73, Bill KE3O



It was certainly an honor to play "Santa" in this month's sprint. Thank you! The majority of my time was spent on 40 and 80 meters, although I was able to catch a few on 20 (thanks F6H-KA...Pere Noel). I did miss five special ops including Scrooge. Used the IC7300 and for the most part, the 1919 Vibroplex Original...love that bug! I QRS'd with the Begali HST. Next event...K3Y! 73, Jack, KK0I...Santa



Thank you all for the great WES! Happy Holiday Season! 73, Sergey KD9EBS



I used my E. F. Johnson key this time. Probably will use one of my J-38's next time. SKCC Cootie needs some more practice. Lots of fun. Looking forward to the K3Y event. 73, Jim KD9GDY



QSO Stats: 13 on 21 MHz (NIL in the others...) TA33 - 50W - Homemade DSK (aka Sideswiper) and centennial SK Klopferfaste M.99 firma Hartmann & Braun. Happy Holidays! BCNU 73, Walt LW3EX..- ZUT

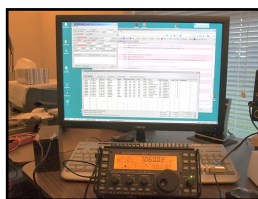


Happy Holidays es 73, Chuck N1OC

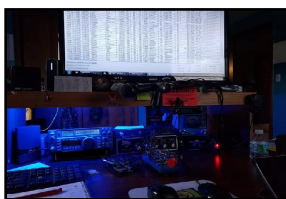
December WES IV



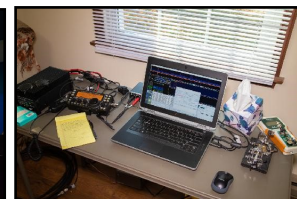
Started getting a blister on my finger from my Speed-X straight-key knob for the first time in 41 years! (Must be doing too many dishes lately.) I switched to my early Russian training key, clunky but smooth. After a while I noticed the delicious aroma of ozone whenever I'd come back to my shack after a break; I suspect the contact on my Russian key as the cause, but can't be sure. Anyhow, I enjoyed WES even though I didn't get to be on the air as much this time. And I get to submit for Tribune now! 73, Todd NØIP



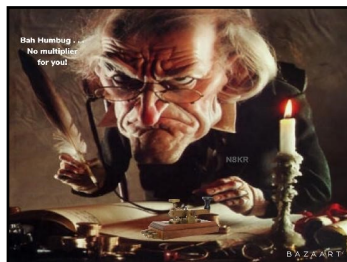
Lots of fun with QRP at times frustrating but fun. Conditions were WILD QSB would bring sigs up to 30db over 9 then drop them like a rock! Did way better than I expected. F6HKA has great ears :) 73 til next year. Happy Holiday Season to ALL. 73 de AL, N4ow (I ran the KX3 on Battery Saturday)



My downsized station, Icom IC-735 @ 90W es some wires in the air. Does OK.. Had some SWR problems Saturday nite es traced it down to a bad coax jumper. Fun December WES as always. 73, "Jack Frost" Randy N8KQ



Fun Time. Used portable antenna mounted to bumper of my pickup. Wolf River Coils silver bullet 1000. Total length of 15 feet. Worked surprisingly well even on 80. 73, Doug N3QW



So much fun! So much activity! Grateful to Dave - NI9M for organizing this event and for choosing me to be Scrooge! Thanks to all of the great SKCC ops who were on this weekend. I can NOW break character and wish you ALL a Merry Christmas! 73, Ken N8KR



Worked a Scrooge - what a goofy name to send until I realized that was a bonus station! Worked this WES an hour here and there a few times due to life. My first WES using my new homebrew terminated folded dipole (TFD) which seemed to perform quite well QRP. Always enjoy the fun and meeting fellow brass pounders, old and new. Until next time, Merry Christmas to all. 73, Paul NA5N



That was a blast!! Thanks all for the Q's and Fun. More S&P on 40M this time with short excursions to 80M & 20M. Amazingly the bands had minimal QRN, which is a plus around here... I and many others missed VE0XDX, Pepper Minstix. But searched the Results for 9000 Points and the Soapbox and so far it looks like 3 made it. They said they were surprised...Umm I would have fell outta my chair. 73, Rick - N8XI SKCC, the KEY to Amateur Radio



Wow! Great propagation. Who needs sunspots!?! I really enjoyed this one. Thanks for all for the contacts. My apologies to the several OPs I left hanging on Saturday evening on 80M. I had to run because of a minor emergency... VY SRI. 73, John W4XX



Just joined the SKCC after getting my very first straight key. I didn't have time to get a cable set up, but a few alligator clips later I was off to the races. Thanks to W4FOA for my very first SKCC QSO, and I look forward to many more! 73, Hugh VA7UNX



I had a good time and the bands seemed to be in fairly good shape. Merry Christmas to all SKCC members!! 73, Jack W9GT

December WES V



Chasing the bonus stations was a lot of fun for this WES. I was trying different configurations of my the receiver filters to pull out some of the folks down in the noise. I was also breaking in a new sideswiper. Many thanks to all the kind people that suffered through the adjustment phase :-) I am looking forward to the next WES when I'll be operating portable from the Delaware Water Gap - 73, Glen NK1N



Only 1 hr on Sat es then had a trip to Dallas so that was it. Best signals from F6HKA es K6ELQ. Strange prop. from my QTH. Really enjoyed my hour es tnx to all the special stations. 73, Les WB5JWI



Western Union 2A Legless

Limited time both days, wish I could have had more, as conditions were sometimes quite good. Thanks to the bonus stations, particularly those who were on a lot. Some of them appeared to be getting good pileup practice. Nice as always to work some of the higher-numbered folks. 73, John W1TAG

STRAIGHT KEY CLUB OF CHELTENHAM



KS3KCC

Had very minimal time this weekend due to work and family stuff. As always a great time.....Merry Xmas to all. 73, DAH KS3KCC



The bands were great: I had S1 noise level on both 20 and 40, and good propagation as well. Weekends are usually work days for me, but I took breaks throughout Saturday (from details of our 2020 budget - ugh) to participate. Great theme and lots of fun. 73, Roger W6LAX



Ran 75w from my TS-590SG to a vertical using a Kent SK. Band condx seemed pretty good this time here. Just sorry I didn't have more time available at the radio. Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah. Curt WA2JSG NJ



Not a lot of time for this WES. Most of the time I spent on the WES I was workings the Club Station Call KS3KCC. Tnx everyone and we will see you soon. 73, Greg WA3GM / DAH KS3KCC



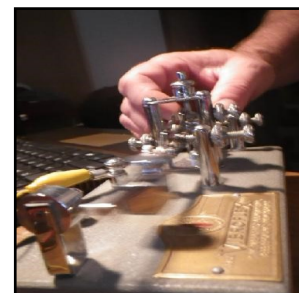
It was a busy weekend for me with other duties but I was glad to be able to participate despite my time being limited. 73, John W9WN



I was only able to get on the air for about an hour this month. I was operating "stationary-mobile" from a local park. There was lots of activity, so I wish I had more time to operate. 73, Craig WB3GCK



Lots of BIG signals on 40 meters! 73 for a Merry Christmas! 73, Jeff WN1MB



Happy Holidays to all!
John AL7K

CW AND Golf

Hi, my name is Ken, otherwise known as N7KO. I have been learning CW for over two years now, off and on. The first year or so it was more off than on, there was always something that got in the way. Looking back, I cannot remember what it was, I guess it was a bunch of little things.

Let me back up a few years, about 50+ years. I had an uncle that had strung a wire around his back yard, did not know why at first, he did not have a Cow. One day while my folks were visiting with my Aunt and Uncle, I noticed a metal box, setting on a small table, a smoking stand I think, next to an overstuffed chair with the cotton showing thru on each arm. The box was not very big a little smaller than a bread box, it had some wires hooked to it and my curiosity got the best of me, so I asked one of my Cousins what it was, he told me it was a ham radio. My Cousin told me his Dad sent messages all over the world using the radio and what I now know as a straight key. From then on, I wanted to know more.

Years past, I never got to learn any more about my Uncle's radio, and in the late 60s I had another Uncle from my Dad's side of the family that drove up one day into our drive way in an old Chevy with a long wire hung on the back bumper that stood up about seven or eight feet high. He said it was for his CB radio, WOW that was great, he could talk to everyone, at least everyone in the valley.

About 1970 I was 16 then, old enough to be driving a car, finely. I worked all summer in the mint farm and earned enough money to buy my first car, it was a 1962 Chevrolet four door sedan, yah I know a four door, but it was in good shape. Well the first thing I did was install my first radio that I bought at a second hand and filled out the paperwork that the FCC required for an operator's license. I was in Hog Heaven for sure, I was able to talk to any one that had a radio, In the valley any way, and when I was on the road I could talk to the Truckers, I remember it was channel 19 for them, except the log trucks used channel 17. It was not but just a few years that I became bored with CB radio, moved away to Roseburg Oregon driving gravel trucks, yep they had the CB radios too, mainly to communicate with dispatch.

At about that time I had a neighbor, his name was George, and he was into ham radio, I got to set in his shack, not what I would call a shack, it was nicer than the trailer I was living in. Anyway, he sat me down while he rotated a big dial and cranked on the knobs until we could hear a voice coming over his speaker, I remember the guy on the other end saying he was in Alaska, WoW that was further than the 60 miles from Roseburg to Grants Pass. Well I was hooked, from then on I wanted a "Ham Radio," well I did until he told me how much money he paid for that tin box with all those knobs.

I forgot about Ham radio for years, until my wife came home from church one day with a slip of paper, the paper had information on it. It listed when and where to take a class in order to become a Licensed Amateur Radio Operator. I called the number that was written on the piece of paper and signed up for the class, and before too long I was ready to take the Technician exam, a few week later I found myself taking the exam.

After marking what I thought was the correct answer for each question and going over it three times I was finally ready to hand it in, so I did and went back to my seat and waited and waited. I can still remember how excited and nervous I was watching the examiners looking over my test, each one scribbling things down, looking at a sheet with holes in it. Seemed like they took their sweet old time. By then I knew I had failed the test, then the last examiner walked over to me stuck his hand out and said congratulations you passed.

Now I was waiting for my ticket to arrive in the mail so I could get on the air, I had already bought my first Ham Radio. The day came when I received my ticket in the mail box,

now I had my tech license, I started right away getting on the air doing check-ins, I checked in to this one and that one, on simplex and on repeaters, on the so called nets. That was exciting for a while and it was not long I became tired of ham radio; it was not long before I boxed the radio up and did not do a thing with it. I knew there was more to Ham radio than the 2 meter band, there were the HF bands, but I also knew I was not smart enough to pass the General test.

Years went by, six years I think, and one summer one of my wife's Aunt came for a visit, she is a very pleasant person and she and my wife spent their time getting caught up on all the family stuff women do. This left me with time on my hands, and I caught myself sneaking off into the basement looking for something to occupy myself with, it was not long I started looking over the General Class License Manual that a friend had loaned me several years before. Well I spent two weeks each evening studying that book until I thought I had a chance to pass the General Class exam. I contacted a local Radio Club to find out when the next test session would be, I believe it must have been the coming Tuesday which was six days away, so I kept my study up until that day arrived and drove to the building where they held their club meetings and the exams once a month. I sure was sweating bricks walking into the room where they had each of us sit down for our exam. I sure was happy when I finished the exam and the examiner came over and asked me if I would like to take the amateur extra exam, took me a second or two to realize I passed the general. "Fantastic!" but then I replied, "No, I do not think so." That evening I drove back home from a small town in Idaho to my home in Washington about 20 miles, I had such a grin, my face hurt; I actually passed the General. Ok, if you are still with me on this journey I will get to the game of golf in a few minutes.

Now that I held the General Class License this opened a whole new world for me, I was soon making contacts far and wide, I was hearing CW also, but I knew I was not smart enough to learn that, or was I? Fast forward a few more years I decided to try and learn CW. I started with computer programs, bought Cd's, downloaded several CW learning programs, you know, all the short cuts to learning CW in a week. Ok I am not the sharpest knife in the drawer so it should only take me two weeks, right. I did this method, I tried that method; I even tried a Cd program that worked on association like Y ---why did I die, came with pictures like kissing a sheep. I never took to the U so that did not work for me.

Some people like the game of golf, you may be one of those, I think some one must be off their rocker to chase a little white ball with pimples around an empty field of grass, you know, a few fries short of a Happy Meal! And some, ok many, think anyone that would spend days, weeks, listening to a bunch of beeps that make no sense at all must be off their rocker. Well, like golf, it is not winning the game, it is the playing of the game, same thing with CW with the radio, it is not how fast you can send a few beeps but being able to send it and copying it.

Here I am today, I have learned to send and copy CW, I am not fast, I make plenty of mistakes, I end up in the sand pit at times, but I am in the game. I am at 13 words a minute, someday I will make 20 wpm. Did I learn CW in three weeks? No, I am still learning (there are no short cuts). You need to have the drive both in golf and amateur radio to learn it. So if you are a golfer or an amateur radio operator and maybe a CW op's, welcome to my world of "a few fries short of a Happy Meal."

Oh, I did get my amateur extra.....

Moral to this story: Everyone is smart enough. It takes dedication. There are no shortcuts. Everyone learns at different speeds. Finally, "one size does not fit all."

I do not care who you are and how young and old, anyone is, everyone is smart enough to get an amateur radio license, and anyone can learn CW. I am not 60 anymore, left that pasture long ago, if I can do it, anyone can.

de Ken N7KO 73, everyone

Straight Key Sprint Europe Results

Results for SKSE: 05-Dec-2019

Overall | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | SWL | By SPC | Soapbox

Overall results

Rank	Callign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/TIC	Score
1	AC1GF	Bob	19399T	NH	18	16	6/5/1	433
2	F6EJN	Bob	508S	FRA	16	9	6/3/0	264
3	F5UQE	Duc	13468S	FRA	17	9	3/5/0	248
4	F5DE	Bernard	6247S	FRA	14	9	5/3/0	231
5	K3WW	Chas	14962S	PA	11	9	5/2/0	194
6	K9LI	Don	19153T	IN	10	9	2/7/0	190
7	WU1V	Rick	9293S	MA	11	9	3/4/1	189
8	W5ZR	Bert	2931S	LA	10	8	4/4/0	180
9	VE1AHX	Ben	18100T	NS	9	8	5/2/0	167
10	VA3RSA	Richard	21258	ON	9	9	2/5/0	161
11	OSOS	Leon	10688S	BEL	4	3	3/1/0	67
12	ON7DQ	Luc	14984T	BEL	10	2	3/0/0	65
13	LW3EX	WALT	3804S	ARG	2	2	1/1/0	29
14	DJ1YFK	Fabian	1982	GER	1	1	1/0/0	16

December SKSE Results

Although there were no pictures submitted, the 14 operators who did submit a score made 150 QSOs, well done guys. There are possibly others who did not submit a score so there are no doubts there were more QSOs made in the event.

Lets support the SKSE like we do the SKS; both stateside participation and Eu support make for a great activity. Send those pictures in too and see your station published here too!

Thoughts on the Camel Back Key



There seem to be two lines of thought on the camelback. One is that since it originated in the days when things were built to not simply function, but also to look unique and pleasing to the eye. It was a great time when cost was not the sole driving factor. The second is that, on wire telegraph circuits, the key needed to be closed after use to complete the current loop and allow others on the loop to operate--the purpose of the closing lever on some keys. In the early days, keys were made without springs so the camelback was a way to place a greater mass forward of the pivot--this would assure the key closed against the contacts when not in use, thus closing the circuit. Lately,

many of the "camelback" keys actually have the hump behind the pivot, so the closing function is non-idea--pretty much a decorative homage to the early designs IMHO. Our version is placed forward of the pivot and will add to the closing moment--it becomes essentially neutral with the spring. It is definitely eye candy on the table. From a mechanics perspective, the leverage available is simply a matter of the ratio of distances from the pivot to the knob vs the pivot to the contact--nothing more. The FEEL of the key is a combination of that leverage, the spring rate, the moving mass of the arm, and much of the flexibility of the arm assembly in the vertical plane. Thin arms feel slightly "softer" in use--stiffer arms feel "crisp in their action.

73, de Curt KU8L Vizkey

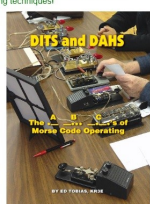
DITS and DAHS

The ABC's of Morse Code Operating
By Ed Tobias, KR3E

This small but solid guide is the perfect read for those interested in learning or improving CW operating techniques!

Within its pages you'll find:

- * The secret of becoming a proficient CW Operator!
- * Where and how to practice, practice, practice!
- * Straight Key or Paddle?
- * Adjusting your Straight Key or Paddle
- * Keyers, Iambic Keying and Bugs
- * Contests, Events, Listening
- * Operating QSK
- * CW Filters
- * Signs, Signals and Procedures
- * Tips on Taking CW On the Road
- * ... and much more!



A Reference CW Book

Here is a book that would be useful for the beginner as well as a CW reference book for those who are not beginners.

December SKS 2019



Happy Holidays to all ! 73
& Cul John AL7JK



For the first time I tried to have a few contacts in a SKS, thinking I will be at te station for some minutes. But I was so glad to find SKCC activity on 40m that I stayed in front of my keys for the two hours of the event. Many thanks to all for those Xmas contacts ! Happy to find bonus station K8AQM and have also one contact on 80m with Chas K3WW, sorry I missed K8AQM on 80m. I liked the rule as we have not the right to use the sked page, a bit more difficult but good exercise indeed ! Happy holidays season and a Happy New Year to everybody and Families ! See you all soon during the year 2020! 73, Bernard F5DE



Enjoyed my vintage E.F. Johnson Speed-X Bug tonight. Considering recent conditions, 40m went pretty well considering my highly compromised antenna situation here. Happy to work F5DE and had some RBN spots out of Europe so skip might have been a little long. :-) 73, Don K3RLL



Merry Christmas to all.
Good activity tonight. 73,



Ho! Ho! Ho! it was great fun being "Santa" and working some old friends and new members. Special thanks to F5DE for calling in on 40m. Santa spent the first hour on 40m and the last hour on 80m. 73 and TNX to all. "Santa Ted" K8AQM



Worked hard, Had FUN.
73, Al KS9KCC



80 was busiest band here. Thanks for the QSOs. Merry Christmas all. 73, Ben VE1AHX



Seems lately that every time an SKS or WES came up something got in the way but not tonight! I was surprised how busy the bands were considering it was Christmas eve and had a great time. Used my trusty old Elecraft K3 and Bencher RJ-2 key. Mostly used an OCF dipole at 30' and my 160M loop fed with window line for a few Q's. Spent the first 45 minute on 40 and finished out on 80. Merry Christmas to all! 73, Bill NZ0T



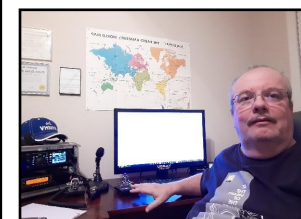
I can't believe I didn't hear K8AQM down here tonight. If I can get the sled gassed back up tonight I am going to take another sweep thru SE Mich. 73, Larry K8TEZ



Missed a chunk out of the 2 hours. Good activity on 80m, the band was "long" as expected. Nothing heard on 160m -- tried some calls there. Overall, a nice Christmas present. 73, John W1TAG

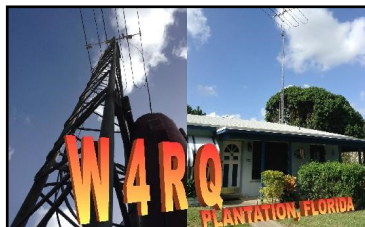


Fairly quite SKS this time..most folks were looking for Reindeer I guess. It was good to hear Bernard and Carlos in the fray. That was the only DX I heard. Found Santa twice so I'm hoping I made the "nice" list this time. Merry Christmas and Have a Happy Holiday Season of your choice. See you all in K3Y 2020 if not on SKN. 73, Randy KB4QQJ

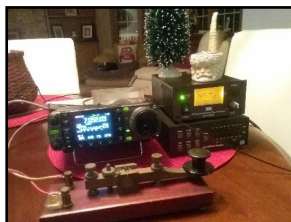


Another fun Sprint Merry Christmas to all! 73, Bob N1MHV

December SKS II



Merry Christmas ! Twas a FUN Eve! Found Santa on 40 meters and worked Chuck WS1L, Chas K3WW, & Bob AC1GF on both 40 and 80 meters! It was great to work Randy KB4QQJ again (its been awhile) Best Wishes to All ! See Y'all in 2020! 73, Rich W4RQ



Just spent an hour in this one and made 7 contacts, all on 40m. Ran 50 watts from my old IC-7000 to a G5RV/JR. But I did find 'Santa' for the bonus station (tnx Ted). Merry Christmas to all. 73, Curt WA2JSG NJ



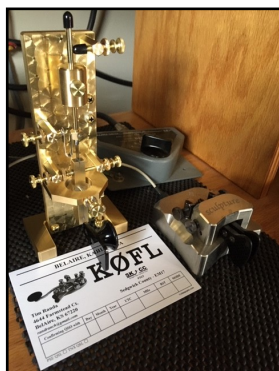
First SKCC entry. 73, Jim WI4EE



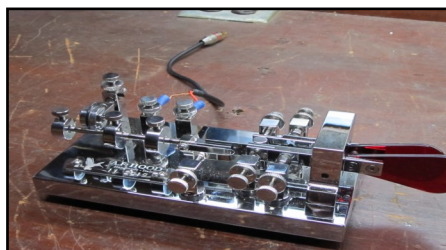
Merry Christmas to All! 73, Jay W8ES

Thank You Santa!

Santa visited the shack of several deserving SKCC members. Check-out these new shack items:



I was very happy to have my new vertical Vizkey arrive just in time for Christmas. What a great way to end the year. Now if my Grey-line flagpole antenna would just show up I might be able to put a decent signal on the air. 73, Tom KOFL



Here's a picture of my Christmas present this year. I got this Bug in November from Alberto Frattini. It's the Chrome Magnetic Evolution model & has dual levers just like an Iambic paddle has. 73, Steve K2FW



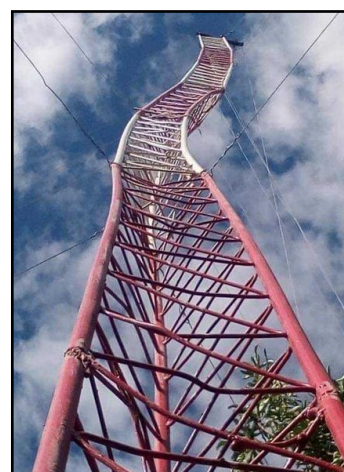
Here is a pic of a shirt I got for Christmas. 73, Don KG5CMS



Great Christmas present from the xyl...happy Christmas and happy pounding for 2020. 73, David MI0VKO 11913T



A new toy for the shack just in time for December WES Vibroplex straight



Santa's sleigh hit my tower! He has got to stop hitting that rum eggnog with cookies at every stop! 73, Ted K8AQM

TG4/KT8X Dennis #7556

My friend Dennis KT8X is an experienced DXer and operator, even so things cannot always turn out the way you plan when it comes to DXpeditions. Dennis took his family (XYL +2 harmonics) on a vacation to Guatemala and hoped to do a bit of DXing and SKCC work when able. This also was the weekend of the CQWW CW Contest and the bands were busy. Unfortunately although a beautiful QTH, it was surrounded with mountains except for a view east toward Europe.

Dennis took a K2 and Buddypole along several station extras which he setup on their house balcony...checkout his view!

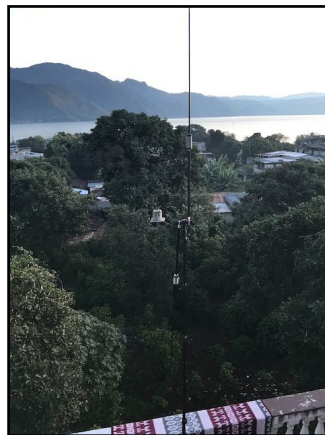


With all the kilowatts firing on 40m, the band was useless for Dennis finding SKCC operators (boy, we sure know that feeling!). 30m had terrific local noise and 20 was even worse than 40 for finding SKCCers. Net result for working SKCCers..."Zero," even working DX in the contest was limited to the mountains surrounding his QTH. FT8 provided the only "fair" source of QSOs.

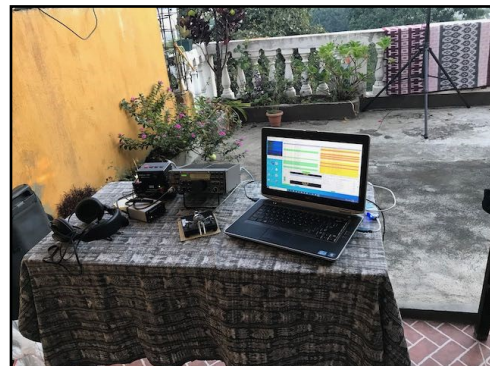
Things don't always workout on DXpeditions as planned but as Dennis said, "What a great family vacation!"



Got the XYL or kids to take this photo.



Buddypole set as vertical dipole



Setup, Buddypole base in the background.

Part of the adventure of being on a DXpedition is overcoming an unexpected problem and making the best of a difficult situation....and Dennis did.

PRESERVING 500 KHz

by Rolf Marschner and Norbert Gabriel, January 2009
(A translation from the original German document)

* Preserving radio heritage on 500 kHz*

This summary was composed from input by the 500 kHz Interest Group of the Maritime Radio Operator Association registered in Bremen, Germany and is meant to provide background information for the amateur radio service regarding future use of medium wave frequencies as well as for radio-historical purposes. The intent is to outline the heritage of the maritime distress frequency of 500 kHz and the extinct profession of the maritime radio operator and a call to preserve the 500 KHz frequency.

For more than a century electromagnetic waves have been used for wireless communication. Due to the nature of radio waves propagating across borders, international coordination for the use of the radio spectrum has been in existence since 1903. To enable as many simultaneous radio applications as possible, rules have been established for the use of different wavelengths. In addition to technical procedures, arrangements for operational rules have been agreed upon. Wireless communication in navigation at sea proved to be the first significant step towards progress.

Before the year 2000, wireless communication at sea was only possible by technically well trained radio operators. For 100 years radio operators on ships and at coast stations kept up the connection between sea and land. This invisible link was of extreme value especially in emergencies. Worldwide, thousands of human lives were saved by using the 500 kHz (600 metres) radio distress frequency and manually keyed maritime SOS distress signals. Without the special qualification of radio operators, this could not have been achieved.

The profession of maritime radio operators existed for 100 years in all seafaring countries of the world, but today maritime distress alerting and subsequent distress communication is executed mainly by an automatic system. It is called "Global Maritime Distress and Safety System" (GMDSS). To a great extent it works on the principle of data transmission and only on a small scale via radio telephony. The data transmission uses shortwave frequencies as well as transmission paths via satellites. But the percentage of false alerts still is too high even though the system was been in operation since 1999. The number of false alarms compared to the time when the distress system was operated manually, in the opinion view of professional radio operators, is not acceptable.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) no longer required the distinct qualification of being able to send messages by hand using Morse code. Morse code telegraphy in maritime mobile radio service is regarded as a kind of world language enabling international communication without knowledge of foreign languages. This unique language is "spoken" by hand using Morse code and applying many abbreviations and signals as text to overcome language barriers.

The use of manually keyed Morse code is an impressive skill. The application of Morse code simplified communications in all regions and among all nations especially in emergencies when applied on the 500 kHz maritime distress frequency. There has never been another radio frequency in the whole spectrum of electromagnetic waves, which served the sole purpose of saving lives in such a unique manner. Even during the World Wars, the status and purpose of this frequency was never questioned and countries used 500 kHz to communicate for purely humanitarian purposes. Therefore this maritime distress frequency, which has been used for more than 100 years by professional radio operators, represents a radio-historical cultural age. In the history of radio, several significant events could be mentioned, however within the relatively new medium of wireless communication this unique use of radio on a world wide

heritage. In the history of radio, several significant events could be mentioned, however within the relatively new medium of wireless communication this unique use of radio on a world wide basis is unprecedented. The former maritime distress radio frequency and all that is connected with its use, is therefore of exceptional cultural importance. Therefore, the actual frequency of 500 kHz should be preserved for all mankind as some sort of virtual radio memorial.

This request is also in the interest of the International Federation of Shipmasters' Association (IFSMA). Preservation of radio-historical culture is in full agreement with the UNESCO Convention for the safeguarding of intangible heritage.

However, the 500 kHz frequency remains a subject of debate only within the scope of preparations for the forthcoming World Radio Conference 2011 (WRC 2911) of the ITU. After WRC 2011, it will be reassigned to other spectrum users if no other claims of protection are made. It would once again confirm the good reputation that ITU enjoys among all other international institutions, if they were to choose this one frequency as a radio memorial. After all, (Article 1, Number. 1a) of the ITU Constitution proclaims that it will promote telecommunications for all purposes. Consequently it would be appropriate according to agenda item 1.23 of WRC 2011 to allocate some medium wave spectrum which includes the 500 kHz frequency. Radio amateurs could take over the radio-historic heritage and would be their custodian. In November 2008 the International Amateur Radio Union Region 1 conference expressed the need for a medium wave allocation, which would include a permanent 500 kHz radio memorial. To keep the radio distress system in the public' memory, it is proposed that the following major action be taken:

The Amateur Radio Service becomes the curator of the 500 KHz heritage

Other than professional radio operators today, only radio amateurs will be able to perform and demonstrate radio traffic in the way it was done for more than one hundred years in the maritime mobile radio service. The ability to send Morse code messages by hand is of major importance. A future "museum frequency" of 500 kHz should be used for a practical demonstration of maritime distress radio traffic and for activities related to other events of radio history. In doing so, the contents of the emissions should deal with topics of national as well as international radio history. In addition radio service procedures should be demonstrated, especially those of the maritime mobile radio service. Such radio traffic should be established between ships and coast stations, between ships as well as between stations on land. Furthermore historical radio equipment may be applied to demonstrate formerly used radio applications, transmission modes and various emissions. The occasional transmission of "Grimeton Radio/SAQ" Sweden 17.2 kHz as well as those of "San Francisco Radio/KSM" USA on 500 kHz is an example of demonstrating radio history. Other activities are:

1. Prof. F. Braun Day in September
2. International Marconi day in April
3. International Lighthouse and Lightship Event
4. International Museum Ship Event
5. Maritime Radio Operator Activity Day (Marine Funker - MF)
6. Maritime Radio Day
7. Activity days of other international associations, for example RNARS, ROARS, BMARS, MARAC, INORC etc.

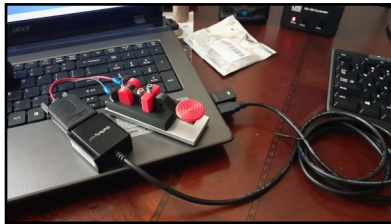
By creating an official museum frequency embedded in the amateur radio service, the operators will have more opportunities to demonstrate technical and operational intercommunications. Radio operations for historical purposes shall be available to ships operated as museums, maritime museums, telecommunication schools, former coastal stations, general technical museums with radio sections and amateur radio stations.

Only persons with proven qualifications may be permitted to transmit in Morse code generated by hand (maritime, amateur, military, police etc.), in order to guarantee proper identification of the transmission. Radio traffic will fall within the services of amateur radio which means that communication for commercial purposes or for third parties is excluded. Cross band operations with other amateur radio stations operating in frequency bands allocated to the amateur radio service are permitted. The "museum frequency" may not be used in connection with amateur radio contests. Any competent person should be permitted to transmit on 500 kHz for historical purposes without necessarily being a qualified amateur radio operator.

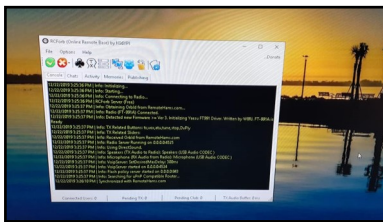
If Telecommunication Administrations agree, call signs used for historical emissions could be supplemented by the letter h (as in heritage, historical, historisch, histoire). The former radio silence periods (SP) taking place on the hour on 500 kHz should be observed at least between 12.00 and 13.00 o'clock local time. This means that from 12:15 to 12:18 and 12:45 to 12:48 o'clock local time, no emissions on 500 kHz are allowed, except in case of emergency.

Within the amateur radio operator community, there is an initiative under way to also dedicate a frequency as an amateur radio distress frequency if the amateurs get access to a medium wave band. In ideal case this frequency would be 500 kHz. Since the telegraphy distress signal SOS is not used any more by other radio services it could be taken over by the amateur radio service as well. Up to now the use of SOS in amateur radio service is not allowed and a special amateur radio distress signal does not exist on a worldwide basis.

Remote Operation



Here are some images from my "Remote Ops" experiments using remotehams.com note the straight key wired to the USB through the RS232 interface. 73, Bob N1MHV



(Be sure to read Bob's article further in this issue for more details....editor)

Random Antenna

(Neat unun enclose)

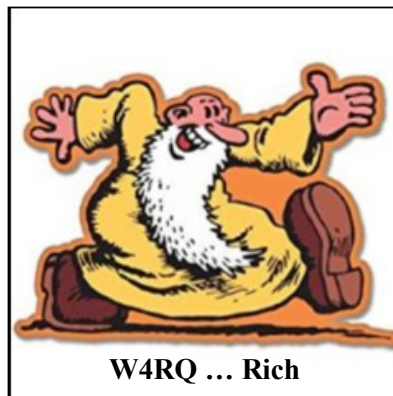


My poor excuse for an antenna you might hear me from this weekend. I have no idea how long the wire is, but it's only about 15 feet off the ground. Feed point is a 9:1 unun, maybe a 25 foot counterpoise. 73, James KC9ZKM

January Slow Speed Saunter

Overall results

Rank	Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	Score
1	KS9KCC	AL	12000T	IN	166	166
2	AC1GF	Bob	19399T	NH	67	67
3	W9GT	Jack	21069T	IN	23	23
4	KD9GDY	Jim	18156T	IN	21	21
5	VA3RSA	Richard	21258C	ON	14	14
6	WA9BBN	Ed	17763S	IN	12	12
7	W4RQ	Rich	8699S	FL	9	9
8	W2LCQ	Ed	5474T	NY	8	8
9	N4API	Brian	11673S	GA	7	7
10	KD0WW	Wiley	6047	CO	6	6
11	WA2JSG	Curt	3018S	NJ	5	5
12	KA8HFN	Larry	2046S	OH	4	4
12	W9GOO	John	21474	IN	4	4
14	N2PEZ	Reiner	20196	NY	3	3
14	W15H	Mike	11770S	TX	3	3
14	AD0YM	Mike	18040C	MO	3	3
14	WO5S	Floyd	12074	TX	3	3
18	KB9QG	Jeff	20712	IN	1	1
19	WB5JWI	Les	5013S	TX	0	0



W4RQ ... Rich

This month's SSS coincided with SKN. By the amount of activity (19 submissions) there was no problem in the two events happening at the same time.

Thanks to all of you submitting photos...get your station pictured here!

Hope to see more pictures in the next SSS.

Slow Speed Saunter



I didn't have a lot of QSOs on this SSS, but I did have two really nice QSOs with Larry (WA5RES) and Jim (K0WVL) on 40 meters. Plus, I got to use my GHD. 73, Wiley KD0WW



Started slow than WOW on 80m was hopping. Real fun activity. 73, Al KS9KCC



Was gone most of day so not many for me I'm afraid. Looking forward to the New Year. HNY to all! 73, Curt WA2JSG NJ 3018S



Lots of fun to do SKN and SSS. Used my favorite straight key a J.H. Bunnell & Co New York, NY Steel Lever Key c. 1924. Note the "Bug Lip" just in front of the spring. Bunnell made 1,000s of these keys for Western Union, Postal Telegraph, press agencies, etc. 73, Ed W2LCQ



If you have questions about how to get started in ham radio, *On the Air* has the answers.



[*On the Air*](#), ARRL's new bimonthly magazine for beginner and intermediate hams, is here! All ARRL members can access the digital edition through the new ARRL Magazines app (see details below).

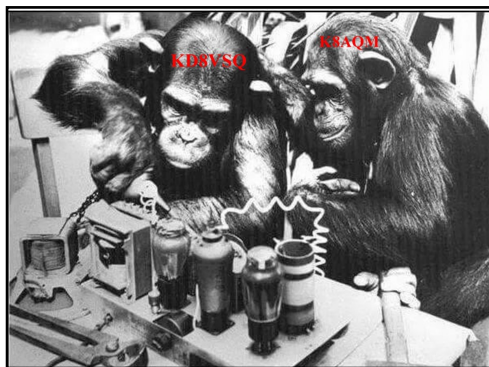
In the first issue of *On the Air* January/February 2020, you'll get:

- A guide to buying your first handheld radio
 - Step-by-step instructions for building simple antennas for VHF and HF
 - A full-page infographic that explains how the ionosphere makes long-distance radio communication possible
- An "Up Close" Q & A with Jeremy Hong, KD8TUO, who reveals his favorite resources for new hams.

...and much more!

Download the **NEW** ARRL Magazines App!

The perfect companion for members on the go! The new **ARRL Magazines** app replaces the QST app. Use the app to access current and back issues of *On the Air* magazine and *QST*, ARRL's monthly membership journal. The ARRL Magazines App is available free for download in Apple's [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#), or visit www.arrl.org/ota for more info. If your device is setup to update apps automatically, the ARRL Magazines app will replace the QST app.



Ok Jeremy, now dip the plate. No! No! Don't peak the grid....ugh! There go the finals....again!

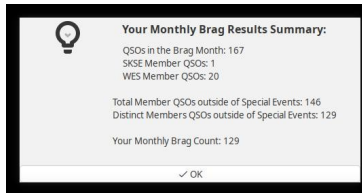
Novice Rig Roundup

Don't forget about the Novice Rig Roundup! The *Novice Rig Roundup* (NRR) 2020 will be held from 00:00 UTC on March 7, 2020 through 23:59 UTC on March 15, 2020.

It's great fun; the older rigs, tubes, the smell of dust burning, learning to "dip and load," separate receiver, t/r switch and crystals! Wow! Lots to learn, lots to do and lots of fun! You find lots of SKCCers in this event.

Check out; <http://www.novicerigroundup.org/> for details.

December Brag 2019



'twas an interesting month. 73, Chris AI8W



Been focused on helping new members climb their awards ladder (need more Ts and Ss out there to boost we elders). Hope this New Year brings more sun spots and lots more member activity.... PS. calling all Cootie users to sign our user list, and all wanna-be cootie users to see "how to use a Cootie", at my QRZ page. Keys pictured are three Torsion Bar models by W1SFR. 73, Mike K5MP



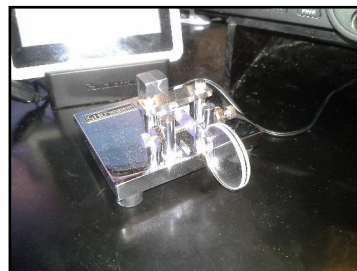
One of my better brag months, even got the bonus station. Hope to do as well next month. 73, Dave KB1WOD



Certainly one of my better Brag months. Mostly used my TS-590SG at 75w to a vertical, and sometimes my IC-7200 and IC-7000 at 50w to a G5RV. Always a Kent Str Key. Hope everyone had a good year and a happy holiday season. Happy New year to all! 73, Curt WA2JSG



F5UQE, 73, Duc



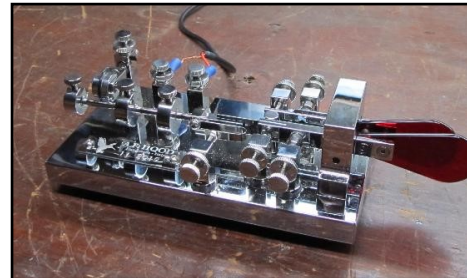
Thanks to all. May God bless you & your family in 2020. 73, Ric KA3LOC



Propagation was good some days and lousy on others, but always fun. Most all contacts were between 5 and 50 watts to my 132' end fed going straight up to 35' and the rest then sloping up to about 65'. End fed? Inverted L? Sloper? Well, it works! As does my J-38, which I've used since 1967! 73, Steve KC5F



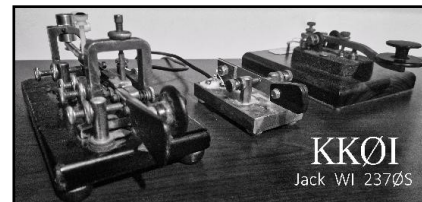
Missed the Bonus station this Month thanks for the Q's 73, Bud W8BUD



Was a fun month as I got a new Bug for Christmas & had a lot of fun getting used to it. Happy New year to everyone in the SKCC. 73, Steve K2FW



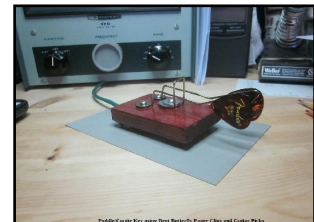
Well a fair month for me. TNX to all who worked me this month and sure hope everyone has a great new year. Wow 2020! Was not sure I would make it HI HI. Look for all of you next year. 73, Allen KA5TJS



Great fun in preparation for SKN and K3Y. Got all three keys ready...1919 Vibroplex Original, K4VIZ Cootie and the Nye Speedx. Thanks for all the QSOs folks! See you next month! 73, jack, KK0I



A bit of a slow month plus a surprising number of QSOs with other than SKCC members. Those 9 were nice but don't count for the brag. 73, Les WB5JWI



Happy New Year and Thanks for the QSO's. 73, Rick N8XI

The “Grasswire” Antenna

The following post by Andy KB1OIQ caught my interest:

The 160m band was quite busy due to the contest. I decided to jump in and made 82 contacts using my McElroy chrome stream key. My grasswire antenna is about 200 feet long and only 6 feet off the ground - quite suboptimal, but I still made a "record distance for me on this band" contact to Calgary (2000 miles away). Have fun and 73 de KB1OIQ.

I have always believed, “you just can’t have too many antennas” and this result of Andy’s made me want to checkout this unusual antenna. After writing to Andy, Andy sent me the following article about his work with the “Grasswire antenna....editor:

The Grasswire Antenna

Andy (KB1OIQ) Stewart

23-Feb-2020

I have been a ham since 2007, and had never made any contacts on the 160m band until a couple of years ago. I was looking for a quick, inexpensive way to get onto the band. One of my elmers suggested that I investigate K3MT’s Grasswire Antenna from this website:

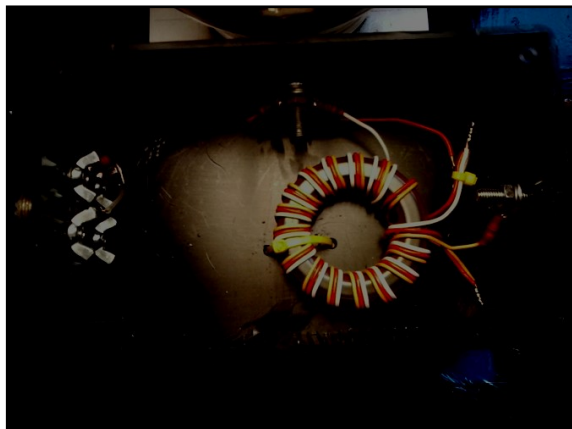
http://f5ad.free.fr/Liens_coupes_ANT/G/K3MT%20Antenne%20gazon.htm

I’ve heard my Elmer say to me many times that any antenna is better than a bucket of wire in the shed. My Elmer also mentioned that this antenna [stinks], but it doesn’t [stink] equally in all directions. It is most definitely a compromise antenna, and not very efficient. Still, I figured I’d give it a try – what did I have to lose? Experimenting can be educational. I will admit, however, that laying an antenna wire on the ground struck me as very counter-intuitive.

I had a roll of 22 AWG solid copper wire, about 200 feet, so all I needed to do was build the balun. I obtained the T-200-2 core and three different colors of wire, and created the trifilar balun. It is mounted in a plastic box, which I placed next to my outdoor ground rod. Next, I put the 200 feet of wire directly onto the ground, and connected one end of it to the balun. I initially held it down with some rocks and snow. The next snowfall buried the wire until the spring. I then ran some coax from my shack.

One evening, I fired up FT8 and went to the PSKreporter website to see what kind of coverage I was able to get with that mode. The picture (above) shows that result. This correlated with my experiences with CW contacts. From my QTH in Massachusetts, my most distant CW contact was a station in Dallas (CW RST 449 running 100 watts). I’ve had no trouble contacting stations up and down the east coast, and as far west as Illinois. Empirically, a maximum of about 1000 miles is what I’ve come to expect for CW and weak signal modes. Clearly, I won’t break any DX records with this setup, but it has allowed me to start enjoying a band to which I previously had no access.

It took me only a few hours in one afternoon to build the trifilar balun, deploy the antenna wire, hookup the radio, and start making contacts. The cost was right (cheap!). Most of all, I’m having fun!



This is my trifilar balun I wound from the article.



These are the results from the PSK Reporter on FT8. The antenna pretty well covers the east coast.

Andy's work with his Grasswire antenna made me want to know more exactly how this interesting antenna worked. I went to the web page suggested by Andy of K3MT's article and work with the Grasswire. Here are the results from that page:

The *GRASSWIRE* another approach to hidden HF antennas

April, 1997

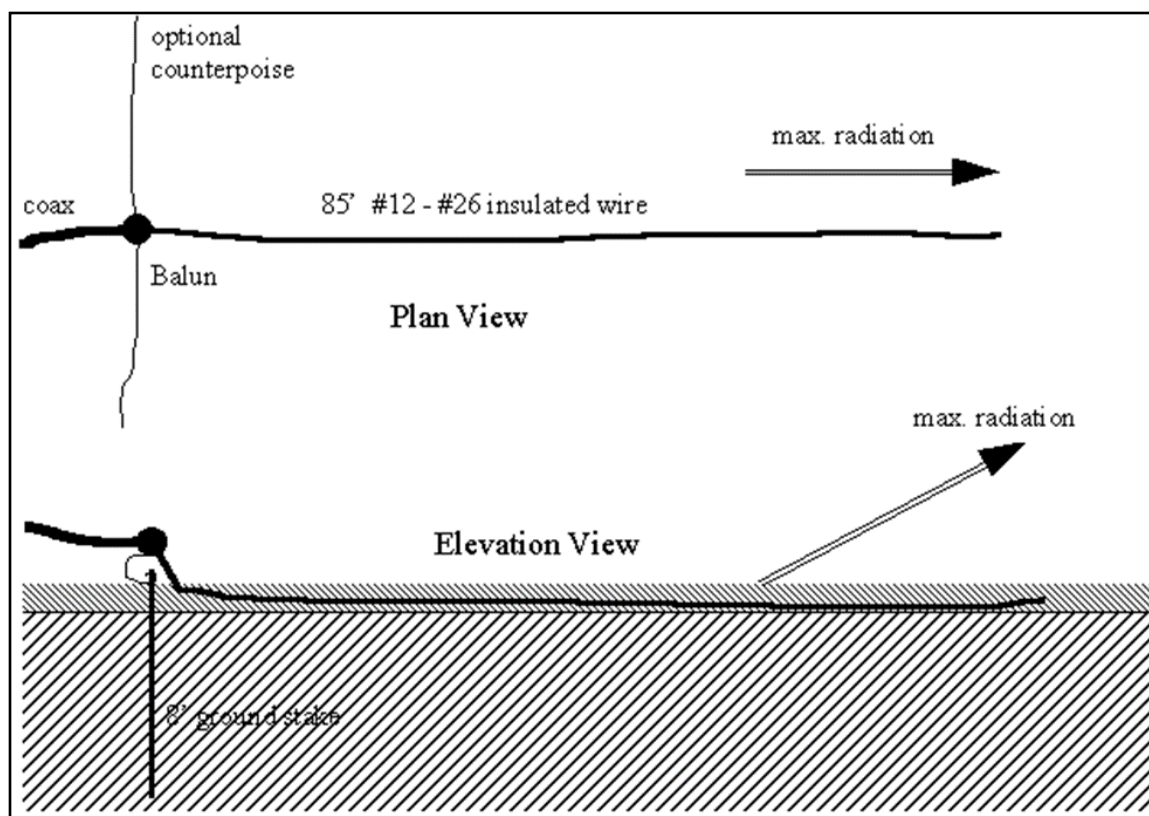
Deed restrictions got you down? Neighbors intimidating your tower plans? Need a really *easy* portable HF antenna? Then the *grasswire* may be the answer! Virtually invisible, lightweight, and compact (you can carry one in your hip pocket), this antenna works! It has been used by K3MT in various installations for more than 10 years.

Read on - and listen to the "experts" telling you that this is hogwash, that an antenna like this can't work. But it does. And *true* experts, who have taken a decade or more to come to grips with the intricacies of Maxwell's Math, know *why* it works.

This antenna will *not* out-perform a yagi, or a decent dipole up a half wavelength. Not in gain or signal strength, at least. But it will survive an ice storm, wind storm, and is practically immune to lightning. And it doesn't need a large tower or tall support. I deploy one from my hip pocket at times - the balun to match it is larger than the antenna!

THE GRASSWIRE - IN BRIEF

What is it? Put simply, it is an end-fed, longwire antenna that is laid right on the grass. Hence the name. The original Grasswire used by K3MT in the summer of 1988 was just 204' of #18 AWG magnet wire laid along the property line, anywhere from 1" to 6" above the ground. This sketch shows plan and elevation views of a typical installation. Both an 8' ground rod and optional counterpoise wires are shown. Use one or the other. Both are not needed.



These antennas are largely resistive, with values ranging from 150 to 500 ohms or so on average ground. They have been used successfully on the average soils northwest of Washington, DC, on the sandy soils of the Cape Canaveral, Florida area, in the rocky, shale soils of the mountains in Somerset county, PA, and on river bottomland of Allegheny County, PA. One was used with great success by K3MT/VP9 in Southampton, Bermuda - the object of nightly pileups on 30 m CW for four nights.

REFLECTION AND THE BREWSTER ANGLE

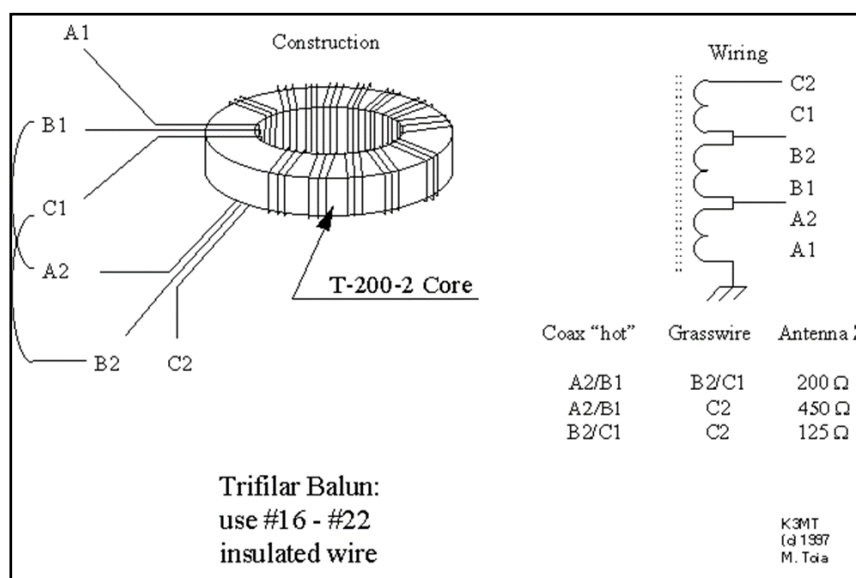
The skeptic in you will doubt that such low antennas can work. After all, its image in the ground radiates and cancels out all radiation. True - if the ground is perfect. But nothing is perfect! The grasswire radiates *vertically polarized* off the *end* of the wire. Extensive monitoring tests with wires laid along the great circle route toward WWV, and perpendicular to that line, demonstrate the end-fire nature of the antenna. So why does it work?

When a plane wave reflects from an air-earth boundary, an incoming ray reflects, giving an outgoing ray. These two, and the line normal to the boundary plane, form a *plane of incidence*. Solutions of Maxwell's equations differ for the case of the E-field being perpendicular to this plane (i.e., horizontally polarized), and the case when the E-field vector is *in* the plane of incidence. You will probably call the latter "vertical" polarization, although this is technically not correct. Electromagneticists (a.k.a those who practice Electromagical effects) refer to these cases as *normal* incidence (horizontal polarization) and *planar* incidence (vertical polarization.)

For the normal incidence case, reflection is nearly total, with a nearly 180 degree phase reversal. Thus very low antennas neither respond to, nor generate, appreciable amounts of horizontally polarized radiation. But for the planar incidence case, the reflection varies in strength considerably. At some *takeoff angle* (angle between outgoing ray and the ground) the reflection becomes quite weak, and has a 90 degree phase shift. Near this angle, the sum of direct and reflected rays will have a magnitude as if the antenna were in free space! Of course, at other angles, ground reflection largely cancels the direct ray, and the antenna does not radiate well at all.

FEEDING THE GRASSWIRE

Since this antenna is largely resistive, a simple trifilar balun is all that I have ever had to use. This sketch shows how to make a balun that works:



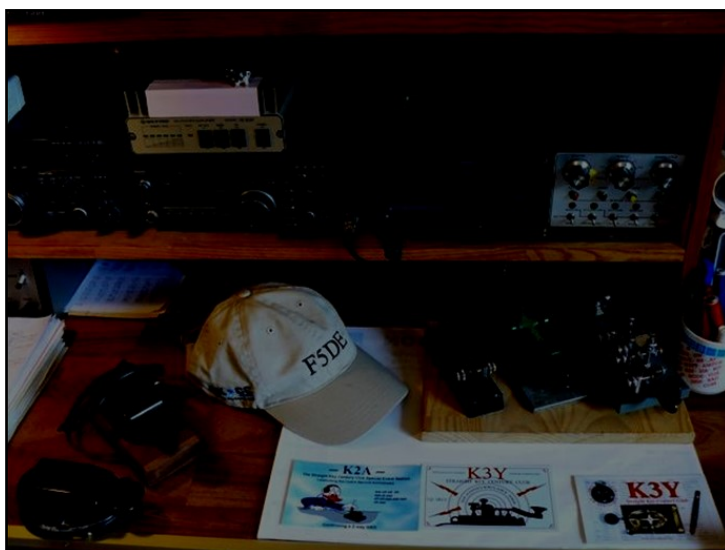
Typically I pull the insulation off of some indoor telephone wiring cable. Four insulated #22 copper wires are inside: discard one of these and use the remaining three. Wind about 16 turns on the core, without allowing the wire to twist (keep the three conductors parallel at all times.)

Notice that this "balun" really matches an unbalanced antenna to an unbalanced transmission line. It is basically a wide-band, three-winding autotransformer. Impedance ratios are as shown on the drawing. Generally it is necessary to connect the coax to either A2/B1 or B2/C1, and the antenna to B2/C1 or to C2. This may change from one band to another, and usually does.

My plan is to run the antenna in an "L" pattern about 400-500 feet and use it primarily on 160m. The low height should also be an asset to receive with lower noise than a higher antenna. The antenna will be running through woods so may not be exactly straight. A 200+ foot counterpoise will also be run and not perfectly straight....Ted K8AQM

The Worst Learning Morse Code Method Was Mine! ***Bernard DELAGE, F5DE, SKCC #6247S***

One of the regular EU signals heard in the US is from Bernard, F5DE. A regular in WES, Bernard has been in over 100 WES events and many K3Y operations. The following is how Bernard learned to copy CW and be involved in amateur radio. Bernard sent both a French version and his own English translation. First the French version for those readers lucky enough to enjoy reading the original and then the English version presented by Bernard. Get ready for an enjoyable and humorous read!...editor



straight keys, cooties or bug keys are regularly used for some good SKCC contacts !



F5DE, SKCC #6247S

La pire méthode d'apprentissage du morse était la mienne ! ***Bernard DELAGE, F5DE, SKCC #6247S***

Revenons de longues années en arrière !

Au cours de l'année 1960, mes parents m'ont offert un récepteur à galène. C'étaient des moments tellement magiques pour moi d'écouter les émissions de l'émetteur local en Petites Ondes que j'ai voulu aller plus loin et écouter les Ondes Courtes !

Puis est venue l'année 1962, j'avais 15 ans et j'étais très intéressé par l'écoute de ces ondes courtes très occupées. De nombreuses radiodiffusions, du code Morse et des signaux étranges étaient entendus sur le récepteur de mes parents, alors j'ai voulu et décidé d'apprendre ce fameux code Morse.

Pendant l'hiver, j'ai eu des problèmes de santé avec ma jambe droite et le médecin de famille m'a dit que je devais rester à la maison sur mon lit et en position horizontale pendant au moins deux semaines.

Ainsi, ayant des périodes libres entre les exercices scolaires, l'apprentissage des bases de l'électricité et des ondes courtes à l'écoute d'un vieux BCL d'occasion que mon père m'avait trouvé, j'ai essayé d'apprendre ce magique code par la méthode la plus simple (je le pensais !), c'est-à-dire : lire la page dédiée à Samuel Morse et à son fameux code dans le dictionnaire de mes parents, le bien connu "Larousse".

J'ai commencé à apprendre la lettre A, puis la lettre B, la lettre C, la lettre D, et ainsi de suite... Croyant bien faire, j'ai seulement appris à reconnaître les lettres par leur forme de points et de traits sur le papier, pas en les écoutant car je n'avais pas encore de BFO sur mon récepteur BCL !

Une très très mauvaise méthode n'est-ce pas ?

Au cours de l'année 1962, j'ai fait la connaissance de François Rivaud F2FI (SK). Quand il a appris ce que j'avais fait pour apprendre le code, il m'a expliqué que ce n'était pas une bonne façon de l'apprendre ainsi, puis il a commencé à me donner des cours hebdomadaires de code en plus des cours de base d'électricité et de radio.

Tous les samedis et dimanches après-midi, je prenais mon vélo et j'allais le plus vite possible pour aller le rencontrer dans son impressionnant laboratoire et y rester pour être dans un vrai bain de radio ! A chaque fois après les cours, j'avais le bonheur d'écouter les ondes courtes sur ce si beau et impressionnant récepteur "RCA modèle AR-88" que François avait dans son shack !

Grâce à François, j'étais prêt à passer l'examen de radioamateur. Je l'ai fait en octobre 1963 et le 14 avril 1964 j'ai reçu mon certificat par la poste ! J'étais si fier de devenir "F5DE" à 17 ans !

Mon émetteur novice était un émetteur fait maison, piloté quartz pour les bandes 3,5, 7 et 14 MHz avec une puissance de sortie de 15 watts délivrée par un bon vieux tube "P17C" ! François m'avait prêté un récepteur BC-348, mon père m'avait installé une antenne filaire de 42 m de long dans le jardin, puis j'ai commencé à lancer des "CQ". La magie est devenue réalité lorsque, après avoir effectué mon tout premier contact en CW avec F2FI, j'ai été appelé par SM2DAR et LA6NI ! Quel jeune garçon excité j'étais, courant vite dans le jardin pour dire à mes parents que j'avais fait mes premiers contacts en Morse !

Quelques années plus tard, en 1968, j'ai commencé mon service militaire. Mon rêve était d'être radiotélégraphiste. C'est devenu une réalité, grâce à ma licence d'opérateur radioamateur télégraphiste que j'ai montrée aux officiers, je suis allé aux "Bormettes", l'école des radiotélégraphistes de la Marine Française située près de la ville de Toulon. Quatre mois plus tard, j'avais acquis la vitesse d'écoute et de transmission et la procédure militaire nécessaires pour pouvoir travailler en tant qu'opérateur CW pendant les dix mois restants de mon service que j'effectuais à bord du bateau "La Moselle", basé en Polynésie Française !

Après cela, j'ai toujours aimé les contacts CW, bien sûr également les contacts en téléphonie, mais ma moyenne en Morse était de plus de 75 %.

Des années après ma lecture du dictionnaire, grâce à Monsieur Morse, à François, à mes parents et... mon service militaire, je suis devenu opérateur CW, toujours heureux d'utiliser des manipulateurs simples ou double contacts, semi-automatiques, ainsi que des modèles électroniques lors de certains concours, et ce plaisir a augmenté lorsque je suis devenu membre du SKCC il y a 10 ans ! Aujourd'hui, la moyenne de mes contacts CW est supérieure à 90 % !

Bien sûr, ma méthode de départ pour apprendre le Morse n'était pas vraiment la meilleure, bien au contraire ! Je n'ai jamais atteint les niveaux de Très Haute Vitesse (VHS CW) mais je prends toujours un réel plaisir à faire des contacts CW depuis 55 ans maintenant !

A bientôt sur les ondes et 73 de Bernard, F5DE, SKCC #6247S.

The Worst Learning Morse Code Method Was Mine!
Bernard DELAGE, F5DE, SKCC #6247S

Let's go back for a long time ago !

During the year 1960 my parents offered me a crystal set receiver. That was a so magic moment for me when listening to the local Medium Waves radio broadcast but I wanted to do more and listen to the Short Waves !

Then became the year 1962, I was 15 years old and very interested in listening to those crowded short waves. Plenty of broadcasts, Morse and strange signals were heard at this time on my parents broadcast receiver so I wanted and decided to learn this famous Morse code.

During the winter I suddenly had some problems with my right leg and family doctor said I had to stay at home in bed in a horizontal position for almost two weeks.

So, having free periods between school exercises, learning bases of electricity and Short Waves listening on an old second hand BCL my father found for me, I tried to learn the magic Morse code by the easiest method (I thought!), that is to say : reading the Morse code page on my parents dictionnary, the well known "Larousse" one.

I started to learn the letter A, then the B, the C, the D, and so on...
On my mind I learned only to recognise the letters by their dot and dash shape on the paper, not by listening to them by ear as I had not yet a BFO on my BCL receiver !

A very very bad method isn't it ?

A bit later during the year 1962 I was acquainted with my local elmer François Rivaud F2FI (SK). When he knew what I did to learn the code, he explained to me that it was not a good way to learn it like that, then he started to give me weekly code lessons in addition to electric and radio basics.

Quite every Saturday and Sunday afternoons, I took my old bicycle and I peddled as fast as possible to go meeting him in his impressive radio-shack to stay there for being in a real bath of radio ! Every time after lessons, I had an hour or so to listen to the Short Waves with the so beautiful "RCA model AR-88" receiver François had in his shack !

Thanks to François, I was prepared to pass the radioamateur exam. I did it in October 1963 and the 14th of April 1964 I received my ticket by post ! I was so proud to become "F5DE" being 17 years old !

My novice transmitter was a home made Xtal driven for 3.5, 7 and 14 MHz with an output power of 15 watts delivered by a good old "P17C" valve ! François lent me a BC-348 receiver, my father installed for me a 42 m length longwire antenna in the garden, then I started to call some CQs. The magic became reality when, after having done my first ever CW contact with F2FI, I was called by SM2DAR and LA6NI ! What an excited boy I was and ran fast to the garden to tell my parents I did my first Morse contacts !

Some years after, in 1968 I started my Military Service. My dream was to be a radiotelegraphist operator. That became a reality, thanks to my radioamateur CW operator license I showed to the officers, I went to "Les Bormettes", the radiotelegraphist school of the French Navy located near the city of Toulon. Four months later, I acquired the necessary listening and transmitting speed and military procedure to be able to work as a CW operator for all the remaining ten months of the service I had to stay onboard the ship "La Moselle", based in French Polynesia !

After that, I have always loved CW contacts, of course phone contacts too but my average on Morse contacts was more than 75 % of my time.

Years after my dictionary reading, thanks to Mister Morse, to François F2FI, to my Parents and... to my Military Service, I became a CW operator, always glad to use straight, cootie or semi-automatic keys, as well as electronic keys during some contests, and this pleasure increased when I became a SKCC member 10 years ago in January 2010 ! Now my average for CW contacts is more than 90 % !

Of course my starting method to learn Morse Code was not really the best, on the contrary! I have never reached very high speed levels but I always take a real pleasure to do CW contacts for as long as 55 years now !

See you soon on the air and 73 de Bernard, F5DE, SKCC #6247S.

A Hidden Message

Thanks to Andy K2AAK, who spotted this and posted it to Facebook.



Your article on the history of our nickel missed one interesting item of trivia. The wartime victory nickel had a Morse code message imprinted around the inside of the rim. It can be clearly seen in the front page photo of the 1943 nickel. The message reads: "We win when we work willingly." In 2005, the Mint issued a commemorative victory nickel but the Morse code message was missing. The reason the Mint gave for this omission was that the original message was not bilingual.

John Hendy, Ottawa

It was interesting to see the 1943 Canadian Victory Nickel on the front page of the Citizen. The following two references may be of interest: the Victory Nickel is a Canadian coin produced between 1943 and 1945. The design of the coin was intended to promote the Canadian war effort during the First World War. The coin was dreamed up by Thomas Shingles, master engraver of the Royal Canadian Mint.

A similar coin was released in 2005 to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

The Canadian Victory Nickel was also known as the World War II Propaganda Coin. This original Victory Nickel was first struck in 1943 during the Second World War by the Canadians as a piece of pure propaganda.

A flaming torch and "V" for Victory (Churchill's famous salute) dominates the design. The coin was in fact the only coin in the Commonwealth whose design reflected the fact that the nation was at war. Used by service men and women, as well as those at home, it reminded people of the war effort.

Doug Hughes, Kemptville

K3Y/8 Operation 2020

It has become a K3Y tradition for the “Dit Dah CW Gang” (KS8KCC) to do a multi radio-multi operator gathering for K3Y at the K8AQM station. This year was really something else, despite the poorer conditions this year than in few past years, we broke that 625 QSO old record with 657 QSOs and in less operating time than before even with the poorer conditions!

It was fabulous to have 24 different SKCC members to show up during the two day event with operators from Michigan and Ohio. At one time we had 19 guys, one teenage girl and one dog in the shack...whew! And the food...chili, venison burgers, chicken pot pie, chips, hunter sausage, humus, pita bread, sodas, homemade baked goods, coffee and water; we pride ourselves on gathering more “calories” than QSOs no matter how well the stations works!

The list of operators were:

N8XI K8UV AC8JF N8LJ AC8W KG8CO KT8X N8KQ K8KIC
NU8Z NQ8T KU8L K8MU K8KS KD8VSQ KE8CEW K8TEZ KD8YQK
KA8HFN AC8SV K8AQM KD8LRW W8KBW K2RLY



W8KBW, NU8Z, KD8YQK,
KD8LRW, KE8CEW



NQ8T and N8LJ at the 30m station



KD8LRW and KD8YQK at the 20m station



K8TEZ, KA8HFN, K8MU, KU8L
And AC8JF all guarding the food



N8KQ, K8UV, KG8CO (behind
K8UV) and NU8Z



AC8SV on 30m



K8TEZ and NQ8T on 30m



K8KIC and KD8VSQ on 40m



AC8W on 20m



NU8Z on 20m



KU8L and K8UV

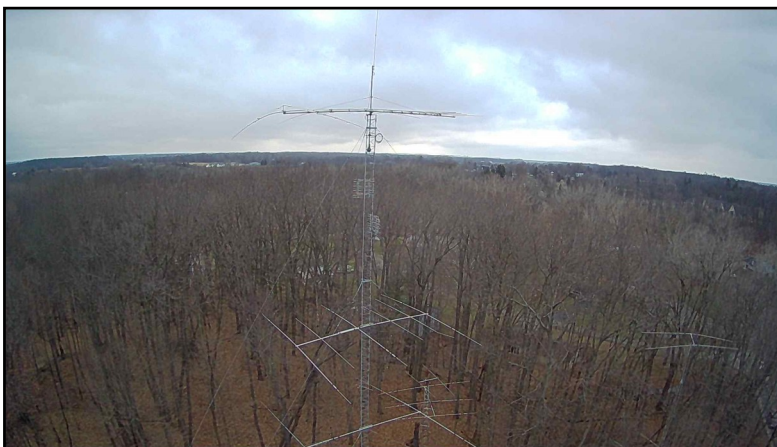


K2RLY (our grill master) and
KD8VSQ (computer guru)

Not only did the gang have fun but Randy N8KQ, brought his drone and I finally got some aerial shots of my QTH and antenna farm!



Randy N8KQ and Jeremy
KD8VSQ getting set to
“drone” the area.



It was a great weekend and we're already planning the next K3Y event 2021! 73, Ted K8AQM

Hambone's Revenge

By

Jaimie Charlton AD0AB

The thin layer of last winter's snow has disappeared and a yellow sun smiling in an azure sky is coaxing the first green shoots to rise up through the warm, loamy, Kansas earth. The local fauna is busy, too.

Bluejays, grown fat from months of feeding at Hambone's generously filled feeders, search each other out with only one thing in mind, and you know what that is. Squirrels, bright-eyed and bushy tailed, frolic across the new grass and through trees still pushing out new leaves.

Looking closer we see uncle Elmer busily struggling with, and swearing at, some large panels in his backyard. From next door, a spectator runs over.

"Hey Unck, what's all this?" asked Dude, Elmer's young and precocious nephew. "It looks like you're building bleachers for giants."

"These are the photovoltaic solar panels I ordered last fall," replied Elmer, grateful for a reason to take a break from mounting another panel on a large wooden frame. "They finally arrived just in time to capture a lot of free summer sunshine."

"Nice!" cooed Dude as he ran his hand over a mounted panels' smooth surface and along its edge. "I've never seen a solar panel before."

OUCH! What the F***," shouted Dude picking himself up off the warm loamy earth and no longer admiring Elmer's fine construction. "I just got a shock! Why didn't you tell me this thing was on?"

Elmer, startled by young Dude's expletive, said, "Dude, what part of photovoltaic solar panels don't you understand? Photo means light and solar means sun. Voltaic means voltage. So, Dude, put them together and they mean that these panels produce voltage when sunlight shines on them. Duh!"

"Well, you shoulda' warned me, I coulda' been killed," muttered Dude. "How much voltage do these things produce anyway?"

"These panels are capable of producing between 100 and 150 watts at 24 volts each in really bright sunlight. The six panels on the rack you were messing with are wired in series so I guess you got a pretty good jolt."

So, now you know. Solar panels are like batteries, they are always on – at least during daylight. Not so much at night."

"How do these things actually make electricity out of sunshine, anyway?" asked Dude, his natural technical curiosity winning over his embarrassment of getting kicked on his butt in front of his favorite Uncle who he is always trying to impress.

"Look closely, you can see each of these panels is composed of lots of small cells that are connected in series to give about 24 volts. Each cell produces only about half a volt."

"I got that part about the voltage," said Dude, still brushing the warm, loamy earth off his butt. "I want to know how they actually work."

"Each cell," continued Elmer, drifting into his professorial mode, "Contains two types of crystallized silicon – negative, or n-type and positive, or p-type."

"What do you mean, two types of silicon? I thought there was only one type of silicon, atomic number 14 on the Periodic Chart of Elements," stated Dude trying to act smart.

"That's pure silicon," continued Elmer. "Tiny amounts of impurities are added to the pure silicon crystals to give them either an excess of electrons, that's n-type, or a shortage of electrons, that's p-type. Where the two types come together, that's called a junction."

“Sort of like the junction in a diode or transistor?”

“It’s just like that. There are different types of photovoltaic cells, but these are made by placing a very thin layer of n-type silicon on top of a somewhat thicker base of p-type silicon. N-type silicon is made by adding a tiny amount of phosphorous to the otherwise pure silicon crystal. This gives that layer an excess of electrons.

The p-type silicon that forms the base is created by adding a tiny amount of boron to the pure silicon. The boron creates a shortage of electrons in that layer. The area where the two types of silicon meet is called the junction. The fact that we have an excess of electrons on one side of the junction and a shortage on the other means we have an electric field trying to “suck” the electrons across the junction.”

“Why don’t the electrons just go from the n-layer to the p-layer? Is there insulation between them?”

“No, but there is the *band gap*. The band gap is like a wall that the electrons must get over before they can pass from the n-layer to the p-layer. Do you remember when we were playing tennis and I hit the ball out of the court and you ran to get it? “

“Yes, but what does that have to do with electrons?”

“Well, to get the ball back in the court you had to throw it pretty hard to get it over the fence. In a sense, you had to give the ball extra energy to get it over the fence. Without that extra energy, the ball could not cross over the fence even if it wanted to. Well, the electrons in the n-layer are like that tennis ball, they want to get over the fence, er, cross the band gap, but they don’t have enough energy to do it - until sunlight hits them.

As you know, light is made of tiny energy-carrying particles called photons. Photons travel at the speed of light because they are light. When the photons hit the electrons in the n-layer, they give them enough energy to jump cross the band gap and get to the p-layer. But then they get homesick and want to go back. So, we provide an external path for them to run back to the n-layer and they do. That flow of electrons going home through the external path is the electrical current we want. In fact, it’s nice pure DC.

As long as photons keep kicking electrons across the band gap, the current returning them home keeps flowing and we keep getting our electricity from sunlight.

“Oh, okay,” murmured Dude.

Actually this analogy is too simple. There’s a lot more to the band gap and kicking electrons across it. But, it’s good enough for now.”

“You’ve got my head spinning, Unck. Let’s see how much voltage these panels are actually producing,” said Dude hooking his uncle’s old Triplett 630 multimeter to the terminals that bit him moments ago.

“It looks like about 100 volts, but it’s not pure DC, it’s ‘bumping’ up and down a little.”

“What’ya doin’?” asked Hambone wandering over to his uncle’s house.

“What does it look like, Dumdum?” responded Dude to his older brother. “He’s putting up solar panels.”

“I can see that. What are *you* doing with Unck’s antique meter? Don’t stick yourself with those pointy probes.”

“Obviously, I’m checking the voltage,” responded Dude. “It shows about 100 volts, but it seems there’s a loose connection or something causing bumps in the reading.”

“Let’s see,” said Hambone grabbing the meter. “Hmmm, those are funny bumps. First there’s one bump, then two, then three. It looks like they go up to five, stop, and start over. What could cause that, Unck?”

"I don't know," said Elmer who had gone back to muscling another panel onto his wooden frame. "You guys have probably screwed something up. Let me see that meter. Hmm, you're right, it does seem odd," Said Elmer. "I wonder if we're picking up some sort of radio signal. These panels are really just diodes. Lets block the light and see if the voltage fluctuations are still there. Help me put this tarp over the panels."

"That stopped the voltage and the bumps, Unck." Observed Dude. "The sunlight seems to have something to do with them."

"I don't see how it could," mused Elmer as he removed the tarp and the voltage and the bumps reappeared. "It must be something else. Let's see if it's directional. Help me point the panels away from the sun."

As the trio moved the panels away from the sun, Dude, still acting as the meter reader, noted that the voltage dropped to about fifty volts and the bumps disappeared.

"Okay, let's turn the panels back and see if the bumps come back," said Elmer.

"The voltage is back up to about 100 volts and the bumps are back, only different," reported Dude. "Now, they are one, one, two, three, five, eight and repeat. I don't know what could cause this."

"I don't know what's going on either," added Elmer.

"Hey! Those numbers are a Fibonacci series!" shouted Hambone. "Maybe you're receiving signals from outer space. I read someplace that aliens might send pulses arranged in a Fibonacci series as sort of a CQ. These pulses do seem to be coming from the direction of the sun."

"Why would anybody, especially aliens, send signals with light? They would use radio, wouldn't they?" asked Dude.

"Who knows? But it's possible, I guess. We send signals with light through optical cables," said Hambone.

"We do," said Elmer, still wondering what was going on.

"In fact, it's pretty easy to send messages with light. Even that guy, Chip, who writes the club newsletter, made a gadget that sends code over a light beam," said Hambone. "I think he has dreams of becoming a brass-pounder."

"Don't they all," mused Elmer.

"Wow! We're receiving signals from outer space," exclaimed Dude as he excitedly pulled up his Twitter account. "I'm gonna tell the world!"

"Not so fast," said Elmer. "We don't really know what's happening."

"But what if Dude's right?" said Hambone. "Other guys may be receiving the same signals. Don't we want to be the first to announce the news that aliens really exist and are contacting us? We'll be famous!"

"Hammy is right," continued Dude. "Why wait? We're receiving signals that are clearly from some intelligent source and they are coming from space. Just because our antenna is a solar panel, that's no reason to think the signals aren't real."

"Oh, I think the signals are real," said Elmer, "I'm just not sure they are coming from outer space. While you guys were busy cheering each other on, I called my friend who works part-time for SETI and told him what we found. He was mildly interested and said he will ask their engineers to check for radio signals from that same area of the sky. But, he warned, it will take at least all day before he will have any results."

As the boys' discussion grew more animated, the words alien, signals and outer space began to attract a small group of onlookers and the ubiquitous cell phones were capturing every action and word. Even Dude's pal, Joey, magically appeared and quickly posted a You Tube video featuring Dude as the discoverer of space monsters

"Excuse me, are you Elmer? I'm from Channel 6 Real Time News, can you tell me what's going on?"

Elmer turned and was instantly transfixed by golden blond hair shimmering above the bluest eyes, reddest lips and perkier pair he had ever seen.

"Excuse me," the lips repeated.

Shaken from his trance and realizing that those lips were talking to him, Elmer pulled in his belly, puffed out his chest and stammered, "Why, ah, yes. I'm Elmer, what, er, can I do for you?"

The lips continued, "I'm from Channel 6 News, can you tell me what's happening here?"

"S-sure," replied Elmer now noticing a news chopper circling overhead. "My nephew, Dude, over there, thinks he has picked up signals from outer space on these solar panels. They are just pulses, really, but they seem to represent numbers..."

Before he could finish his sentence, the golden-haired goddess with her somewhat pudgy cameraman in tow headed across the backyard to where Dude was holding forth before a small audience.

"... I first noticed the signals when I hooked a voltmeter to this solar panel," explained Dude. I expected the voltage to be pure and steady, but it sort of bumped up and down. That shouldn't happen.

My uncle and brother thought the 'bumps' were just a loose connection to the panels, but I realized that the 'bumps' were numbers – one, two, three, four and five. I thought this was strange and could not imagine how a loose connection or simple sunlight could cause that."

The on-lookers nodded in agreement.

"Then the bumps changed. The numbers became one, one, two, three, five, eight - that's a Fibonacci series, you know. That's what alien hams would use to call CQ. The number sequences repeated over and over endlessly and I'm sure they are from some sort of extraterrestrial intelligence." Dude paused so the audience could marvel at his analysis and appreciate the magnitude of his discovery.

"It's pretty hard to see the voltage bumps on my meter so I've hooked up a decoder that changes the numbers to big letters and displays them on that 80" plasma display over there. It's set up so the number one displays as an 'A', the number two as a 'B' and so on. It's displaying the actual signals we are receiving right now."

As Dude explained the display the audience turned to see a series of large numbers followed later by their equivalent letters stream across the big screen.

Using her beautifully pointed elbows, the blond goddess/reporter muscled a space for herself and her cameraman in the front row and asked, "Have you informed SETI about your discovery?"

"Oh, of course," replied Dude, realizing he was now on national television. "We called them as soon as we had something. They were very impressed with our work and, as we speak, they are analyzing radio signals from the same part of the sky."

"Where do you think the signals are coming from?" asked a voice in the back row.

"I don't know," stated Dude. "I only know they are coming from the direction of the sun. SETI astronomers are working to determine possible sources in that direction."

"So, you are absolutely sure these signals are from outer space?" asked the voice.

"I am," replied Dude adopting an ever more professorial tone. My uncle Elmer and I have verified every aspect of these signals and we are sure that we are receiving the very first messages from an alien, non-human intelligence. This is a great day that will go down in history and I'm glad you all could join me here to be part of it."

With that, the audience began applauding wildly as all major networks carried the announcement live across the globe. But Dude, who had now been joined by Elmer, and was

basking in his fifteen minutes of fame, heard a small voice from the audience calling his name.

“Mister Dude, Mister Dude, look at your screen, the aliens are sending something new.”

As Dude, Elmer and the rest of the world watched, the following filled the screen:

1 16 18 9 12 6 15 15 12 4 1 25 8 1 13 2 15 14 5

Well, you can figure out what they said?

POST SCRIPT

Two weeks have past. The jeering has largely subsided and Elmer and Dude are once again able to appear in public without being sneered at, much. The golden-haired news goddess won't return their calls and the CNN channel seems to be blocked from their cable TV.

It has been confirmed that Hambone did, indeed, originate the “extra terrestrial” signals by using a very bright LED spotlight. He keyed the light on and off with his Raspberry Pi programmed to blink out the number sequences and his final message. Although the spotlight was hidden and pointed up to blend with the sunlight, dust particles and water vapor in the atmosphere reflected enough of its light back to register on the solar panels.

Nobody has seen Hambone. But, rumor has it he left a note saying this was payback for the cruel trick played on him last Halloween. From his Instagram photos, it appears he is enjoying his revenge in Nassau while snorkeling in the warm Caribbean waters.

January 2020 SKSE Results

Straight Key Sprint Europe Results

Results for SKSE: 02-Jan-2020

Overall | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | SWL | By SPC | Soapbox

Overall results

Rank	Call sign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
1	AC1GF	Bob	19399T	NH	24	13	6/6/1	467
2	EA6/GM3ZDH	BOB	6027T	BLI	14	9	5/6/0	261
3	OS0S	Leon	10688S	BEL	16	10	4/4/0	260
4	ON7DQ	Luc	14984T	BEL	14	10	4/4/1	245
5	F5DE	Bernard	6247S	FRA	12	9	6/3/1	233
6	EA3NO	Lluís	6653S	ESP	12	10	2/6/0	210
7	G4PVM	Paul	17810T	ENG	8	7	3/3/0	131
7	YU7AE	Kare	5790T	SER	8	7	3/3/0	131
9	VA3RSA	Richard	21258C	ON	7	6	3/3/1	122
10	W0KFG	Richard	16863T	MN	8	6	2/3/0	108
11	HB9CPS	Geo	20350	SUI	8	5	1/4/0	95
12	G0RDO	John	2133S	ENG	2	2	1/1/0	29
13	WA9BBN	Ed	17763S	IN	1	1	0/1/0	11
14	ON7AUR	Aurore	18854	BEL	1	1	0/0/0	1
15	AA6AC	BOB	6276S	CA	0	0	0/0/0	0



Happy new year to all my SKCC friend, working from my /p location (work place) in JN95ud 539m ASL, rig is FT817nd 5W and Vibroplex champion bug, antenna is low ZS6BKW doublet, thanks for nice SKSE, 73 de YU7AE



Conditions dire here ! Well that, or my aerial has been nicked ! Just 2 QSOs - and great ones too - EA6/GM3ZDH Bob and F5DE Bernard. Both on 80m. Rig TS440s, 100 watts, vertical ant. Redifon marine key. 73 all & Happy New Year ! John G0RDO

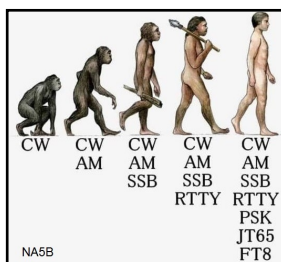
The New Year has begun with a fairly good SKSE turnout despite very poor propagation. We can only hope 2020 brings us better propagation for our events.

Thanks to all those who participated and please submit your results and photo for publishing here.

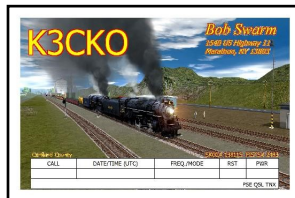
January WES 2020



Overall I would say conditions weren't very good. Not much activity on Saturday, but late Sunday afternoon was good on 40m. I heard K3WW working F6HKA on 40m @ 1:38PM local time. We're definitely at a sunspot low. I told my wife I was going to take it easy this WES, but W1GF got my competitive juices going. Highlight of contest was working W1GF/Maine on 20m. That's a new state on 20m towards my 5BWAS award. Worked some DX: F6EJN, DL9YCS, CO8RRM, FG8NY, LU7DD, G4VPM, F8DGY, WB9EAO/VP9, F5DE, PZ5JW, and CT1BQH. F5DE and WB9EAO/VP9 were worked on 80m. Around 6:30PM local time on Sunday the 40m band went dead except for a couple of European stations coming in. I heard DF7TV, CT1BQH, and EA5IIK, but they couldn't hear me. Also tried to get K6RC, but he couldn't hear me either. Missed a couple "easy" SPCs: ie CA and KY. Lots of QRN Sunday night on 80m from storms. Thanks for all the QSOs! Photo shows tree where I attach one end of my 20m dipole. Working on a 20m loop for the spring. 73, Bob AC1GF



I liked the January bonus system, I tried to do 80 m contacts at first. As often I used three bug keys for different speeds. On the photo can be seen my simple method to reduce the speed of my Lionel J36 bug key, very easy method, isn't it? Hi! Many thanks for QSO and see you soon during 2020. 73, Bernard F5DE



Ben off the air for three months. Was good to get back into the swing of things. 20 meters was lost to high speed contest on Saturday. Other than that all bands were good. Even worked 2 European stations with my wire antenna. 73, Bob K3CKO



Great Contest again this month. Lost a lot of time with the NAQP, but enjoyed the time with SKCC. Half my contacts were from home with my Icom IC-7300 at 100 watts into a 22 foot OCF Flagpole Antenna. Most contacts made with my Begali Spark, but a few with a W1SFR Cootie and a Vibroplex Champion circa 1968. Getting really close to my TKA. Eight contacts were made from the K2DM contest station just adjacent to The Villages with a K3 at 100 watts into a 3 element Yagi on a 60 foot tower. 73, Bob K3ZGA



Struggled to be heard most of the time, stuck to 20m and a small time on 15m where I heard LU7DD. Successful QSOs were with - DK3DUA Tom, F6EJN Bob, K3WW Chas, S58MU Milan, all on 20m. Rig - TS-440s, 100 watts, vertical ant. Picture is a fabulous 1919 Vibroplex Dual Lever bug key. 73, John G0RDO



I only had little bits of time, here and there, to jump into the fray... and didn't read the bonus scheme until JUST NOW! At least I snagged 4 80m QSOs! Thanks, as always, for the fun. Here's mirror cat. 73, Lloyd K3ESE



AWA and CW Classic Exchange on the same weekend meant firing up the 1950 or earlier stuff - the Collins 310B at 20 watts, the 51J at about 6 khz bandwidth, and the old WW2 RAF bathtub and Lightning bug. What a great combination of sights, smells and sounds. Only had to fix rigs twice. Thanks to all the guys that made K3Y easy to get, and those that struggled to hear the 20 tired watts from the 310. 73 HNY Scott ka9p



Fun WES. First time as a new T! Simultaneously working WES (GM0EUL), K3Y (GB2KEY) and CWops anniversary event (GM2CWO). My bug and my paddles have the dits and dahs reversed. It actually helps keep my techniques separate. Until next time. 73, Peter GM0EUL



I took off 10 hours to work the NAPQ CW contest. In WES had 11 QSOS on 160 and 48 on 80M all in the mornings or at the very end. Photo shows the most organized corner of the shack, the G0NVT key, and my high tech tick sheet for tracking K3Y stations. Thanks for the nice QSOs. 73, Chas

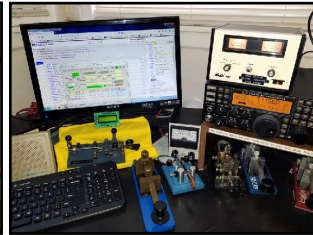


Not as good as I would have hoped. Been a little under the weather this week. Still had fun and thanks for all the contacts! 73, Dave KB1WOD

January WES 2020 II



As always, thanks to everyone that made this a fun weekend. Out of 71 QSOs, 47 were on 80m, 23 were on 40m, and 1 on 20m. Early on the noise was terrible but got better after that front passed. My cootie got a workout and so did I! 73, Eric KB3NSK



Had very little time to play but made some of my best contacts! Hooray to Take, JR2IUB for completing my Grand Sweep!! Not many contacts but some great DX this WES. Japan, Alaska, New Zealand, France and Australia. What a great time. Since I've been operating as K3Y/4 I moved up a notch from QRP to QRO (for me anyway). Ran my K3/10 into a Ten-Tec 405 amp that has seen some upgraded finals. Gives me a solid 85 watts out. If I push it I can make 125 but according to some of my RST reports it starts to hum a tune after 100W... heh heh. Station was K3/10 to Ten-Tec 405 Amp. Keys were Custom NT9K SKCC Pro-Pump, SKCC Side-swiper, 1939 Martin Jr Bug and SKCC Club Straight Key. Happy New Year to All!! 73, Randy KB4QQJ



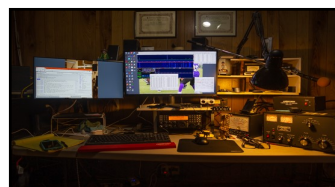
A fun event although wasn't able to spend much time with other personal activities. Ran the old gal (1919 Vibroplex Original and the new 3D printed Cootie by Chris, AI8W. Was able to manage a US sweep during the WES. Thanks for all the QSOs. HNY all! 73, jack, KK0I



Back in the saddle again !!! ... Had fun !!! ... been doin digital stuff for a while but needed a change ... good to see old buds on the band ... Kenwood TS-130SE, ZeroFive 49 meter vertical and Vibroplex 100th Anniversary Bug. 73, George N2JNZ



Another fun weekend. The bands were in good shape. 73, Al KS9KCC



First WES using QRO+. 73, Doug N3QW



Had lots of fun operating leisurely and exclusively playing 80 meter S & P. Plenty of distraction though provided by football games and the NA QSO Party, especially on Saturday. But in the end, good winter band propagation made for high level of activity, at least in my area. 73, Bill KE3O



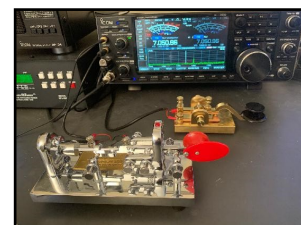
Great time to be able again to bring the club station on the air. I only saw one other KSXKCC club station on this weekend. Would be nice if more got on. It was a very busy CW weekend. I worked the Club Station, my call, I was K3Y/3 for a few hours this weekend and squeezed the NAQP in between....The fist is tired. 73 & CUL DAH KS3KCC



It was fun to dust off the station and pound some cw for a short while. Thanks to all. 73, KI4GLH Dave



Didn't get too serious with this one, mainly chasing K3Y stations. 73, Russ KK4WX



Despite a crush of post-holiday conflicts, I managed to operate long enough to rack up 30 QSOs, 25 of which were on 80m. 80 was actually very active here in NJ during the WES. My 6BTV did yeoman service. One of these days, I really need to get something up on 160. Used my 1987 Vibroplex the whole time. I think I'm getting passable on it and it was lots of fun. 73, Chris N0CC

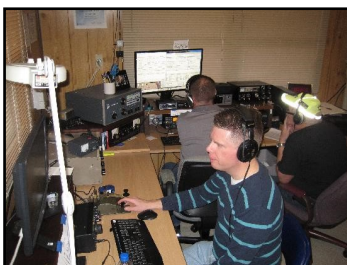
January WES 2020 III



Poor conditions during the short time I was on. Hope to have more time available next month. Broke in my new N1DWJ Side-swiper, acquired on Ebay. A very smooth key to send on. 73 de AL N4ow 11375s



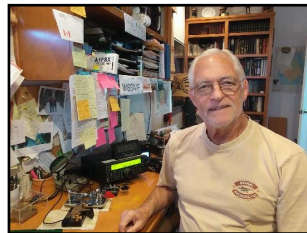
Busy weekend with WES, K3Y, antenna problems and family. We fell short of our goal by 16 for our Tx3. Thanks for the contacts! CU for the Sprint on the 21st. 73, Dos Equis RC. W4XX



11 Fort Wayne Radio Club/ SKCC members and one out of town SKCC member worked Saturday in our three station K3y/9-WES multi. Fun - Food - Fellowship - Food! Pictured is Josh-W9HT in the foreground running 17 meters while Jamie-W0CD and Terry-K9FMX operate 20 meters. 73, Ft, Wayne RC



Started out QRO 100W and my K3 quit and would only put out 10w. So switched to my KX3 with 15W. Not much difference but just a little extra. Now have to repair the K3..grrr. Used a 3D printed side swiper from AI8W. Worked fine business with the K3 but was different with the KX3. Still investigating? 73, Dave NE5DL



I spent more time with the NAQP event so just answered a few WES calls..all fun and couldn't figure out at first why the concentration on 80M (and 160), until I read the theme..duh. 73, Stan W6AMF



An interesting weekend. I had limited operating time and also noticed a lot of competition with the NA QP. Along with various other challenges, high humidity or something caused intermittent problems with contacts on my bug keys. Had to repeatedly clean and adjust them. Weird! I had fun anyway. 73, Jack W9GT



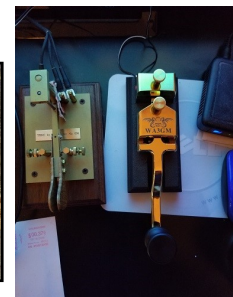
Wow, 80 was brutal Saturday morning from storm QRN. Much better Saturday night and Sunday morning along with 160. Pic is of my modest key collection I used this WES. From L-R - Bencher RJ-2 I used with my K3, J-38 used with my IC-7300 and my original Radio Shack novice key bought for \$15 new in 1981 used with my chirpy Heathkit SB-104A. Antennas used were an OCF dipole, 160M full wave horizontal loop, 54' vertical with remote tuner and 2 element 5 band quad at 40'. Finished early to get ready to watch the Chiefs (hopefully) beat the Texans. 73, Bill NZ0T



I was with the Boschveldt QRP Club for our annual Winter outing at the Mohican Outdoor Center in northern New Jersey. I operated "stationary-mobile" for a few hours from the Blue Mountain Lakes Trailhead. 73, Craig W3GCK



I was on a Boschveldt QRP Club outing this week working the WES from a cabin at the Mohican Outdoor Center at the Delaware Water Gap. The cabin QSOs were made with a KX2 and an 85' Inverted L @ 28 feet. Three QSOs were made from the Appalachian Trail (N2JNZ, K1NIE & K6RC). That station is pictured below. 73, Glen NK1N



Very Busy CW Weekend. I worked my own call, KS3KCC, K3Y/3 and the NAQP. I leave for FL later this week and will not be back until April. Look for me down there mostly QRP as no antennas allowed so I have to hide by antennas as best I can. 73 & C U L Greg WA3GM

January WES 2020 IV



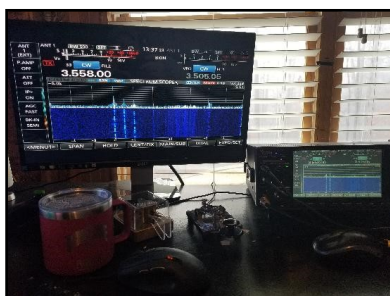
All my contacts were on 40. No antennas here for 80 meters or 160. 73, Al WB4JJJ



Good WES, only a couple of hours on but got HI, AK, and PR K3Y. Really good time tnx all. 73, Les WB5JWI



Usually work QRP for SKCC, but because of band conditions I was using my old Ten-Tec 580 Delta (arguably one of the best CW rigs ever made) and a US Army Signal Corp J-43 key. 73, Dave WD8KRV



It's been a few months since I've been able to put more than a few hours into WES. I was determined to work at least 8 hours this month - I got 9 - in between kids basketballs games, date night my XY1, and chore list :) -- oh, and the storms passing through the south kept me off the air all of Saturday night. 80/40/20 were the only bands I made Q's - i saw some chatter about activity on 15/10 but i couldnt hear anyone. 160m was closed by the time I was able to get on the air Sunday morning. Overall, it was a great time and it was nice to get back in to SKCC events. Attached action photo shows the foggy Georgia Sunday Morning in the background! 73, RJ WF4W



Worked only 2 F stations, high noise level and bad propagation here, using FT817nd 5W output into Windom antenna and key is Vibroplex Champion bug. 73, Kare YU7AE



Less power, more fun! 73, Jeff WN1MB

A Bit of History

RECEIVED BY W4SM 11:15 PM EST 12-7-1941

QST SPECIAL TO ALL RADIO AMATEURS
FROM W1AW 9:35 PM EST DEC. 7, 1941

BY ORDER OF THE FCC ALL AMATEUR RADIO OPERATION IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES ITS TERRITORY AND POSSESSIONS IS HEREBY PROHIBITED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE EXCEPT FOR STATIONS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED BY FEDERAL STATE AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY IN CONNECTION WITH EMERGENCY MATTERS STOP

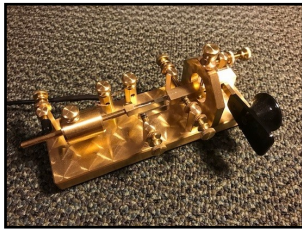
THIS IS A PRECAUTIONARY AND TEMPORARY CLOSE DOWN PENDING EXAMINATION OF THE AMATEUR SITUATION WITH FURTHER WORD PROMISED WITHIN 48 HOURS STOP

LEAVE ANTENNAS UP AND DO NOT DISMANTLE RIGS STOP

IN CASE OF LOCAL COMMUNICATIONS EMERGENCY AMATEURS REQUESTED BY LOCAL AUTHORITY MAY OPERATE FOR THAT PURPOSE STOP

LOOK TO W1AW FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AR

January SKS



Pleased to hear some nice activity on 40m this evening. Skip was long again. Best RBN reports were from northeast, northwest and Europe. We have some pretty good fists in this club! That was fun. See you next month, I hope. 73, Don K3RLL



Tried 20M and 40M and could not raise anyone, but 80M sure was hot. Great fun. 73, Steve K4JPN



Conditions weren't too bad but there seemed to be a lot less ops on than usual. Nice sigs on 80M. Thanks for the QSOs and the sprint. Kent KT-1, KX3 & 100W amp into an 80M doublet. 73, W4XX "Dos Equis"



Thanks to everyone who worked me. 73, Roger W6LAX

Useful Info from K9JP

I am a bit slow (a low slow) when it comes to adopting modern hi tech computer programs so I asked my friend Jeff K9JP to tell me about Reverse Beacon and some of the other interesting programs he has run across. This information might be useful to other luddites like me.

The Reverse Beacon Network reports your transmitter signal as SNR in dB or Signal to Noise Ratio. The higher the dB report, the stronger your signal received. RBN stations are located all over the world. See the list in the blue highlighted box on the right hand side of this page: <http://www.reversebeacon.net/dxsd1/dxsd1.php?f=0&c=k9jp&t=dx>

I have a lot of fun learning about propagation using this reporting system. It's simple to use. To get a report all you need to do is call CQ a few times and repeat your call sign. Something like 3x3 or 3x2. Your page will update every 15 minutes or when you reload the webpage on your computer.

<http://www.reversebeacon.net/dxsd1/dxsd1.php?f=0&c=k8aqm&t=dx>

When I had my small beam and vertical I would CQ on say 20 or 15 and see where I was heard and what the SNR was. Then maybe rotate the beam 180 degrees and see what the new SNR was from the same receiving station. All that playing helped before I found out about the Propagation Prediction software for DXpeditions. With that software I knew when to sleep and when to get on the air to try to work that elusive new one!

Here are a few more website that will give you signal reports (mainly in dB)

Good for FT-8 signals

<https://pskreporter.info/pskmap.html>

Just type your call sign in the call sign box, pick the mode or select "all" and select the time (24 hours or other times)

Here a plus dB report is a very strong signal received, but I find it interesting that even a -24 dB (very very weak signal) there are stations around the world that hear my signal. They may not click on my signal to work me, but they still hear me via their computer.

DX Heat is another general propagation reporting software tool that lets you know where the action is or what bands have propagation.

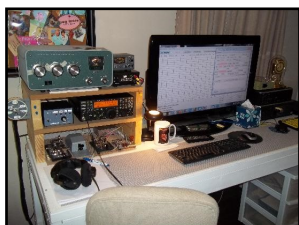
See: <https://dxheat.com/dxc/>

73, Jeff K9JP

February Slow Speed Saunter



After the exhausting K3Y activity there appeared to be a "K3Y hangover" as the Slow Speed Saunter this month had less than normal activity but those who were involved had a good time under very poor band conditions with S9+ noise on 80 and 40 meters.



Only had a bit of time but had a great 45 minute QSO with John W2QCY. John really uses his side swiper well, enjoyable copy on a very noisy 80m band. 73, Ted K8AQM



TNX everyone for new ones and for putting up with my shaky qqQQRs fist! C U next month. 73, Steve NQ8T



Not much time to participate this month but I still made 7 QSOs. I found the conditions quite difficult with noise and QRM. I am glad to have completed two particularly difficult QSOs. It was worth the effort. 73, Robert VE2KZW



Love it when these SSS fall on Friday night into Saturday. I tied my record 13 in a day and I got a new state (AK) toward SKCC WAS. I just need HI and ND now. Been 100% TBFB Cootie key since I got it 4/12/2019! I LOVE this key. 73, Ken N9KJU



Had several rather nice QRS QSOs. Really had a lot of fun. SKN total was 11 and SSS total was 7. Thanks to all who played. 73, Les WB5JWI

Slow Speed Saunter Results

Results for Slow Speed Saunter: 1-2 Feb 2020

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

Rank	Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	Score
1	N9KJU	Ken	10904T	IL	13	13
2	NQ8T	Steve	5019T	OH	11	11
3	WA2JSC	Curt	3018S	NJ	9	9
4	VE2KZW	Robert	16248T	QC	7	7
4	WB5JWI	Les	5013S	TX	7	7
6	KD9GDY	Jim	18150T	IN	6	6
7	N1API	Ronan	11073S	GA	5	5
7	WA9BBN	Ed	17763S	IN	5	5
7	K8HFN	Larry	2046S	OH	5	5
7	W5H	Mike	11770S	TX	5	5
11	WB0QQT	Steve	1831	NE	3	3
12	W2QCY	John	21544	NY	2	2
12	K8AQM	Ted	1829S	MI	2	2



Working My Station Remotely on Travel

By: Bob Trester, N1MHV, SKCC # 21332T

Fellow members, on occasion I have a need to travel for business. When on travel, I want to keep in touch with friends and fellow HAMS using HF CW or even SSB. I needed a viable low-cost solution. A fellow member of my local HAM club happened to introduce me to Remote HAMS (www.remotehams.com).

Some investigation opened my eyes wide as I investigated Remote HAMS. They have a software-based packages for Windows based systems functioning as a Server and a Client. These are available free of charge. That solved the problem on how I could control a radio attached to my Home Station PC through my laptop directly connected through the internet at a remote site.

The next question was how can I follow SKCC rules which require me to key my CW Transmitter with a straight key? Looking into the forum boards at Remote HAMS held the answer. The answer was in the use of a Serial input, in particularly in this case, a Request to Send (RTS) and a Clear to Send (CTS) connection. The Software design acknowledges contact closure between RTS and CTS as a Push to Talk (PTT) signal that would then be sent to the remote transmitter.

Therefore, using an RS232 connection shorting RTS and CTS in Phone Mode, is akin to the PTT switch on a hand mic. In CW Mode, it is akin to the Key Line which the Straight key can be connected. This solves the problem of maintaining our Key standards when operating remotely. In modern laptops OR Windows driven tablets an RS232 is no longer available. The answer is an RS232 to USB adaptor would be required; these are widely available through many sources.



After adding the connection for the Straight Key to the Laptop, the Client Software needed to be aligned properly and the Server Software had to be set properly. This is outlined in the software instructions. I wanted to keep this article at a high level and not technical in nature for general consumption.

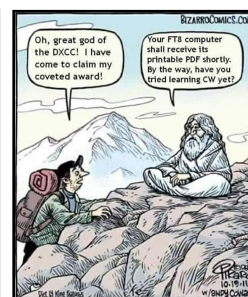
Remote HAMS also has MANY remote stations set up by individual HAMS open for use. There are many clubs that allow club members to operate Club stations remotely. This is a legitimate operating model, not as some call cheating. You are operating the station just as if you were sitting at the station, switching antennas, turning on amplifiers, rotating beam antennas, etc.

Many HAMS set up stations for use to help fellow hams, not allowed to set up and operate at home for financial or other restrictions invoked by HOAs. These HAMS ask for donations to support their remote stations. Remote HAMS require a HAM to join at no cost, upload a JPG image of your license for review and validation so Remote Station Owners can be assured that permissions are granted based on the license and class level access.

I strongly endorse Remote HAMS; it supports the hobby and allows HAMS greater ability to get on the air.

(For those wondering, the client software does generate a side tone so the keying could be used by a bug as well as a straight key)

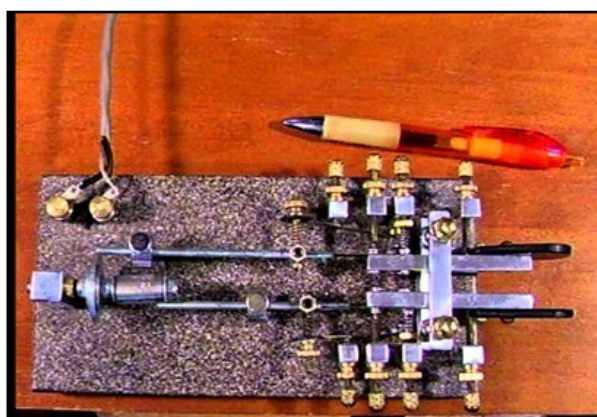
Great Stuff Seen on Facebook



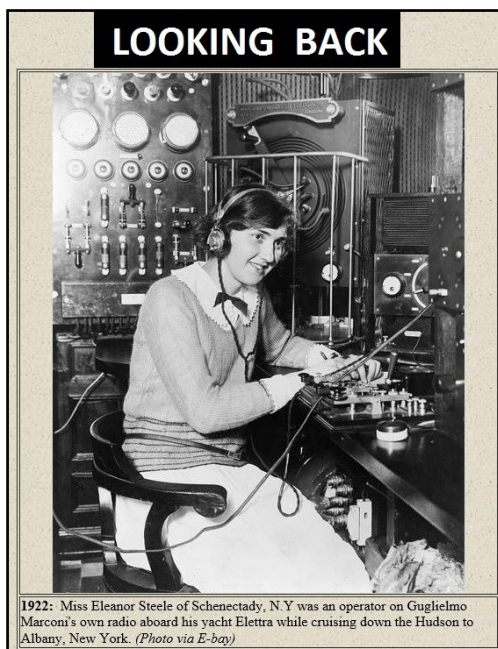
Before and after work by IZ2ABI



AD4CW's "neat" station



Auto dits and dahs..WB2QLL



1922: Miss Eleanor Steele of Schenectady, N.Y. was an operator on Guglielmo Marconi's own radio aboard his yacht Elettra while cruising down the Hudson to Albany, New York. (Photo via E-bay)



Don AA2KC has a new Key and a beauty too!

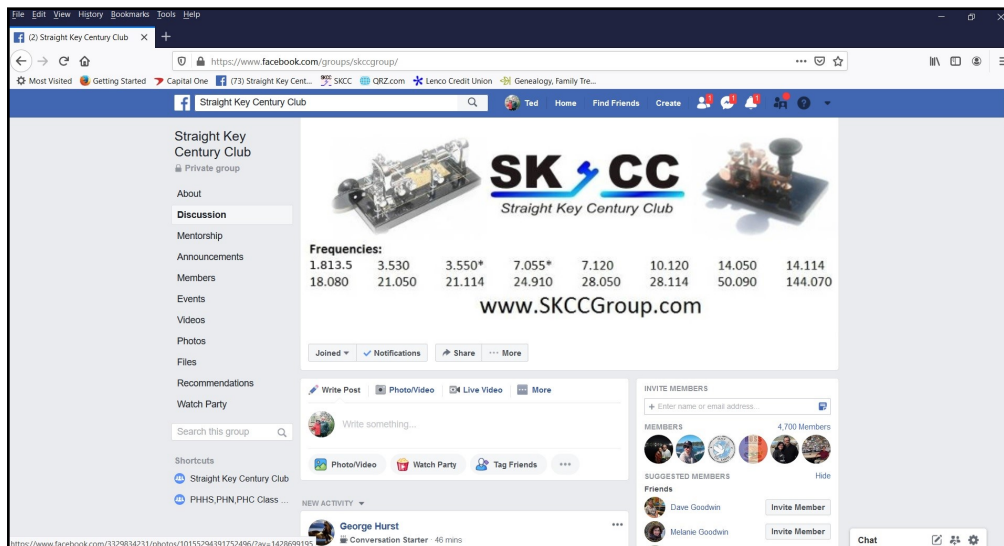
Meet Eleanor Steele! In 1922, Steele was the #1 Radio Operator aboard none other than Guglielmo Marconi's yacht."

Speaking of Facebook...

A Facebook page for the Straight Key Century Club can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/skccgroup/>

As your editor I check this Facebook page quite regularly and often “borrow” interesting posts to be repeated here for those members who do not participate in Facebook. Great things are often posted there and I enjoy re-sharing them with their author. **It would help me greatly if those who post any text would add their call to the end of their post so I may give proper credit to the author.**



Who?



Friedrich Clemens Gerke, 1840

22 January 1801, is the birthday of Friedrich Clemens Gerke. He is the man who improved the code into what we are doing as MORSE on the air today, since the days of Guglielmo Marconi.

These days many people don't know of him. Give him tribute with more CW activity on the band as normal.

Read more here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Clemens_Gerke

Spread the love!

73 de [NW7US](#)

Getting Your Grind On!

I love operating with vintage “Boat Anchor” transmitters. There is something about that warm glow of the tube filaments that just seems right. I started in this great hobby back in the late 60’s. My first license was Novice Class and the rules were 75 watts max and crystal controlled transmit frequency. No VFO’s!

Crystals were reasonable in price back then and I was blessed to be have a two connection bus ride across town to get there. AES had lots of crystals to offer for the 80 and 40 meter Novice bands and I was working as a helper in a print shop near our home so I had a few dollars to spend on crystals that were about \$3.00 each at the time.

Fast forward 50 years and crystals are now getting harder and harder to find for that vintage or “Boat Anchor” transmitters. Even worse is a few years ago the last U.S. crystal manufacture that made ham band crystals closed it doors for good. These days, we are still blessed to have Bry - AF4K, SKCC #1879S who sells crystals in all types of cases and frequencies. Check out his website for more info on crystals.

I think, there are crystal manufactures still in business in England and Europe as well. So all is not lost if you are looking for a crystal to add to your collection for your vintage transmitter.

Ebay is another place to watch and I assume the other on-line radio swap sites are also good place to watch.

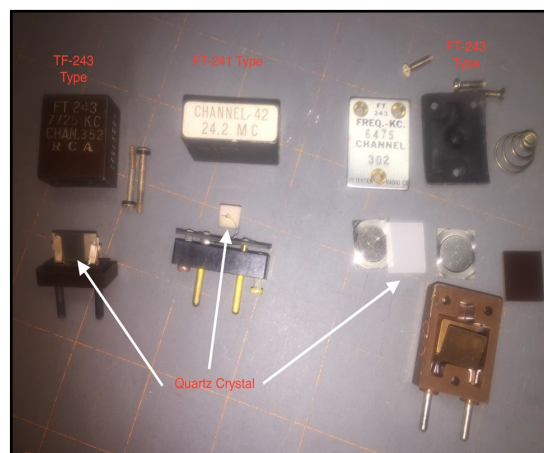
Well this past December while I was testing a new to me Johnson Viking Adventurer transmitter, I remembered that Rex - W1REX of QRPme.com offered a great kit at “Four Days In May” a few years ago called the “X-CHECKer” a crystal grinding oscillator/frequency counter kit all in one unit. Sure enough he was still selling that kit on his website. I read about the kit from the webpage and the provided web links and ordered one with some accessories items (extra FT-243 Quartz blanks for 7.015+/- MHz to grind/move up in frequency) for use with this kit that he also sales.



I was excited, as I remembered reading and hearing stories over the years that you could take a crystal and grind it higher in frequency or pencil it down in frequency. You could take a crystal that

was not on the desired frequency for a net, QRP gathering place, SOTA calling frequency, of one of the common SKCC operating frequencies and move it to where you needed to operate.

The kit arrived, I built it and the oscillator/frequency counter worked very well. Rex even provides a crystal of a known frequency measured with his very expensive equipment as a calibrator or known for the frequency counter of the kit.



I took one of the crystal blanks he sells after watching the Youtube videos on the X-



CHECKer web page and began grinding a custom crystal for my own use near the 40 meter SKCC calling frequency of 7.055 MHz. I was able to move or grind that crystal blank from 7.010 MHz up to 7.055 MHz in a very short time. I placed the newly ground quartz blank into



an old military FT-243 crystal holder, and placed it in the crystal position of my Viking Adventurer transmitter. Sent QRL x 3 and got no reply and then started calling CQ SKCC.

I had the RBN (Reverse Beacon Network) website open on my ham computer and there I was being spotted on 40 meters. The only thing was I was spotted on 7.056.7 MHz. What was happening?

Well, after some thought, I remember reading the oscillator circuit of the X-CHECKer is based 30 pf loading (Commonly used crystal loading in current transmitter designs) of the crystal. You will find that the capacitance loading of a crystal can be either parallel or series coupled depending the type of oscillator circuit used in the transmitter. My Viking Adventurer transmitter must then have a different amount of capacitance loading of the crystal in the oscillator. Note to self: Leave the desired crystal frequency about 1.5 to 1.7 KHz lower if the new crystal is to be used in my Adventurer. HI

I wanted to see just how far you can move an original crystal up in frequency. I had a surplus FT-243 type crystal that was originally on 6525 KHz. So, could I grind it up to the 40 meter band and still have it oscillate and function normally. The first day I did multiple grinds and moved it to 6657 KHz. The second day I did some more grinding and it climbed to 6780 KHz and was still oscillating. WOW, that is over 250 KHz!

Finally, I took this X-CHECKer and supplies to visit Ted, K8AQM and show him what I was doing. Ted, suggested we try using a pencil to lower the frequency of the crystal and learn how far to can lower the frequency of a given FT-243 type crystal blank. We found after few tries of different ways to pencil the surface of the quartz blank that it appears you can only low the original frequency by about 50 Hz. Not really a big change in frequency. Oh, we did try a "Sharpe" marker but it did not change the frequency at all.

To learn more about the QRPme X-CHECKer kit -
Please see: <http://qrpme.com/?p=product&id=Q17>

Check out the links on that page and take a look at the video links as well. It is all very interesting. I do plan more experimenting and testing. I still have a lot to learn about crystals for vintage transmitters. If you know more about this subject, please share your info with the SKCC members by posting to the group or writing an article for the "Rag Chew."

As Jeff and I learned, a pencil "could" alter a crystal frequency but very little. We tried "more" lead and found that technique stopped the crystal from oscillating entirely! So much for the pencil theory!

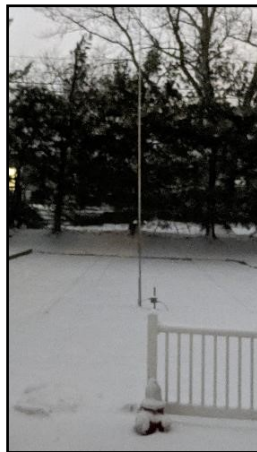
The X-CHECKER kit worked "raising a crystal's frequency, we haven't discovered a technique (yet) for lowering a crystal's frequency by more than 50 Hz!

73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM

February WES



Another great boat anchor WES. Only able to work Sunday, gave out some bonus points and got a few in return. Rig was a Heathkit SB 300, SB 400 and SB 610 scope. Antenna was a Carolina windom up abt. 40 feet. Sorry but no tubes for the tuner. Thanks to all that take part in these events and the folks that give their time to make this club stand out from all the rest. 73, Frank AA2XB



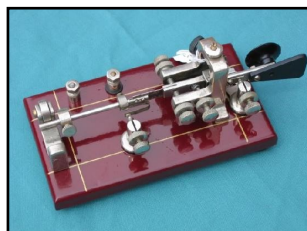
80 meters was THE band this weekend. The last few hours Sunday evening were really busy. The snow static wasn't helpful, but the Omni VII's DSP functions helped pull everyone through. 73, Gary AF8A



I enjoyed the WES. Only contacted a couple boat anchor stations, but that's OK. I was using my new-to-me bug. It has been quite a while since I used one. I'm not completely happy with my fist, but bought the bug so I can work on it. People seemed to be copying me OK. I suppose I'll have to get a sideswiper next so I can work on the TKA. Always nice to work a few stations for the first time. 73,



Very nice WES, many new numbers and new T. Very good WES with two good periods of traffic in the afternoon in France and therefore in the morning in the USA. Thank you all for the QSO and soon, I will also be able to traffic the 40 m. see you next month for the Brag bonus and the WES. 73, Bob F6EJN



Good time: 5.5 hours on Saturday with my Heathkit station: DX-60/HG-10b VFO & HR-10 = 13 tubes (if you are counting, VR tube in vfo replaced by zener diode ;-). The HR-10 rcvr got a lot of help from my NESCAF audio filter!! I also went back to paper logging which made good copy a greater priority! Between working to keep the rcvr and xmtr on similar frequencies, manual T/R switching, listening to the wide receiver that hears sigs on both sides of the carrier, and trying to write in the log, it was a fun challenge... [Shouldn't I get a bonus for that?? ;-)] 73, Jim AF3Z



I was only able to be active on Sunday, but I had fun as usual. Thank you to everyone for the QSOs and see you next month. 73 Bert F6HKA

Conditions poor here and we had a storm raging over the weekend. Did not hear any EU stations at all. Rig TS-440s, 100 watts, vertical ant, Marconi PS No213A pump key. Picture is a Standard Radio Co bug WW2. 73, John GORDO



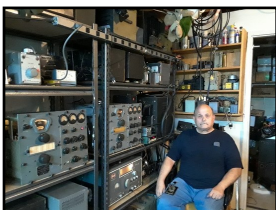
Wow, what a WES! Big story for me was my newly installed 20m loop antenna. I haven't been happy for a long time with my 20m QSO total using my 20m dipole at 35 feet. This new loop antenna seemed to have solved the problem. I made 130 QSOs on 20m with the loop, and worked many 7th area call signs that I never used to work. Loop was purposely made to be bi-directional in the NW/SE directions. It works surprisingly well in the other directions too, only used the dipole for a couple of contacts. Only made 45 QSOs last month on 20m, and 79 the month before. Never worked North Dakota in previous contests, but worked ND 3 times in this one! Working 40m was very tough.... RTTY QRM most of the WES, some windows of operation between 11AM and 1PM local time. Moved up to 7.110 to 7.122 to make a few QSOs.

I cleared out my cQSL inbox before the contest, now it's jammed packed again, more work. Photo shows 20m loop. A little hard to see... home-made balun in middle of bottom horizontal wire around 4 feet off ground. Coax lying on ground near cut birch tree. But... the best part of the contest is looking at F6EJN's cat. I asked him if I could have it, but he said no. (can't blame him for that). Thanks for all the QSOs! 73, Bob AC1GF

February WES II



Great fun to fire up my HW100 and give away some bonus points. I think the boat anchor WES is my favourite. There didn't seem to be as many tube radios on the air this time and I only received two bonus points myself. 73, Peter GM0EUL



Great WES – I'm glad it was held in the winter this year! In the photo on the middle shelf are my WW II Navy RBB and RBC receivers. The B&W 5100 transmitter is below the RBC receiver. I gave out a bonus of 38, but there were really over 50 tubes glowing all through the weekend to keep the shack toasty – The RBB covers 80M and the RBC covers 40M and 20M; only one was in use at any given time, but both were “cooking”. I used my J-38 key for the event. 73, Mark K3MSB



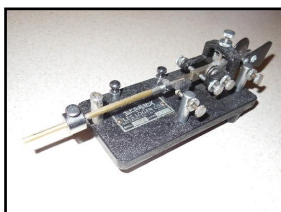
I always enjoy the BA WES. This time I used a Kenwood T599D and Drake R4C. TX has 3 tubes RX had 6 but 1 was replaced with upgrade sub, so gave out 8 bonus points. RTTY caused havoc on 40M 20M was dead here a lot of the time. My antenna was Hustler 5BTV Key was a 1942 Lightning bug instead of the later model Original shown in the rig picture. 73, Joe K0IVK



Ever wonder what an ant out in the middle of a busy dance floor feels like? Use QRPP CW during a popular RTTY Contest and you will probably come close to knowing that. Always nice to be heard by Bert-F6HKA and Bob-F6EJN, especially when I'm running QRPP! KX3 @ 1W - 40m Dipole - 20m Beam. 73, Jody K3JZD



Enjoyed the boatanchor theme, but didn't hear many. Only 4 stations out of the 28 that I worked had tubes. My rig for this time around was a Drake TR4 (which did a nice job of keeping the shack warm). Key was a 1948 Vibroplex Original Deluxe. See you all again next month. 73, Noel K8NB



RTTY drove us to the upper 40 meter band where I did fairly well. 20 meters was a looser this month. 80 meters bailed us out in the end. I used a SPEEDEX Les Logan bug for this WES. See it's picture below. It is set up for 7 to 13 words per minute, the action is not quite as nice as my Vibrolex bugs but it does ok in a pileup. 73, Bob K3CKO



A frustrating WES to say the least. Had unexpected overnight company on Saturday, leaving only Sunday afternoon for WES. Then band conditions were kind of weird, with several stations simply disappearing in the middle of our QSO. And finally, there were the RTTY mavens, who cast their wide footprints all over the spectrum, seemingly without regard for anyone else's signals (especially problematic for those of us running crystal-controlled stations). Still, it was fun to fire up the boat-anchors, feel the warmth of their glowing tubes in my chilly basement, and hear the sweet chirp of their CW voices. Looking forward to the next one. 73, Frank K8FAC



I think I had about a total of twelve hours to play, this month, half on each day. Plenty of fun! I actually worked John in OZ, VK4SSN, with my 5W, Saturday afternoon! whoa! And that's long-path. I also worked two of my old QRP Barbershop buddies, K1ESE and W5ESE. My setup was an Elecraft K2 at 5W to a 20m EDZ up 50'. Here are a couple of our doggos. 73, Lloyd K3ESE



One must have patience WORKING out of Idaho especially with a poor antenna...I will be more prepared next month. 73, Tom K7ROH

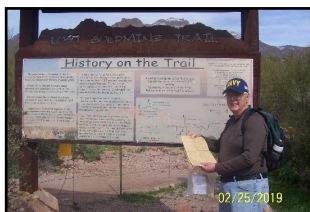
February WES III



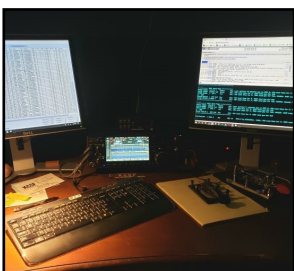
I had a lot of fun during this WES. The HR-10 RX arrived just two days before the WES, and was not hearing very well at first. Got that fixed and then the WITS original design TX had very low output at first. Got that fixed and was back around 4 watts output. Still need to do more work on that. There is something I still find amazing about "Boat Anchor Gear"! There will always be vintage gear at my station. Thanks to everyone for the QSO's and Thanks to all those SPECIAL stations with TUBES. Maybe, you will find a Tube TX or RX to use in next years "Boat Anchor" WES or like me almost everyday! 73 and Keep Having FUN! de Jeff K9JP 3008S



One of my favorite events. Not many other boat anchors received on this end but always fun. Ran my DX-60B along with the HG-10B VFO and a Drake 2A with some help from the Heathkit QF-1 Q multiplier. The bug was a Vibroplex Champion. Thanks to all that worked me and 73, Joe KD2JC



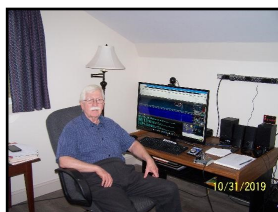
Portable Snowbird operations from Mesa, Az. 20 meters only using a modified Gotham vertical mounted on side of car port to a TS530 and J-38 key. 20 meters was active with QSB. 73, Daryl K9QEW



Nice to have the old Novice section of 40m for refuge during the RTTY contest! 80m and 20m also fun, but only one 15m QSO. As usual, only Saturday available for WES, but more time than usual made it even better. (And WB0SND with 53 tubes - wow!) 73, Steve KC5F



Limited time for this event. Still very enjoyable for the time. Looking forward to the next one. 73, jack, KK0I



Not very good results this month. Thanks for the QSOs. 73, Dave KB1WOD



Only had time to participate on Sunday. But it was a good opportunity to give my new Yaesu 991 a workout. It was up to the task, and it was nice to see some good activity on 20 meters during the afternoon. Thanks everyone for the contacts. 73, Warren KC9IL



Old meets new. Kenwood TS-530S and solid state amp OCF inverted V at 30 feet. Loads of fun. Lots of stations on. 73, Al KS9KCC

QSO stats: 8 on 21MHz (NIL in the others...)TA33 - 50W - Homemade DSK (aka Sideswiper) and a German SK Firma Radio Richter (clone of the Baumuster LT1). As always a great time... Thank you everyone for the QSOs BCNU 73, Walt LW3EX -- ZUT



Thank you everyone that made this WES so much fun. I will be looking forward to the next one!! 73, Eric KB3NSK



Always enjoy the Boat Anchor WES, it gives me a reason to keep the Knight T60 and Heathkit HR-10B operational. Recent crystal grinding has resulted in enough TX frequencies to be somewhat flexible on three bands. 73, Roy KD1RT

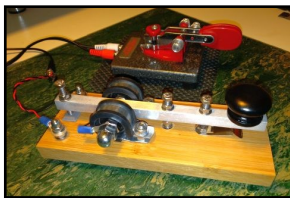


Conditions not the best and then RTTY interference made it even tougher. Thanks to all who worked me. CU next time. 73, Russ KK4WX

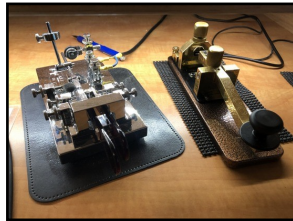
February WES IV



This is always my favorite WES theme: Boatanchors!! All my gear is from yesteryear, so this is fun for me. Boatanchor WES is the only time that I can get a pileup waiting to work me. 22 tubes. This time, I was running my Heathkit SB-101 (20 tubes) + an SB-640 external LMO (2 tubes). About 100 watts out, fan dipole antenna, and Navy flameproof straight key. 40m was good, but too bad about the digi stations around 7.050. Fortunately, many of us moved above 7.100 and carried on. 80m was just on fire Saturday and Sunday. I even had a QSO with WB0B (Larry 8753) from IA in broad daylight Sunday morning. I also got a new country for me, FG8NY Guadalupe (Jean 9424). 73, Steve KE4OH



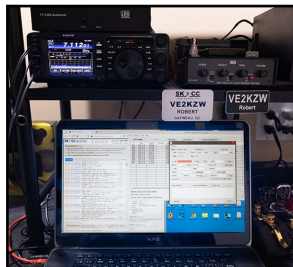
My first WES with a new homebrew straight key. Many thanks to all and 73 de Sam, OH2MGA



First WES participation for me in a long time but it was fun to catch the boat anchor captains as their signals drifted slowly by. Hihi 73, Larry N1FG



Saturday, bands here were Great but not as good Sunday morning, but improved thruout the day. Thanks everyone for another fun weekend. 73, Randy N8KQ



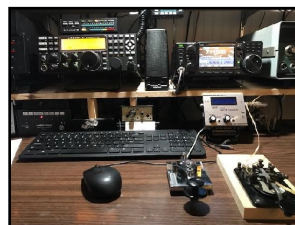
That was fun, my first WES as Tribune. QRM was more of an issue than QRN or QSB. Confidence is building up and it makes the whole experience much more enjoyable. I include a photo, a view from the driver seat; next one will have more light on the black equipment. 73, Robert VE2KZW



Always my favorite theme! Thanks for the fun. 73, Doug N3PDT



Saturday, bands here were Great but not as good Sunday morning, but improved thruout the day. Thanks everyone for another fun weekend. 73,



I was all set to use my Drake R-4A/T-4XB with 22 tubes but when I tuned up on 40M Friday night I only got about 40-50 watts out. So looks like finals are going and I had no extra set of 6JB6 tubes! Ended up using my Elecraft K3 at 100 watts with a Bencher RJ-2 key on Saturday and my Icom IC-7300 at 100 watts with a J38 on Sunday. Antennas used were an 80-6 OCF dipole at 30' and a 5 band 10-20 2 element Quad at 40. Had fun a anyway! Ordered a set of finals today so maybe next year I'll have those 22 tubes on WES! 73, Bill NZ0T



What can you say about RTTY ? grrrrrrrr ! Operating at 1 watt will keep you humble :-). Many SKCC ops have great ears and patience. Thanks for digging out my pea shooter KX3 at 1 Watt with a Vertical. 72/73 de



TNX 2 all for putting up with my qqqQRS fist and slow copy speed. SRI for so many & often "?? & agn pls" !!! I know I slowed many of you ops down. TNX! 73, Steve NQ8T

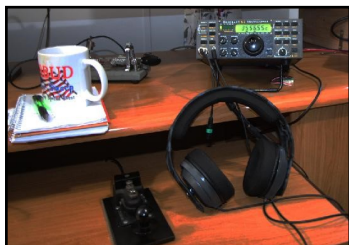


Thanks to all for a good weekend - special thanks to the 'boat-anchor' stations. Zero tubes here- tho' the Vibroplex in the pic, which I have owned since 1956, has keyed a lot of tube rigs! Part of the shack was tidier than usual for a new pic. 73, Ben VE1AHX

February WES V



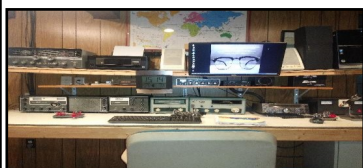
Limited time this weekend, so I was in and out. Conditions didn't seem bad, and 80m was quite good at night. Since there were no multipliers for the bonus points, it didn't seem like there was a big incentive to chase the boatanchor guys. But it was definitely a good time of year for that theme. Thanks to all. 73, John W1TAG



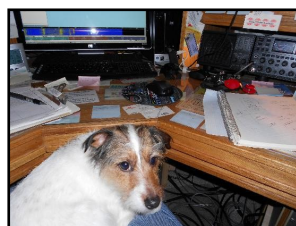
Many tnx fer the Q's on my new K2 5w delta loop antenna all bands up 65 feet true ladder line c all of u in the next SKCC/ WES. 73 Bud, W8BUD



Always enjoy using my boat anchors. Indeed, I almost always use the in the WES regardless of the bonus month. This month, I used the Collins 75A-4 RX and KWS-1 TX for a total of 53 tubes. Conditions overall were not good. 40 was useless due to the contest. So, my QSO count was way down from most weekends. Thanks to everyone and looking forward to next time. 73, Mike WB0SND



My first WES in a while. I tried out my new QRP rig. Worked only 20M for about 2 hours near the end of the event. Worked mostly western USA stations. 73, Dan W3DF



Limited operating time, but had fun anyway. QRM was horrific from RTTY stations in RTTY WPX contest. 73, Jack W9GT

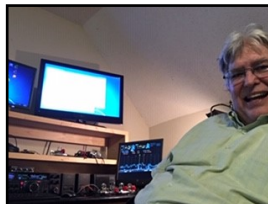


Only on for about 30 min. Friend from the UK over to visit the "colonies" so time limited. It was fun even if very short for me. My 2 tubes came from the SB200 amplifier. 73, Les WB5JWI



Limited time to operate, but was still a blast! WES is always a fun event. 73, Jeff WN1MB

Had a ball using the Heath HW16 and the Drake 2nt/2c rigs for the Boat Anchor theme. 73, Dan WB8JAY



Propagation was not the best into Oklahoma and the RTTY contest destroyed 40m, but still had fun. Thanks to all who participated, 73, Dan W5BM



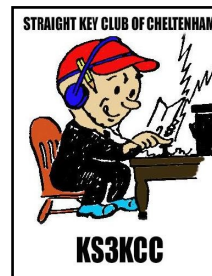
Had some extra time this weekend so set my sights on making 75 contacts, but I did 100. Certainly my best WES to date. Band condx here fairly good. Ran 75 watts from my TS-590SG into an HF6V Vertical (elevated) using a Kent KT-1 Straight Key. Thanks to all for a fun weekend. 73, Curt WA2JSG 3018S



Thanks everyone for the activity this weekend! It was fun to operate some boat anchors despite the QRM from RTTY. 73, Chris WB2VVV



Lots of fun and new stations in the log. Thanks to everyone that worked me. Straight key the whole time. 73, Terry W7AMI



Not much tie this weekend as most of it spent at the Orlando Hamcation. Good to see everyone at the SKCC booth and made the picture on Saturday. I am the one in the front row with the cast and sling on my our arm. Great to meet Ted from the Dit Dah Gang KS8KCC and our club KS3KCC. We only need 3 more call areas to get club stations and we will have KSXKCC in all call areas.....Lets get it done and maybe we can have an award for worked all KSXKCC club stations. 73, DE Greg WA3GM / DAH KS3KCC

Who Are We?

Just for something different, for my latest acquisition, club call sign VK4SSN, I thought I might try to ascend to the lofty heights of “Centurion” employing only VK call signs in my application. After all, with 167 VK members, it should be a snap, right?

Wrong! As you will see below, there are more potholes than pavement along that road...

28% had no published email address on QRZ.com

21% suffer from what I term “CFRB Syndrome” (Cannot Find Reply Button)

5% had no rigs (or antennas – pick one)

3% had no licence

2% were overseas, including one “rounding the cape” on his sailboat

1% did not know CW, and were unlikely to learn it any time soon

1% were “too busy”

1% were “too ill”

Wow! 62% attrition before the first press on the key. OK, so maybe this does not qualify as one of my better ideas. I had heard rumors that some folks were joining SKCC solely so their friends could find them on-air via <http://rbn.telegraphy.de/> . In fact, one of my mugging victims confirmed this, but went on to give me a QSO. Do you suppose it is our exorbitant dues that keep the real die-hards out?

73, John VK4TJ

Ambient Noise

In 1960, 61 and 62 while my fellow students were chasing girls and cruising in their cars on weekends, me and the rest of the Saturday Knights of the Roundtable were holding forth on 40 meter AM on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. Our roundtable AM rag chews (yes we actually used microphones way back then) usually started right after supper and continued late into the night, frequently into the early morning hours.

All of the “knights” were within the city limits of Dallas, TX, though we often had folks from around the country break in and join the conversations, usually after 2200 hours local time. Most everyone was running 50 to 120W to verticals and dipoles, using Viking Rangers, Viking 2’s, Globe scout’s and the like.

The point of this nostalgia is this; Communication was easy. Ambient noise, even in the city was so low that it was never mentioned, not even noticed. I do not remember any ambient noise on 80 or 40 meters as a novice or a general. Fast forward sixty years later (where did the time go?), whether I’m in the city or in the country on our ranch and away from typical rfi in population dense Dallas, the typical ambient noise level is S8 to S9 day and night. Last year, a few of the “knights” met for a 40M Saturday evening rag chew using state of the art equipment, much better antennas than we had 60 years ago, and amps, now time using SSB of course. This time, unlike our fond memories of the early 60s, communication was NOT easy due to high ambient QRN. We were a little farther apart, but only by a few miles; all still in the north east corner of Dallas county.

Not only are we missing sunspots, we now have an ever present ambient noise level which now certainly includes more manmade RFI than we had 60 years ago. I am curious- what are other’s observations on ambient noise. Especially those you’ve been cluttering up the airwaves as long as I have or longer. What was the level of noise when you first got on the air? What are you experiencing now?

If anyone is so moved, shoot me an email and share your experience. K5ZOL@arrl.net.

Tnx es 73, Bob K5ZOL

Orlando Hamcation 2020

This tale begins at the Orlando, Florida Hamcation in 2019, when Ken (N8KR) and I were chatting and I said “The SKCC Booth is at Dayton each year, But never here at Orlando, the second largest Hamfest in the states. We should have a booth here next year.” and Ken replied “ Yes, YOU should !”

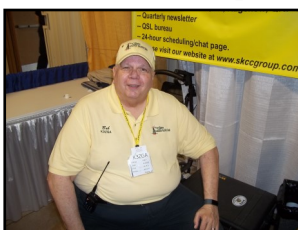
With that, we opened the SKCC booth for the first time at Hamcation 2020 held on February 7,8,& 9. Our booth (#021) was in a prime location in the commercial building amongst Kenwood, Yaesu, Icom, Elecraft, Ham Radio Outlet, 1010, QCWA, Cushcraft, etc.

I anticipated possibly 25 or 30 members to sign into our visitors’ log, but we registered almost 100 members visiting us through the weekend!

With the help of Ted-K8AQM and Jeremy- KD8VSQ who flew in from Michigan for the weekend, Ken-N8KR, Josh-W9HT, Bob-K3ZGA, Tom-NV1U, John-KK4ITX, Chuck-K9IA, Stan-W9JX, the SKCC was well represented throughout the weekend!



Ken N8KR and Rich W4RQ



“Bob” from the Villages



Lots of us!



Wonderful Barb...aka “Phil”

John-KK4ITX wrote:

“I spent 3hrs at the SKCC booth at Hamcation (Orlando, FL) today and I was rewarded with a very busy and enjoyable time, interesting conversations and great booth partners too. We had an interesting variety of nationalities passing through and stopping for a chat, UK, Germany and Brazilian that I know of plus many “Snowbirds” from VE land and of course the US. The display of various keys, a SK, Sideswiper, Bug and a ‘cutting-edge technology kitchen knife key’ complete with a device to sharpen your skills !! All of the keys were hooked up to oscillators so kids (old and young) could try them out..... kinda like the “Ring for Service” bells that you just have to try! A real magnet for sure, Mike-K8NS lent us his home brewed kitchen knife Cootie key, which became a star attraction, and source for some good natured kidding, we referred to it as our “Cutting edge keying Technology”, and several other sharp remarks! Mike spent some quality time with us although he was busy with his own annual spot outdoors in the massive tailgate flea market.”

We had many folks stop by who were not yet members, giving us the opportunity to introduce them to the SKCC and explain who we are, and what we love to do. Many walked away with our SKCC hand-out information cards, I won’t be surprised to see a surge of new members as a result of our weekend in Orlando.

As at Dayton (Xenia), our booth was the spot for members to stop by, sit a spell, and chat. Many interesting tales were told and a good time was had. It was a very positive experience and exposure for SKCC !

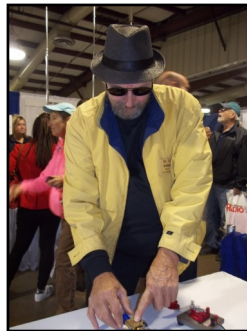
We’ll be back next year, our reservation for booth #021 is already submitted.

73,
Rich-W4RQ

Hamcation 2020 Scenes



"Cutting edge technology" cootie designed by Mike K8NS. This cootie will also "sharpen" your skills, I'm sure you get the "point."



Mike K8NS showing us how it's done... why does Mike look like a "mafia" hit man...you should see him use the knife...er, cootie!



The vertical "cutting edge technology" cootie, also designed by Mike K8NS.



One of our many happy SKCC check-ins.



More "satisfied" SKCC check-ins



The booth was a hit and especially the extra chairs used to rest!



Not only did we do check-ins of members, we did a lot of explaining "SKCC" to the curious.



Three group pictures were taken to accommodate late comers and two different days.

There is no doubt, the first SKCC booth at Hamcation was a great success and hopefully the first of many great years at Hamcation.



Check One Off the Bucketlist!

I'm a lucky guy; I only live two and a half hours from Dayton. I have been able to attend Dayton Hamvention for over 35 years, I have attended the Tokyo Hamfest while living in Japan for a year (missed Dayton that year!) and I've been to the DX Convention in California ... but the Orlando Hamcation was on my bucketlist. This year I had the chance to attend Hamcation and sit with the gang at the SKCC booth and meet many of the fellow SKCCers I've had QSOs with.

When you live in Michigan and have the chance to "escape" a week of February weather and travel to 75 degrees to sunny blue skies...you do it! Jeremy, KD8VSQ and I made the flight to Orlando...it was 20 degrees and snowing in Detroit when we left and 76 and sunny two and a half hours later when we arrived in Orlando..."cool!"...well, not really, just wonderful!

"Hamcation" is the second largest hamfest in the United States, second only to Dayton and it lived up to its reputation...24,000 hams in attendance, all the major manufacturers, most dealers, and an extremely large flea market. Here are just some of the pictures of manufacturers and the setup in "Hamcation":



Elecraft was always crowded



Checkout the insulated tower!



Keys, keys, keys....



Lots of vendors and promoters



Long rows to checkout



Many side halls for vendors

Just incase you're thinking, "Gee, doesn't look too crowded at all"... wrong! These pictures were taken about one hour before the hamfest closed, otherwise you never would have seen the booths, just a sea of hams!

But there was plenty more to see in the "Swap" building which was the "indoor" part of the flea market...a very big place! Check out the photos here and again remember this was just before closing and many "sellers" had packed up and hit the road.



Great building and great room for sellers...



So you walk out of the “indoor flea market” and right to the most wonderful food and they provide an ATM so you can tap into more cash to spend in the “outdoor flea market which is even bigger!”

I didn't take any good pictures in the outdoor flea market as I spent time sitting, BS-ing and enjoying a cigar with my good friend Mike K8NS. We had a great time and it was interesting watching and listening to Mike and his good friend (next site) joke and squabble like two old friends do.

Yup, I think “Hamvention” was a good “bucketlist” accomplished. Next on the list for hamfests is “Friedrichshafen,” in Germany (2021), which is Europe's largest and best known hamfest. My hope is to get Bert F6HKA, Joerg DL9YCS, Leon OS0S and others to setup an SKCC booth with the blessings of the SKCC Board.

Many thanks to Jeremy KD8VSQ as my traveling buddy, Rich W4RQ SKCC booth manager and all the great SKCCers I met there at “Hamcation.”

73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM



Ahhh!!.....de Pete NM5PS



Early morning-late night DXing and rag chewing!



The need for coffee after chasing K3Y stations!

Ouch! I Got Bit by an Old Bug!



How the "jankey, dirty old key" arrived...ugh!

As I was perusing "flea bay" one day and I got bitten by a McElroy P-500 Bug. It was jankey, dirty, old and missing pieces but was going pretty cheap. It was kinda like when you're walking thru the mall and the pet shop puts the cute little puppies out to coerce people to buy them and take them home, know what I mean? Well no one else bid on it so I got it pretty cheap. Had to explain all this to the YL also.



Dirty, old and "jankey."



All cleaned and "new" parts attached now back to cleaning, repairing and practicing.

Then comes the cleaning and repair. I got in touch with Ted (your editor, K8AQM) and he sent me some parts. Then I sent an e-mail and a Pay-ur-Pal to W0EB for a dot stabilizer. That is how I treated my Bug bite,



W0EB dit stabilizer added and weights. ..dang thing is fast...or maybe I'm slow?

I have never owned a semi-automatic key before so the learning curve will be sharp but hope to catch you on the air sometime ... (a week or so passes)

Well I have been itching my bug bite some over the last week or so and the swelling and inflammation has increased. It took a lot of weights to get the beast to slow down to a manageable rate of speed. (see Photos) I have improved more than I thought I would. Staying in the old novice sub-band around 7.115 MHz I have managed a few Q's and to my surprise people could actually copy me. Now have decided to get at least 100 contacts for my TKA and then I'll get back to my cootie which is by far my favorite keying method. I'll put a couple Pics on my QRZ page for posterity. Having more fun than the law should allow.

73,

Kelly AE5II #15292S

January Brag 2020



I always enjoy being a K3Y operator. Propagation wasn't the best but made some contacts, even though I use only a mobile antenna. Was wishing for more on the higher bands. Got my new call this month. Relinquished my Dad's call because my daughter is studying for her Technician ticket and I want her to be third-generation W1LIC. 73, Wes AA4XU



Had no time to commit to K3Y, so this score is non-competitive by any standard. So, I dedicated my limited air time to helping others achieve their personal award goals while at the same time trying to emphasize the virtues of the Cootie key.. my key of choice (see my inventory of the various Torsion Bar models offered by W1SFR).. Pse see my QRZ Bio for more info 73,



Another fantastic K3Y event in the books. It was great to catch older members that I hadn't gotten in my log, not to mention the new ones also. I had a great time and hope everyone else did also. 73, jack..KK0I



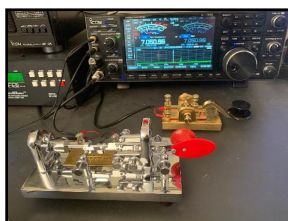
A great boost in count due to K3Y. 73, Ron AC2C



Made it to the cottage/hamshack often during January and one of my better showings in the K3Y. Still haven't been able to do the full sweep. Missed /oc, /as and /af this year. Had fun though. Thanks to all. 73, Randy K8ZAA



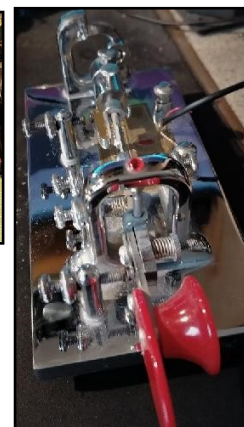
Excellent month! Made a lot of progress on my Sx5 quest and had great fun with the K3Y event. Thanks for all the contacts. 73, Dave KB1WOD



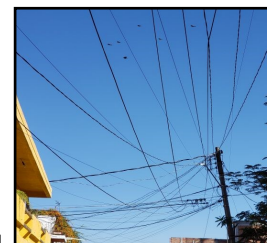
Lots of fun as usual. Going to try and up the effort for February and also get passable with the new cootie. 73, Chris N0CC



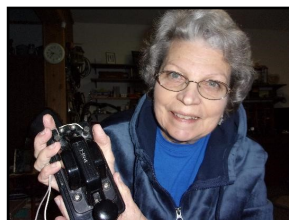
"Thank you" to all "K3Y" operators & SKCC staff for a great 2020 event. Ice storms were the challenge in No West Mo..every weekend. This year makes the 11th anniversary and they just keep getting better. Very enjoyable to hear old friends as well as all the new op's. When I was a teenager I visited an operator that invited me to use the Vibroplex on the desk. It happened to be a "Blue Racer" "now when ops stop by I can extend the same invitation. 73 es TU to all....Rick K0KEX FYI I was licensed in 1957.



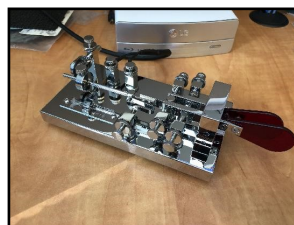
January was again a month with lots of stations. Easy to work the bonus station this brag! 73 es lets hope condx will come up again Joerg DL9YCS



An odd month for me, as I was unable to operate for over half of the month, being out of the country. I missed a lot of K3Y and daily brag operating, and had to delay my "S Quest". The photo is outside of one place I stayed, so I imagine the QRN would have been horrible, anyway, even if reciprocal operating had been an option. 73, Steve KC5F



K3Y qso's 30 and did some of my first DX during this event. Thank you. 73, Virginia KC5SAM



K3Y is my favorite SKCC event and I look forward to it for 11 months each year! Hi. Thank you to the organizers, coordinators, operators and all participants! (Especially those who put up with my pitiful bug fist!) 73, Larry N1FG

January Brag II



Iffy conditions. K3Y keep it the CW bands jumping. Much fun. Broke-in my new Side-swiper. Very smooth action and excellent workmanship. 5 Stars. 73 de AL N4ow



Thanks to all who plans this event. Fun! I had 192 QSO's as K3Y/8. Appreciate all who called me. 73, Rick N8XI



Thanks to all the coordinators for another great K3Y Anniversary event! 73, Rich W4RQ



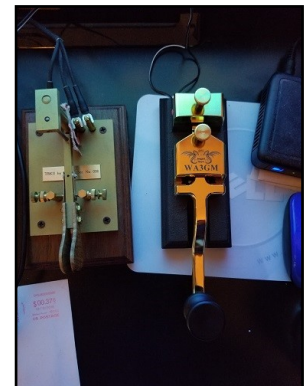
Quite a month! A fun month, I was an operator in the K3Y event, completed Tx8 and WAS=T. 73, Gene W9KMK



Wow, I broke my personal record on this one! My best month ever! I ran 75 watts all month from my Kenwood TS-590SG into an elevated HF6V vertical using my Kent SK. This key and radio are a dream to use together. Many thanks to all who gave me a contact. Now to relax! 73, Curt WA2JSG



Operating as K3Y/OC sure helped the brag results. Another enjoyable month, but even with poor band conditions and not a lot of time for radio, I still managed a healthy 77 brags! I was using the Begalia HST MkII in sideswiper mode. I managed to work quite a few towards my Triple Key Award and only need 16 more QSOs on the cootie to be eligible for the award. Thanks to all who worked me, 73 from Tasmania, Steve VK7CW # 10820S



This has to be my best month ever!!!! I worked a lot of days as a K3Y station so that helps the qso count. In FL now until the March 30th so mostly QRP here. C U all in the spring. 73, Greg wa3gm / Dah ks3kcc



This will probably be a record month for Brag scores. Did anyone NOT work F6HKA? Anyway, the K3Y event did bring out a lot of folks. Thanks to a number of them for their patience in digging out the less-massive signals. Keep up the activity, gang, it is appreciated. 73, John W1TAG



A really great month. Got the K3Y sweep except for / AF and the bands just didn't work that way. Worked a lot of new members. Missed about half the month and still got 47 QSOs. REALLY had a great time. 73, Les WB5JWI

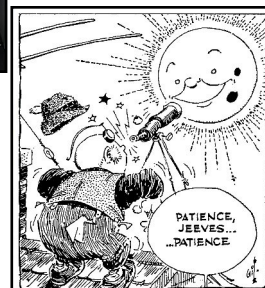
January Brag III



I had major reconstruction surgery of my right hand and wrist in late December 2019. Thus, my right hand was in a cast all of January 2020. I learned to operate my straight key (WWII Flame-proof Signal Key) with my left hand. It was quite the experience operating as K3Y/0 during the January special event. I even made my S)enator - Yay! I am SO happy with how the K3Y/0 team made me feel welcome and that goes for all of the SKCC membership. It was great to meet new operators, and to reconnect with friends all over the world. Thank you, everyone! Oh, I also have a new radio which made operation MUCH better. It is an Icom IC-7610. 73, Tomas NW7US



January 2020 has been my best CW month so far. Although I missed the SSS on the 1st (family had the priority), I made up for it with WES and a few other sessions. My quest for "T" and the K3Y event were strong incentives. I was promoted to the Tribune level on the 26th, just as I was part of a team for WFD, a great excuse to celebrate. Thanks to you for your patience when my hand is not as steady as it should be; it is great to be part of this fine community. 73, Robert VE2KZW



Some Guys Have All the Luck!

Had a lady advertise ham equipment \$20 last weekend, stopped by and took a quick look, didn't see very much. Looked to be quite a few connectors, etc gave her 20 and brought everything home. These 3 keys plus some other items.

73, Ian KN4TBG



Memories of “Days of Yore”

“If you know someone who dreams of a time long ago, when knights roamed the countryside and engaged in daring and romantic quests, you could say that person longs for “days of yore.” Yore, meaning “a time long ago,” is used in the same manner as yesteryear, days gone by, and olden times.”

I come from the 1960’s era of amateur radio and often get nostalgic reading or hearing about those inspiring tales of operating as I was “discovering” in my adventures into amateur radio. If you’re a “newbie” and don’t know about crystal controlled frequencies, lamp cord for feedline and separate receive and transmitter units then you might want to skip this article...but if the smell of tubes, the Radio Amateur’s Flying Horse Callbook and building Heathkits bring a smile to your face then you just might enjoy reading on!

Back in January there was a thread on the reflector that included a couple of comments from Joe, V31JP/K8JP that brought a smile to my face. The thread had to do with memories from the early days of Joe’s beginnings in amateur radio. I wrote to Joe and we chatted about “days of yore.” Here are a couple of the original threads and Joe’s comment on them.

Re: OTA Etiquette

From: [Joe V31JP](#)

Date: Tue, 21 Jan 2020 19:39:39 PST

Yes, keeping your call (K8HKM then) and use a VFO. That was way before incentive licensing, so you got all privileges. In fact, in 1968 or 69 when I went for my Extra, I guess it was just because it was there. Not long after, they put incentive licensing in place, so I only had to worry about band edges or mode sub bands. I got lucky so when they allowed preferred call requests, I was in the first group and got my K8JP. I ran into Dave, K1ZZ, at an ARRL Hamfest in Grand Rapids, MI and he had the latest list of preferred calls available. Dang, K8JP was checked off(We did not know, it was checked off because it was going to me.

*I had very few Hallicrafters, mostly National, Heath and Yaesu rigs. One of my Elmers, Francis, W8THZ, had an SX-71 and it was a sweet radio. I think it was the only commercial gear he owned. The rest of his gear was home brewed including his VFO with a National radio dial. Ah, the smell of solder rosin of the old days.
73, Joe, K8JP/K5*

3a Old Time Radios

From: [Joe V31JP](#)

Date: Tue, 21 Jan 2020 17:28:56 PST

It was the Meissner Signal Shifter, 1943 or WW II ARRL Handbook. RME & E. F. Johnson may have made VFOs, but mind you, this was WW II and radio silence was observed except for emergency use.

I only have the 1943 Handbook up here in Texas. In 1957 as a Novice, I had to be crystal controlled. When I got my General ticket in the spring of 1958, I acquired a used Heath VF-1. For Christmas of '59, my folks bought me the Knight V-44 kit. Because I built it non-stop, my Mom said that was the last kit they would buy me. It took all of one weekend and worked right off.

The DX-20 I built, but the DX-35 or DX-40 I bought used. I soon built a 6L6 push-pull plate modulator for it from scratch. I only had a black wrinkle steel chassis to build it on. Drilling & punching that steel chassis was the hardest part, but it was sweet sounding on AM.

SSB was coming into use, but as a high school kid, I could only afford a Command set ARC-5 for 40 meters that I converted to double side band. After the service, about 1966, I got a SSB rig, still separate receiver and transmitter.

Oh, the history and memories.

73, Joe, K8JP/K5

The response I got from Joe is well worth the read...and Joe, I am holding you to the idea that you'll write more "tales of yore and pass them along for publishing in "The Rag Chew!"

GM, Ted.

Ha, ha! I am still working on CW operating hints & kinks, but I just bought another mini lathe as mine is still in Belize and I hate my hands being idle. So, I am working on tooling it up and maybe being able to make some key parts.

As I kept typing that bit, other memories kept popping into my mind and I wasn't drinking. Well, I did have an Irish Cream that embraced a bit of gold rum before I went to sleep.

I still remember my first 40 meter crystal frequency, 7167. My first antenna sucked, but I learned and cut enough grass, ...er "lawns," to afford some coax to replace my 75 Ohm twin lead. One of my Elmers had a Radio & TV repair shop (remember them?) across from my Junior High school. I kept in touch with Ben, W8VPC, until he moved to Texas to be by one of his daughters and then passed away just a few years back. Ben stocked a few parts for hams there, also.

I started the story and will work on it in between my setting up for the lathe. This damned blurry vision issue slows me down a bit.

73, Joe, K8JP/K5

Have another Bailey's Joe and a bit of that golden rum...but keep writing! And for all of you "old guys" like Joe and me, please consider sharing some of your "days of yore" stories so that the younger ops can read about all the fun we had!

73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM



And who was your Elmer?



WA2JSG

Trying out my luck today with QRP using an L&R 40-20-10 meter end fed wire. 73, Curt WA2JSG

February SKSE

Overall results

Rank	Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
1	F6HKA	Bert	6069S	FRA	28	20	12/8/2	830
2	AC1GF	Bob	19399S	NH	23	19	9/6/1	637
3	F5DE	Bernard	6247S	FRA	20	17	8/7/0	530
4	K9LI	Don	19153T	IN	14	10	7/5/0	295
5	K3WW	Chas	14962S	PA	12	10	5/5/0	245
6	YU7AE	Kare	5790T	SER	10	7	5/2/0	165
7	ON7DQ	Luc	14984T	BEL	10	7	4/2/1	155
8	WU1V	Rick	9293S	MA	9	7	4/3/0	153
9	W2RAN	Randy	1050S	NH	8	8	3/3/0	139
10	WB2VVV	Chris	14078	RI	9	8	2/1/1	117
11	W0KFG	Richard	16863T	MN	7	6	3/2/0	107
12	WK2S	Art	9434S	NJ	6	5	2/3/1	95
13	GM3ZDH	Bob	6027T	SCO	6	5	2/2/1	85
14	W15H	Mike	11770S	TX	5	5	2/2/0	75
15	WB9HFK	Mark	83S	IL	5	5	2/1/0	65
16	K0KEX	Rick	5220S	MO	4	4	1/1/0	41
17	F5UQE	DUC	13468S	FRA	3	3	0/3/0	39

Poor condition don't help participation in the SKSE but still there is plenty of opportunity for good QSOs.

As we move into the summer months and 20m stays more active QSO numbers will increase...hang in there and join the fun of SKSE!



I missed the first half hour but still had a great time. Thanks for the QSOs, everyone. 40m was in very good shape. Thanks for the QSOs, everyone. 73, Bert F5HKA



Despite having a cold, I enjoyed this SKSE, using my homebrew cootie, the only key I use lefthanded. I found three new numbers for TKA award ... still 122 to go ... Also tnx to K3WW and WK2S for some DX. Cu all next time
- 73, Luc ON7DQ



73 from the High Plateau of Rhode Island de WB2VVV
Chris



JRC KY-3A

My JRC KY-3A. It has been paired with quite a few radios. Radios come and go, but it stays. It was given to me by an ex-military radioman who later on working for commercial non military shipping company before he retired. I use iambic paddle a lot, but there are times when you are longing for the manually composed dots and dashes, and a hand-key like these will fulfill that innate desire.

73, Ricky YB7XO

K3Y/7 Remote

This year was my first experience operating as K3Y/7 from Washington State. I am unable to have a station of my own in my apartment, so I use the internet to connect with Remote-Hams.com, and thereby connect with equipment that station owners have allowed other licensed operators to use.

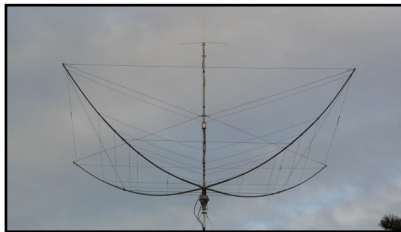
The station I used for the K3Y Event was AC7AV in Spokane, WA, owned by Erik Montgomery. When I explained my intentions to him he was very accommodating in granting my operation request. Erik went so far as to close the remote link to other qualified operators during my operating times so I would not have to QRT for someone else to use his station.

This "soapbox" entry is a public "Thank You" to Erik and to let SKCC members know of his gracious efforts to allow me to participate in the event.

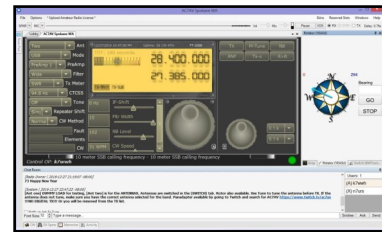
73, Russ, WD7JS



AC7AV Station



AC7AV main antenna



Users computer interface

From the "High Plateau" of Rhode Island!(?)

Greetings from the "high plateau" in Rhode Island, where on 40 meters I operate a rotary dipole up at 70 feet. This was my station for this past weekend's WES with 12 tubes on Saturday using my Johnson Viking Adventurer XTAL Transmitter and Hammarlund Receiver with home-brew manual T/R toggle switch. Thanks to those that noted the provenance of its very slight chirp. However on Sunday due to the heavy Digital Interference I switched to the greater frequency agility of an older VFO/PTO rig with only a 3 tubes in the final via my Ten Tec Station (Omni D and Centaur) and was QSK plus QRO. The weekend was a success as I finished earning my Centurion and am now 14078C.

73 from RI and Tnx for the SKCC QSOs, Chris WB2VVV



A Labrador Lighthouse in January

By Dave Goodwin VE9CB (also VO2AAA and W8SR)
SKCC 12520

CQ 160 CW Contest

Every January since 1960, CQ Magazine sponsors the biggest contest on 160m. For over ten years, the CQ Worldwide 160-Metre CW contest has received over 2,000 log entries, and many more Amateurs around the world take advantage of the contest to work some DX on Top Band.

For the 2006 CQ 160 CW, Chris Allingham VE3FU (also VO2AC) and I travelled to the Point Amour lighthouse in southern Labrador to make a big effort. At 125 feet/38 metres, Point Amour is the tallest lighthouse in Atlantic Canada. It sits on a 50ft cliff overlooking the strait that separates Labrador from the northern tip of the island of Newfoundland.

Labrador was attractive for a couple of reasons: the contest rules have a quirk that counts Labrador as a separate multiplier from the rest of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

That made us rare, perhaps unique – we were the only ones handing out the LB multiplier, so everyone HAD to work us.

Also, Labrador is in Zone 2. That doesn't mean anything for this contest, but for many people trying to complete CQ's Worked All Zones (WAZ) award, Zone 2 is their last zone. We hoped many DXers would seek us out.

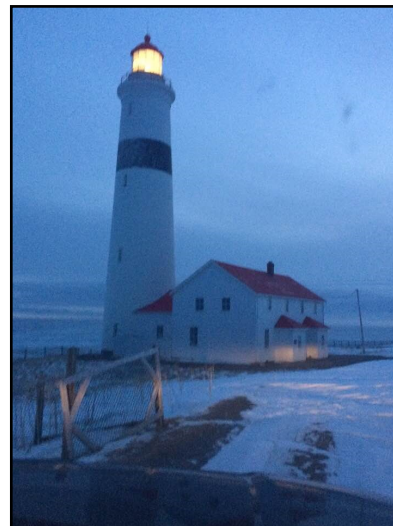
Labrador is unattractive for other reasons: the weather in January is brutal. How brutal? Have you ever tried to walk across an ice-covered field in winds of 190km/h (120MPH)? With temperatures of -10c (14F), that wind creates wind chills that are dangerous. That is what we experienced in 2006. Labrador in winter is not for the feint of heart.

In 2006, we had to bring everything we needed to the site: rigs, amplifiers, antennas and all the accessories we needed. As I was living in nearby Newfoundland at the time, it was a fairly easy task to ship our gear there and fly in to the closest airport. We also had to negotiate access with the authorities who control the lighthouse.

Our plan was to put up a single wire vertical with three elevated radials. This hung from the railing atop the lighthouse and terminated at the edge of the cliff overlooking the Strait of Belle Isle. We also put up a two-wire reversible Beverage receiving antenna and an Inverted Vee dipole.

Our 2006 operation was a great success. We placed #1 in the world in the Multi-op category, but it was not easy. The operating part was pretty simple, it was the weather that was hard. We had extreme winds and wind chills, and erecting antennas was painfully difficult. We lost power at the beginning of the contest. We were able to rent a generator, but we still lost several hours of good operating time.

It took thirteen years, but we returned to Point Amour in 2019. Frank Davis VO1HP joined our operation. The antenna configuration was new: Chris designed a two-element vertical yagi that we could steer to favour North-East, South-West or omni-directional. Frank deployed a Beverage-on-Ground (BOG) with a Software Defined Receiver (SDR) and "Skimmer" software so we could spot potential multipliers.



The Point Amour Lighthouse

Frank flew from St John's, Newfoundland with his gear, and Chris and I drove to Point Amour with our cars packed tight with all our gear. From Ontario, where Chris lives, or from New Brunswick, where I live, driving to Point Amour in winter takes over thirty (30) hours, mostly on ice- or snow-covered lonely two-lane highways through northern Quebec and across Labrador. The temperatures on this trip were consistently around -35c (-30F). A vehicle breakdown on these lonely roads in these temperatures could be a matter of life and death, because it could be hours before another vehicle will come by.

For our 2019 operation, the weather was rough. Bitter cold, high winds and the road to the lighthouse was blocked with snow. To get the last two kilometres to the lighthouse, we had to use a snowmobile and a komatik (a trailer for a snowmobile). Sitting in a komatik with boxes of equipment is an arduous thrill ride, with snow and wind blowing in your face the whole time.

In 2019, it took us three days of hard labour to get our antennas up and the station working. Despite the winds, we had power at the start of the contest, but we lost power when the wind took out the power line at about 2am on Day 2 of the contest. Power was eventually restored, but we lost several good hours of operating time.

In 2020, we had a few advantages: from our operation the year before, we stored some of our equipment and antennas in Goose Bay, about eight hours' drive from Point Amour, freeing Chris and I to fly in to Goose Bay, where Chris' parents live. We could then load all our gear into a truck for the day-long drive to the coast. We also had great weather: quite tolerable temperatures of -5c to -15c (23F to 5F), little wind and hardly any snow, so we could drive right out to the lighthouse without the need for the snowmobile or komatik. Our station went together in hours, not days. We had a generator with us, but we never lost power, so we never had to use it.



Best Score, Worst Performance

Here is a chart comparing our scores from our three operations:

Year	QSOs	States/ Provs	DXc	Score	Rank
2006	1,506	59	71	1,473,290	#1
2019	1,206	54	74	1,141,504	#9, #2 in NA
2020 *	1,648	58	85	1,735,734	#15, #1 in NA

*Claimed score, not yet adjudicated

So, despite turning in the best claimed score ever, we appear to be significantly behind our big competitors in Africa, Asia and Europe. This may be a tribute to the growing popularity of this contest, but we are undeterred. We are keen to return in 2021 and probably for many years to come.

More than just the contest

In 2020, we had an extra mission. Working Zone 2 from Japan is extremely difficult 160m and 80m. Not only is the path through the auroral zone, but there are few hams in Zone 2, and fewer still with good antennas on these two bands. In the days leading up to the contest, we made a priority of trying to work Japanese hams because we knew the demand for Zone 2 on those bands was huge. While we worked JH2TPI on 80m, and we heard JA7NI and a JH3 on 160m CW during the contest, signals were extremely weak. We planned to try FT8 during the morning and afternoon openings to Japan.

Over the four days leading up to the contest, we had thirty-six (36) QSOs with Japanese Amateurs, twelve (12) on 160m FT8, twenty-three (23) on 80m FT8, and one (1) on 80m CW. These were with thirty (30) different JA stations. Of the Japanese Amateurs we worked on 160m, only one (1) was loud enough that we could have completed a CW QSO – JA8WKE.

We count this as a great success, and will try and work more Japanese hams on our next trip in January 2021. The Japanese CQ Magazine included a story on our operation in JA4DND's "Low Band DXing" column.



Chris VE3FU and Dave VE9CB
atop the lighthouse

SKCC QSO

Before I left for Labrador, SKCC member Jim N6KZ (#24655) contacted me to ask for a QSO using a straight key. I obliged, bringing my old J-38 with me. Jim and I managed a QSO on 20m CW using our straight keys on 23 January. This will help Jim complete his SKCC "Maple Leaf (Orange)" award. I also worked Ted K8AQM (#1629S) and probably many other SKCC members.

Good Press Coverage

In addition to JA4DND's coverage in the Japanese CQ Magazine, we gained good exposure for Amateur Radio to the general public.

CBC Radio 1 in Labrador interviewed Chris VE3FU before the contest and carried the interview on as the first item on "Labrador Morning" on 24 January 2020. You can hear the interview with Chris on http://cbc.mc.tritondigital.com/CBC_LABRADOR_MORNING_FROM_CBC_RADIO_NFLD_AND_LABRADOR_HIGHLIGHTS_P/media/labmorning-4naCZKfo-20200124.mp3

As well, Dave VE9CB was interviewed by the Northern Pen newspaper. The interview appeared in the Northern Pen and the St John's Evening Telegram in the weeks after the contest. You can see the article on <https://www.saltwire.com/lifestyles/regional-lifestyles/ham-radio-fans-reach-out-to-the-world-from-labrador-lighthouse-409949/?fbclid=IwAR1uuQ0cElCq-69j749RE7ntBo05yXGpT9PLxH8F8OFX5e6W53npRZL-yZE#.Xkr5ObTxhHZ.face>

Permanent Amateur Radio Presence at Point Amour

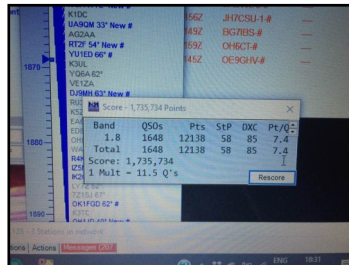
The Point Amour lighthouse was also the site of a Marconi marine radio station from 1904 to the mid-1960s. Its first call sign was MPR, and there is now a permanent Amateur Radio call sign assigned to the site – VO2MPR. The management of the site are very keen to encourage Radio Amateurs to visit the site. While we were there, we installed a multi-band dipole that

that any visiting Radio Amateur may use. They will have a desk with power available for you to set up and operate. You may use the VO2MPR call sign, or your own call sign. Just bring your own rig. This should be a prime site for anyone interested in exploring Labrador, operating from Zone 2, or for taking part in the annual International Lighthouse Lightships Weekend (ILLW) in August each year.

So, visit Labrador. The “Big Land” has a great deal to offer. But go in summer, and leave January to Chris, Frank and I.

73,

Dave VE9CB and VO2AAA



Band	QSOs	Pts	STP	DK	Pt/100
1.8	1648	12138	58	85	7.4
Total	1648	12138	58	85	7.4
Score: 1,735,734					
QTY: 1 Mult = 11.5 Q's					



Dave VE9CB, Chris VE3FU and Frank VO1HP at “VO2AC”



The skidoo and “komatik” were essential at first

New Bug!

I have been doing CW for about 2 years now, and always thought I would stick with a straight key. That was until I visited K8AQM for the first time in early 2019 for his annual K3Y multi-multi event. I got the opportunity to try all kinds of different keys, and started to develop an interest in buying a bug.

Fast forward to the same event in 2020 - and I decided to ask Ted which bug he would recommend for a newbie. He showed me the 90 degree VIZ KEY bug right away. I sat down and played with it for a while, and I realized it was perfect for anyone from newbies to the experienced user. Without any modification, it has a generous speed range (especially if you need to go a bit slower). I ordered it the very next day after getting back home.

Curt, KU8L, puts major effort into making these fine sending instruments. They really do work like a fine watch. Every detail is accounted for including the finish.



I was a bit intimidated by all the adjustments, but there was no need to be. Curt sent very detailed documentation and diagrams to get the key adjusted just as you would like. It worked great out of the box, but was nice to be able to dial it in to my sending preferences.

If you are on the fence about buying a bug, look no further! This will be one of my go to keys for a long time to come!!

Andy AC8SV - 18238S

February SKS 2020



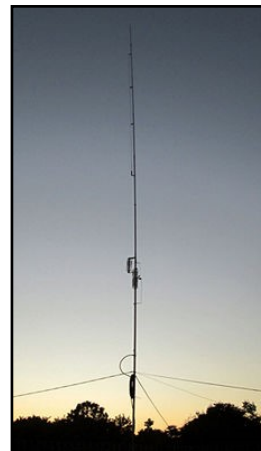
Worked 80 both hours except a couple on 40. 80 seemed in great shape but 40 was bad here. Thanks to all who participated es worked the club call to finish out the "Cootie" for the TKA. 73, Randy K8CGE



Thanks all for the nice run on 80 meters..That should shorten the journey to S..73 from the shores of Lake Erie...Larry K8TEZ



Started out having lots of fun and then I had to leave and take family to fast food. Was still fun. See everyone next time....73, Bill N0UMP



Tough going at my QTH. 20 dead, 40 few stations heard or worked, ditto for 80. Local RFI from my neighbors grow lights. Had a nice rag chew with AK4JA to pass some time. Photo sunset view of my Butternut HF6V. Works very well. Not an easy antenna to set up. 73 de AL N4ow 11375s



Used my Heathkit SB-104A with an OCF dipole at 30 feet. Key was a J-38. Started out on 40M, got the dinner call and finished up on 80M. The ole gal held up well considering her age of over 42 years. The 400 Hz CW filter in these rigs works very well! Thanks to all I worked for another fun SKS. 73, Bill NZ0T



Figured I would try the sprint on the last night in Belize. Thanks to the few who heard me. Hope to work many more in the future. 73, Bob-V31CO/W0YBS



Wow, 20 mtr completely dead tonight. Got 7 on 40 and 6 on 80. 80 meters was hot. All stations were 589 or better and the QRM was not bad. Only worked the first hour. TNX for the fun and CU all next month. Used my E F Johnson SK on a few slow ones and the HB cootie for the rest. 73, Allen KA5TJS

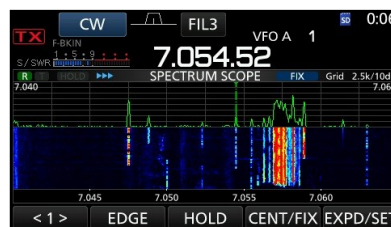


I only worked about 15 min had sum fun with my qrp station see you next time 72/73 bud working qrp from my Ice shanty had great time Bud w8bud/p



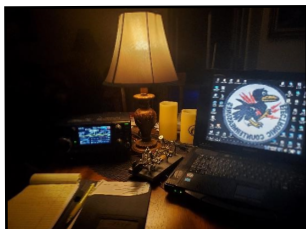
DARN! while having several people calling I heard "V31" at first I thought it was bad CW. I answered a louder call and after I realized it was V31CO and I had blown it! Sorry Bob, I'll get you next time! Good signal in Michigan. Operated from house shack at 75 watts. 73, Ted K8AQM

A good SKS Sprint. Got a triple-play with W5TMT on 20/40/80. Couldn't find the bonus N2BR. 40m. was weak but 80m was good. Rig: IC-7000 at 100w into G5RV up 25 ft w/ old WWII German Junker Straight key. 73 to all Tom KA2KGP

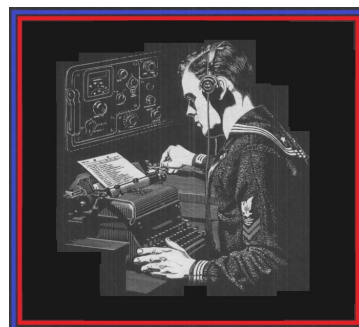


FT4 has moved from QRMing W1AW and lower end of SKCC range to just above SKCC range. 73, Brian N4API

February WES II



Great fun and great event
in spite of propagation.
73, Rick WY4X



Don't Forget, Dayton is Coming!

Just a reminder since Dayton will happen before the next issue of the newsletter. Again this year it will be in Xenia, OH and of course SKCC will be there. The booth will again be in it's same location right across from where you deposit your ticket stub. There will be various keys for sampling, handouts for those who want to become SKCC members and extra chairs for all you weary walkers! The booth is a great place for those eyeball QSOs with old friends and meeting those new friends. The booth will be managed by Jeremy KD8VSQ and Ted K8AQM.

Dayton dates are May 15, 16 and 17. Come join us and share the SKCC booth experience!



Shop Till You Drop!
Then rest at the SKCC booth!

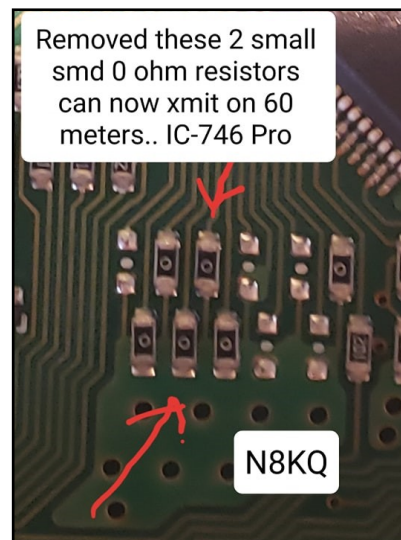
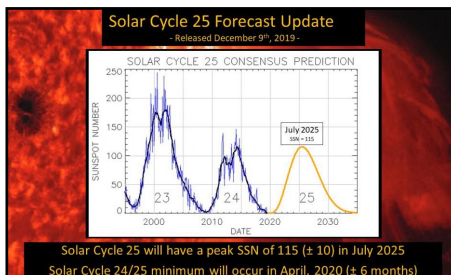
Information Posted from Facebook



From Nick G8SYE



Using a kitchen cabinet door knob as a replacement knob for a straight key! (Photo courtesy of Yoon, KM6KJL, SKCC#19642T)



Removed these 2 small
smd 0 ohm resistors
can now xmit on 60
meters.. IC-746 Pro

N8KQ

Lighting Up the Bands...Again!



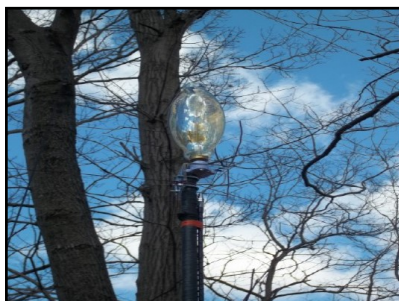
100 watt bulb with about 60+ feet of filament! Really!

tuned radials from two to four for each antenna as well as a single feedline of LMR 400 for each antenna! Because the bulbs are limited to 100 watts we run about 80 watts on all bands. The bulbs actually do get

Once again this year the “Dit Dah CW Gang” will prove you can light-up the bands with a “dummy load” antenna. Last year in the SKS we worked 67 QSOs and this year with antenna improvements we’re hoping to do even better.

Our first cw operation will again be in the March SKS and we will be the bonus station running as “K8AQM.” We will be “KS8KCC” running in the April WES.

We have “antennas for 160, 80, 40, 20 and 15 meters and this year we have increase our ground plane



All antennas are placed in the woods and many people walk through the woods on paths ...can you imagine what they think with the blinking lights...cool!



40m antenna at night in action!



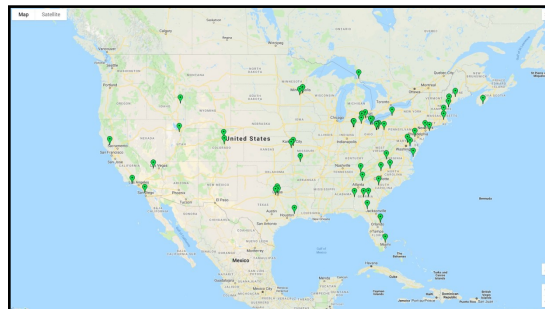
Jeremy KD8VSQ holding our 40m bulb antenna and testing.

warm/hot and the SWR does change a bit.

This will be a multi band and multi operator operation in both events. Looks for us on all bands and join the fun of saying you worked a bunch of “dummy loaded” guys from the Dit Dah CW gang. We may even offer a downloadable PDF award for working three or more “dummies!”



We ain't right!



Our 2019 two hour run in the SKS



President of the Dit Dah CW gang! “Chief Op!”