



Volume 16 Issue 2

The official newsletter of the Straight Key Century Club
"The Rag Chew"
Editor: K8AQM/VE9AQM

June, 2023

Dayton/Xenia 2023



Just some of the SKCC stars at Dayton/Xenia 2023



To say that Dayton and the SKCC booth for 2023 was fun is grossly understated; it was absolutely fabulous!

The booth setup was great: two cooties, two bugs and six different straight keys were available with three CPOs available for the different type of keys... although one CPO had a severe "chirp" and we laughingly referred to it as our WWII Russian tank radio that many of us are familiar with back in the older days of our DXing. We had a Czech key, J-38, Junker, an NT9K pump, a mini key that would be perfect for POTA



The star of the show! Muskrat trap converted into a straight key!

and...the “Star” of the straight keys (and possibly the show!) a converted muskrat trap key made by Greg KE8CEW (15805T) as a gag gift...to help CW learners develop a “light touch” (very light touch!). It was great fun to offer visitors a “chance” to try out this key and to watch their expressions! Ha! They thought, we thought, they were nuts...no way would they try it until we proved it really was a key!

There were many “helpers” to man the table and to field the many questions of passer-bys. AC2C Ron, AH6AX Larry, N2JXX John, AC8W Stan and K8AQM Ted set things up and there were so many SKCC members who stepped up and sat in to give us a hand; KA8HFN Larry, WA8BBN Ed, KA9GKE Rose, NX1K Mark, W4CMG Cathy, K8FAC Frank and WA9xxx. Unfortunately due to illness Curt K2CWM was unable to attend. Curt is always there, we miss him but says he’ll be back next year. Get well Curt, we all miss you!



Larry KA8HFN and Mark NX1K in the back. Stan AC8W and Ron AC2C at the table.



WA9SWW Steve manning the table and chatting-up SKCC.



Stan AC8W, Cathy W4CMG and Ron AC2C answering questions.



Ron AC2C and Larry AH6AX enjoying a laugh.



Ron AC2C and Frank K8FAC explaining SKCC to an onlooker.



Check-out all those keys! They gathered lots of curious folks and those who wanted to try their hand on straight keys, bugs and cooties.

Rose KA9GKE and Mark NX1K enjoying a moments break from the front line. Rose is the first YL “S” in 9 land (only too).





Frank K8FC checking in. Frank was one of the major support team workers at last year's Dayton.



This gentleman was a real pro at handling a bug!



That's Anne KC9YL giving directions to someone.



Lots of curious folks wanted to hear more about SKCC and to try their hand at some of the different keys.



Ron AC2C logging in SKCCers and Stan AC8W explaining SKCC.



Ted K8AQM discussing key types with several onlookers.



Kaz K8KS and Ted K8AQM enjoying a rag chew during a break from the table.



Two keys of course and the duck is the mascot for the "Ham and Quackers Club"...really! He had poor CW clacking away on the keys with his bill and the "trap key" he wouldn't even try!



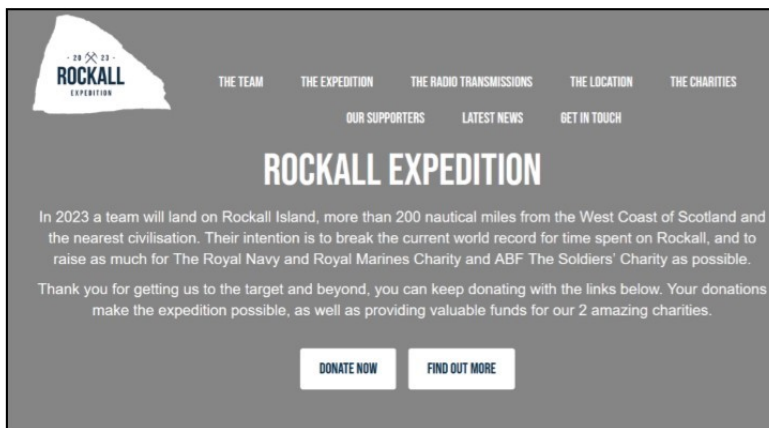
That's Stan AC8W and Cathy W4CMG apparently sharing a laugh...

SKCC Members Who Logged-in at Dayton

AA4AZ	K8KS	KD4EE	KN4CNU	N9XLV	W8HOG
AA8KY	K8QKY	KD8AZO	KP4DX	NA1L	W8MND
AA8NN	K9KEU	KD8BBK	KP4P	NE0S	W8PU
AC0E	K9KVS	KD8DLV	KS4HE	NE3R	W8WGT
AC2C	K9WA	KD8TUR	KX4BE	NE5TH	W8WTS
AC5O	KA3UIP	KD8VUY	KY8R	NI8W	W8YD
AC8JF	KA8GKT	KD9TWA	N1SG	NM5ER	W9GPP
AC8RG	KA8HFN	KE1IH	N2GSL	NR3C	W9HT
AC8W	KA8WQL	KE7FD	N2JKA	NV9X	W9IXX
AC8XU	KA9GKE	KE8BIT	N3DRL	NX1K	W9LW
AC9HP	KA9VLC	KE8EON	N3GTG	VA2SS	W9TOX
AD0AB	KB0P	KE8GKO	N3JJT	VE3JZT	W9YA
AF8E	KB1OIQ	KE8LQR	N3RDG	VE3MRX	WA3WXR
AH6AX	KB3LAS	KE8RU	N4DR	W2NR	WA8IMA
AK4SQ	KB4WJA	KE8SNS	N4LSJ	W2PIX	WA8PCW
AL7AH	KB8ANY	KE8UIV	N6KZ	W3AL	WA8ZNC
DL9UAS	KB9ORH	KF5PFU	N8EU	W3ASW	WA9SWW
K0WHW	KC0CCR	KG8CO	N8FQY	W3MAC	WB0SND
K1WCC	KC0ZPS	KG8Y	N8GAS	W3ZT	WB4FDT
K2EAG	KC1ELB	KI8FV	N8IQV	W4CMG	WB4ZDU
K2PI	KC3AM	KJ4MZ	N8JEN	W4NHO	WB5NCB
K2VS	KC3WJM	KJ4YSY	N8OI	W4RSS	WB8SCT
K3ARC	KC8ALZ	KJ5T	N8PEM	W4SAV	WB9EAO
K3YV	KC8LTL	KK4LW	N8QU	W5DT	WB9TFF
K4FT	KC8YTV	KL7AJ	N8VZD	W8ASA	WB9TFH
K8AQM	KC9IL	KM4CH	N9DBJ	W8EC	WD9GET
K8CCA	KC9YL	KM4FO	N9DEK	W8FAX	WK4WC
K8FAC	KD1XH	KM4ZZ	N9MLE	W8HFZ	WO6W

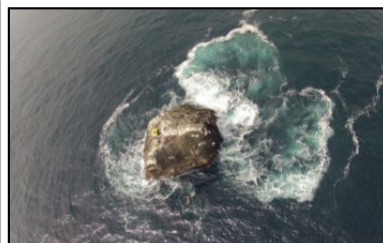
Rockall DXpedition

Here is an interesting happening, "Rockall DXpedition" and it's for charity



“Google” the url below for full details and history. The event is happening in June 2023 and although not an SKCC operation, it would be a wonderful to have aQSL in the shack.

<https://www.rockallexped.com/2022/05/22/update-may-2022-expedition-pushed-back-to-2023/>



We are exceptionally fortunate to have some highly experienced and skilled radio operators as part of our expedition team. One of the World's most Wanted IOTA's **EU-189**, QTH LOC **IO37DO**. This very rare and difficult activation is set to go ahead in May/June 2023.

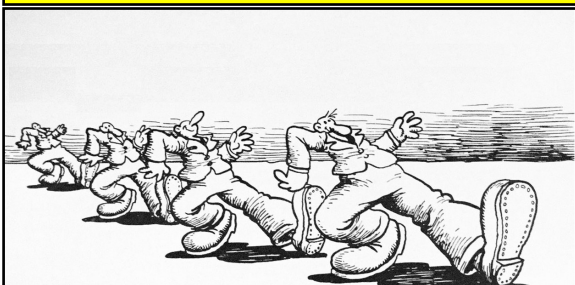
Rockall is an uninhabitable granite islet situated in the North Atlantic Ocean. The nearest permanently inhabited place is North Uist, an island in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland, 200NM to the east. The UK claimed Rockall on 18 September 1955 when “Two Royal Marines and a civilian naturalist, led by Royal Navy officer Lieutenant Commander Desmond Scott, raised a Union flag on the islet and cemented a plaque into the rock”.

Rockall stands at 17.15m above sea level at it's tallest point, covering an area of just 784.3 m².

QSL INFO & MANAGEMENT VIA **M0OXO** CHARLES [HOMEPAGE M0OXO](#)

Slow Speed Saunter March, 2023

Slow Speed Saunter



Band conditions were not good here. A lot of busted QSO's due to QSB. Still had fun and hope I helped some folks work on their goals. Best 73 & May the "Love Of Christ" be with you. 73, Ric KA3LOC



Ran my old IC-703 at 5 watts this time to a multi-band vertical using a small inexpensive CW Morse Straight Key. Thanks to all my contacts for hearing my peep-squeak signal (hi hi). My fav SKCC event. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
W6DFM	Mike	27053	AL	3
N0CW	Chuck	23240S	CA	9
WB6ZG	Bruce	17714S	CA	2
W0LRF	LARRY	16585T	CO	14
K1PUG	Hank	12486S	CT	8
KD4KYP	Roy Pitts	24201	GA	3
KQ4DAP	Cainan	26817	GA	5
K9NUJ	Steve	23563S	IL	2
W9GOO	John	21474S	IN	8
WA9BBN	Ed	17763S	IN	7
KA3LOC	Ric	660S	KS	6
NN3E	Kevin	19625S	MD	2
W1DV	Dave	1433S	NC	10
K2CWM	Curt	3018S	NJ	16
KE2AUQ	Michael	27189	NY	2
KA8HFN	Larry	2046S	OH	7
N1BW	Steve	26659T	OH	21
NJBL	Vern	13613S	OH	5
NQ8T	Steve	5919S	OH	2
W4CMG	Cathy	20093S	TN	1
AF5Z	Bob	27159	TX	6
N2TNN	Dean	25132S	VA	9

Participants and QSOs by SPC

AL: 1 / 3	CA: 2 / 11	CO: 1 / 14	CT: 1 / 8	GA: 2 / 8
IL: 1 / 2	IN: 2 / 15	KS: 1 / 6	MD: 1 / 2	NC: 1 / 10
NJ: 1 / 16	NY: 1 / 2	OH: 4 / 35	TN: 1 / 1	TX: 1 / 6
VA: 1 / 9				



Are You "GIB"?



Received SKCC Buro delivery today... always fun to see what goodies are inside!

Yes I'm still GIB! 73, Chris WX7V

"GIB"...Good in Bureau

SKCC Bureau info:

https://www.skccgroup.com/member_services/qs1_buro/

SKSE March 2, 2023

Straight Key Sprint Europe Results

Results for SKSE: 02-Mar-2023

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

Overall results

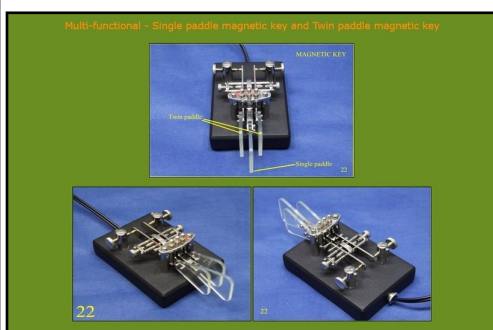
Rank	Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
1	CT7AUP	David	24197S	POR	30	18	11/6/0	765
2	VE3KZ	Bob	22804S	ON	24	15	8/7/1	555
3	EA3NO	Lluis	6653S	ESP	18	13	8/3/1	389
4	F5DE	Bernard	6247S	FRA	19	14	5/4/1	386
5	ON7DQ	Luc	14984T	BEL	13	9	5/4/1	237
6	G4IVV	Jon	26874T	ENG	10	9	5/3/0	195
7	NQ2W	Will	25403T	NY	8	6	5/1/1	138
8	EA4HKF	Jose	25196T	ESP	7	6	2/2/0	92
9	HB9CPS	Geo	20350	SUI	8	5	0/3/1	75
10	K0KEX	Rick	5220S	MO	4	4	3/1/0	71
11	F8DTU	Frank	8662C	FRA	5	5	1/2/0	60
12	G3ZRJ	TONY	3492T	ENG	7	5	0/1/1	50
13	HB9IRF	Gerald	12483	SUI	5	5	0/2/0	45
14	TA3RT	Rifat Tultak	24143	TUR	3	3	1/1/0	34
14	F6FJE	Peter	27045	FRA	2	2	2/0/0	34
14	K9QEW	Daryl	2963	IL	2	2	2/0/0	34
14	EA3WX	Lou	11443T	ESP	2	2	2/0/0	34
18	DL2KCD	Jo	27055	GER	3	3	0/2/0	29
19	EA5XQ	JUAN	24762	ESP	1	1	1/0/0	16
20	F5UQE	Duc	13468S	FRA	1	1	0/0/0	1



This was a very enjoyable SKS-E for me. When you look at the picture you'll understand my joy. Europe is up over the hill from me. Conditions must have been very good and your stations must have been perfectly tuned to copy my 5W signal. Thank you to F5DE, Bernard, EA3NO, Lluis, F8DTU, Frank, G4IVV, Jon, and CT7AUP, David (two bands!). It was great having QSOs with VE3KZ, Bob, and K3EW, Phil, for "extra credit." 73, Will NQ2W Funtastic!



Many thanks to all friends contacted during this SKS-E edition. Always a pleasure to get some new members as VE3GSS, K4TNE and KN4HAQ, in addition to some two or three bands contacts with K3EW (3 bands), YU7AE and VE3KZ (2 bands). My good old bug key Lionel J36 and Junker Straight Keys were used with my TS590SG giving me about 80 watts into the old multiband GP antenna on the garden making enough power to have those 19 contacts. On the photo, I was visiting my son in Paris living just near the highest underground station called "Telegraph" in memory to one of the first Chappe telegraph stations in the country. 73 to all and see you soon again Bernard F5DE !



Check Out These Keys

An interesting key maker. Also makes straight keys:

http://www.amplitec.hu/jani_baratom%20_eng.html

SKSA March 10, 2023



Results for SKSA: 10-Mar-2023

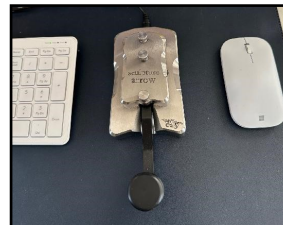
Overall | QRPp | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | Multi-Op | By SPC

Overall results

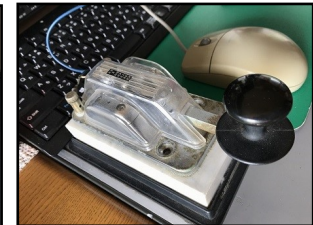
Callsign	Name	SKCC#	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
JF1UOX	MISA	26413	JPN	20	17	3/8/0	465
KS1KCC	SKCC	20550S	MI	27	12	1/7/1	414
JJ1FXF	HIRO	22608T	JPN	25	10	4/3/0	340
JR2IUB	Take	11167S	JPN	13	11	3/6/0	248
JF1NHD	INO	NONE	JPN	22	8	2/1/0	216
JA0FVU	TAKA	13456	JPN	21	8	1/2/0	203
JR6CSY	TAKA	26476	JPN	22	4	2/1/0	128
VR2CO	SOLO MAN	13192	HKG	11	11	0/0/0	121
JK1BVN	KAT	26584	JPN	19	4	0/2/0	96
JF1JDG	HIRO	26409	JPN	10	5	1/2/0	85
JQ1OLT	Deo	19288	JPN	8	4	2/1/0	72
K0KEX	Rick	5220S	MO	9	2	2/2/0	68
JA0IND/1	Jin	8240	JPN	8	4	0/2/0	52
JG2LGM	Yoshi	26989	JPN	7	3	1/1/0	46
VK2DVA	Colin	23507T	AUS	9	1	1/2/0	44
B1B2M	Cheng	23269	CHN	9	3	1/0/0	42
JF1EPL	YOSHI	26458	JPN	11	2	0/1/0	32
JR0ECQ	TOMO	26698	JPN	4	2	0/2/0	28
JM4AOA	KEN	26423	JPN	11	1	0/1/0	21
JF2FIU	Mark	NONE	JPN	8	1	0/1/0	18
J14JGD	TAKA	5393	JPN	5	1	0/1/0	15
JG2JKR	Roy	10424	JPN	5	1	0/1/0	15
JN1FAO	YOSI	26729	JPN	5	1	0/1/0	15
JA9MAT	HIDE	12796	JPN	7	1	0/0/0	7
JJ0SFV	Aki	26384	JPN	2	1	0/0/0	2



I put a capacity hat on top of my whip and covered a key nob with a cheap finger cot bought at \$1 shop. They work fine for me! 73, Yoshi JF1EPL



I joined 30 minutes late. Thanks for the Qs. Worked on 10m for the first time in the sksa. See you next time. 73, Misa JF1UOX



Thank you all stations! It's an old key "HK-702 (made by HI MOUND)", but it's still usable. hi... 73, Mark JF2FIU



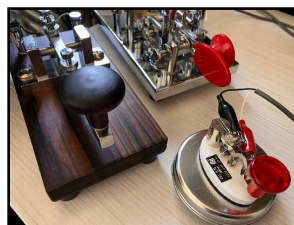
Used sideswiper and homebrew rigs. 73, Yoshi JG2LGM



Today this key. 73, Aki JJ0SFV



Multi multi operation from the N8CC station by N8CC, KU8L, K8AQM ...great fun! 73, SKCC KS1KCC... "official" SKCC Club Call



TNX for calls and SRI for the ones I couldn't copy well. I used three different keys this time as photo shows. HPE to CU AGN at next SKSA in April. 73, Hiro JJ1FXF



This is the homemade wire antenna I use. 80m: INV, 40m: LOOP, 30m: LOOP, and other BANDs function as harmonic antennas. Currently undergoing maintenance work. 73, Kat JK1BVN

SKSA March 10, 2023



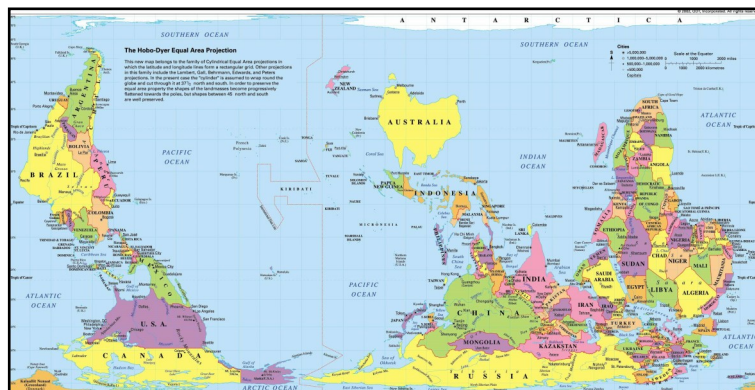
This time, it was late to start, but I enjoyed it until the last minute. It was a lot of fun to be able to communicate with one station that I had never communicated with before. I'm looking forward to next month's SKSA. 73, Ken JM4AOA



Today I used A1 Club 2023 New Year Key on my rig, Hi! 73, Taka JR6CSY



Oceania QRS Saunter March 18, 2023



Oceania QRS Saunter Results

Results for Oceania QRS Saunter: 18 Mar 2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

Call sign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
VK2GAZ	Garry	5460C	AUS	2
VK4DRK	Derek Jones	26381	AUS	1
VK4EV	Ron	10775	AUS	1
VK4IAN	Ian Robertson	18148	AUS	1
VK4SE	Jeff Creed	26280	AUS	7
KG6YJ	Jun	27223	CA	1
ZL3TK	Stan	16208	NZL	3
W4NLT	Andy	16400S	VA	2

Participants and QSOs by SPC

AUS: 5/12	CA: 1/1	NZL: 1/3	VA: 1/2
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On 3/18 Saturday I was listening around the CW bands but it seemed there was no Oceania QRS Saunter activity, as I could hear. On Saturday night I had a QSO with W4EMB and exchanged SKCC numbers, but he was just testing his antenna on 20m band after dark, not for OQS. Anyway, my intention was for OQS. After the QSO with him, I called CQ QRS for a while on 20m band and didn't get answer. Will spread the word so that more hams come to OQS. 73, Jun KG6YJ

Stan ZL3TK		SKCC QRS SAUNTER 18 March 2023						
TIME Z	FREQ MHz	CALL SIGN	REPORT		SPC	NAME	QTH	SKCC #
			SENT	RCVD				
1	0419	14.050	VK4EV	549	55N	RON	BRISBANE	10775
2	0740	7.039	WV3V	119	229	NV	LAS VEGAS	22102
3	0850	3.551	VK4IAN	459	57N	IAN	BRISBANE	18148

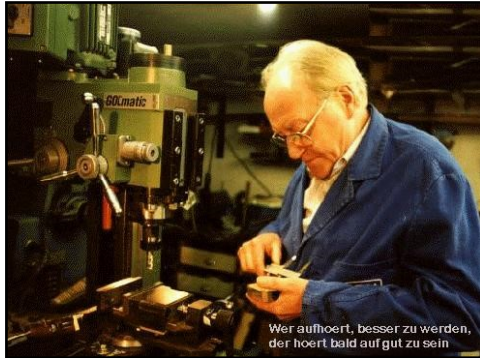
The only stations heard resulted from calling CQ ad nauseum. Trans-Tasman conditions not ideal. Highlight was successful exchange with WV3V running only 20 W. 73, Stan ZL3TK



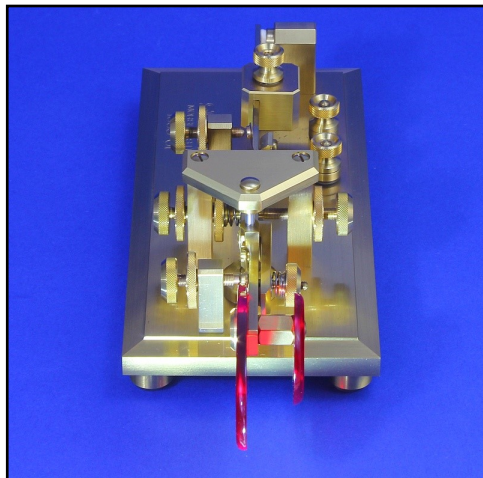
Keys By Gerald Shurr

This past month I've discovered keys made by Gerald Shurr (SK...DH2SSA) and viewed on DL1DSN's (Mark) website at: <https://www.dl1dsn.de/morse-collection/?lang=en> and although Mr Shurr made many keys including iambic, I'll limit this presentation to his straight keys and his bug productions.

His bug is indeed a work of beauty.

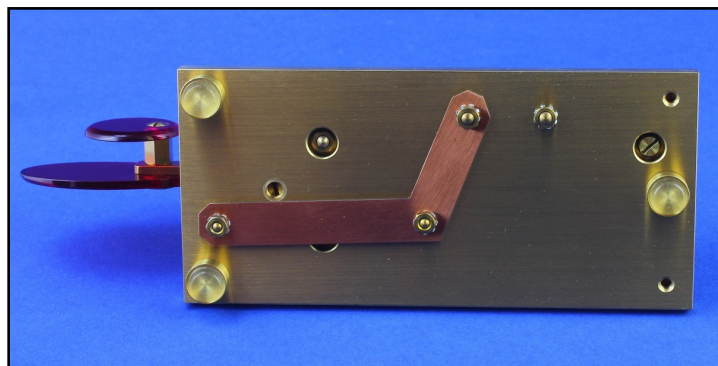
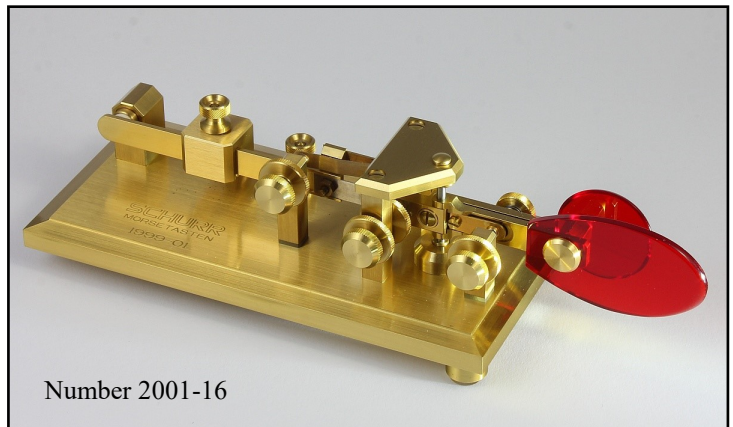
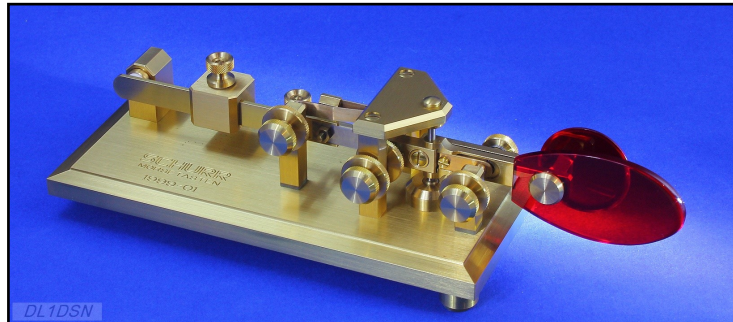


The eponymous Gerhard Schurr, DH2SAA. His motto, shown in German above, translates as: "If you stop trying to be better, soon you will stop being good."



These pictures come from the DL1DSN website (worth the visit): and elsewhere on the web:

"This is an all-brass bug from Gerhard Schurr, of Schurr Morsetasten in Germany. This is number 1999-01. Schurr has taken a reservation list for a second run of 25, but has not started to make them yet. The weight of the moving parts (from the fingerpieces to the end of the reed) is balanced at the pivot, resulting in an unusually light feel. For Schurr this was an exercise in craftsmanship more than a need to supply a product, and the result is a beautiful bug that handles as well as any ever made. Schurr's logo, and the serial number are engraved on the base."



Editor...In 63 years of ham radio I have never seen this bug nor to my knowledge have I ever heard of anyone using the Schurr bug. Like many, many CW enthusiasts, I want one!

Mr. Schurr also made straight key and that's how I discovered his building. I am waiting for the arrival of my recently purchased **Big Hand Key 'Ultra Champion'** shown here.



All pictures shown are from the DL1DSN web site. Visit it and check out all the iambic (cootie) paddles.

I purchased it from friends in Japan so shipping may take a bit of time.

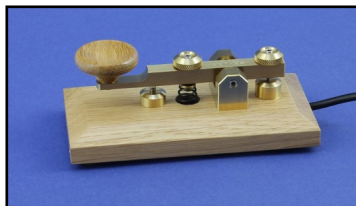
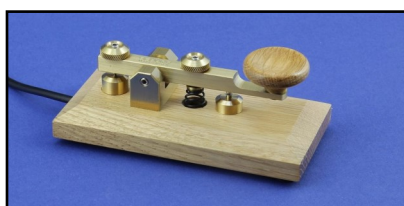
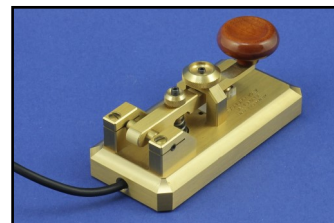
Schurr made other straight keys; some very small, some pre-mounted on wood bases and some just on their own brass base but all the keys look just beautiful! Seen here are the photos from DL1DSN page:



Miniature straight key
Dimensions (W x D x H / mm)
approx. 40 x 70 x 38



Small hand key, made of solid brass MS58. It has a similar weight like the larger 'Big Champion'.



Dimensions (W x D x H / mm) approx. 60 x 120 x 47

Weight approx. 200g

These are smaller straight keys. Sorry but I didn't want to do the metric conversions.)

Are these "great" keys? I can't say for sure as I haven't tried one yet (in transit) but I like the looks, they are beautiful and I like Gerald Schurr's thinking, "If you stop trying to be better, soon you will stop being good."

By the way, should you have the Schurr bug, I am looking to buy one (along with probably 10,000 other hams!)

73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM

Editor...The following is an article by Markus DL1DSN and appeared in the German radio magazine, **Funkamateuer**. According to Markus this article is the only written biography (at the time) of Gerald Schurr and it was written ten years after his death. This is a Google translation of the original German article. Article was edited for formatting and SKCC content.

Handmade-Made in Germany

(On the 10th anniversary of Gerhard Schurr's death)

By Markus. Lieblingsbänder DL1DSN

Introduction

They are definitely a matter of taste. And they were never cheap. Neither in production nor in price. But there is no question that they are precision mechanical masterpieces. "Handmade - Made in Germany" can be read on them. A three-year guarantee was standard, as was quick repairs in the event of a problem many years after purchase.

Nobody knows how many of them there are worldwide. Probably nearly as many as were built. But only two models carried a serial number. Often a call sign is engraved on the hood. The 'list of ingredients' basically includes a lot of brass, some plexiglass or wood and a lot of precise manual work. CNC machines were not used. Even the screws were mostly hand-turned, often with fine threads.

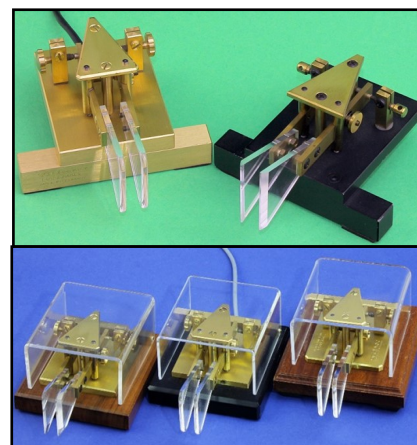
Of course, CW enthusiasts already know what it's all about. Morse keys manufactured by OM Gerhard Schurr, DH2SAA, whose 10th anniversary of death is in October 2021. The craftsmanship with which Gerhard Schurr built Morse keys certainly justifies the term 'retrospective' for this article.

How it all began

The first Morse key that Gerhard Schurr built was not a hand key or a single-lever mechanism, but a squeeze mechanism. The "Schurr Wabblers" or "Wabblers Standard" was first sold in 1984 at the VHF conference in Weinheim. It was initially available with a matt black painted steel base. Later also completely in brass or with a Plexiglas hood (picture 1). This wobbler can be seen as a motif on a QSL card from DH2SAA.



Picture 2



Picture 1

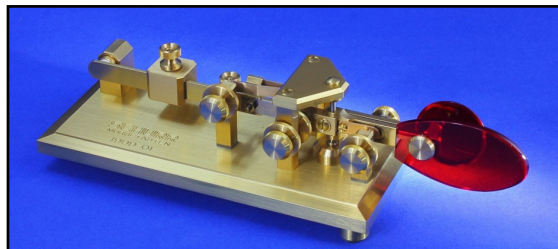
Parallel to the well-known squeeze keys, Gerhard Schurr also made beautiful hand keys. These had been in his price lists since 1987. The entry-level model at the top) has a simple mechanism made of brass on a small wooden base plate and was available in 2002 for a cheap 66 EUR. A mini hand button and a medium version were made almost entirely of brass. Only the button was made of fruit tree wood (cherry or plum). The upper class here is definitely the "Big Champion" or "Big Hand Key" (middle), a work of art made of brass with a mahogany base plate. The matching design of brass and wooden base plate alone is fantastic. In terms of price, it was about the same as the professional wobblers.

The Schurr Mercedes - a bug?

As early as 2000, i.e. shortly after the introduction of the "Profi 2", a small series of 25 semi-automatic Morse keys was offered by DH2SAA after two years of development. Whoever wanted to be the proud owner of such an icon had to hand over a handsome 525 EUR to the master. What additional tributes were necessary I do not know. In return, the buyer received a sensational bug that years later was traded for twice the price. Karl-Heinz Hille, DL1VU, was allowed to test a prototype of the bug at the 1998 Schlackertastenevening. In May 2000 a detailed test report was published in [2], in which he proudly reported that he had won the above competition "undisputedly".

The legendary Schurr bug (ser. no. 1999-01)

The fact is that the Schurr-Bug looks rather inconspicuous next to a fully chrome-plated Vibroplex. In terms of the precision of the manufactured parts and the mechanics, however, it is vastly superior. No compromises were made in the design. You won't find cheap black rubber feet, for example. Turned brass parts were also manufactured here. They make the very flat, transparent foot insoles almost invisible. A total of 13 knurled screws and nuts are provided for adjustment and cable connection.



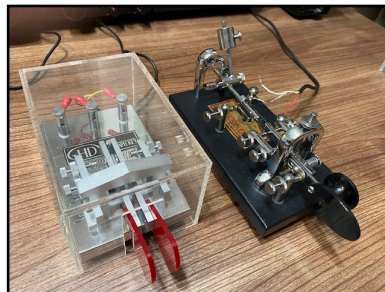
In 2005, after certain interested parties had gone away empty-handed, Gerhard added another 25 bugs. Anyone who thinks that there are exactly 50 is wrong. After years of searching for a Schurr bug, I got a call one day and with it an offer for the rare piece. As it turned out later when unpacking - number 1999-01! After a long search on the web I found another 1999-03. So even before 2000 there were some of the coveted brass bugs. Is my bug the first with a serial number? How many are there? Who knows.

Just as rare as a Schurr bug are the articles in magazines about DH2SAA's products. To my knowledge, there was not a single contribution to this in the CQ-DL between 1984 and 2011. I couldn't even collect a handful of documents about his keys on my website, apart from price lists and care instructions for the keys. Instead, his advertisements kept appearing in the advertising section of amateur radio magazines.

Gerhard Schurr passed away on October 1st, 2011. His products are still known and loved by radio amateurs with CW ambitions worldwide - rightly so, I think. If you are interested in further details, you can also have a look at my website. New information and documents on the subject are always very welcome.

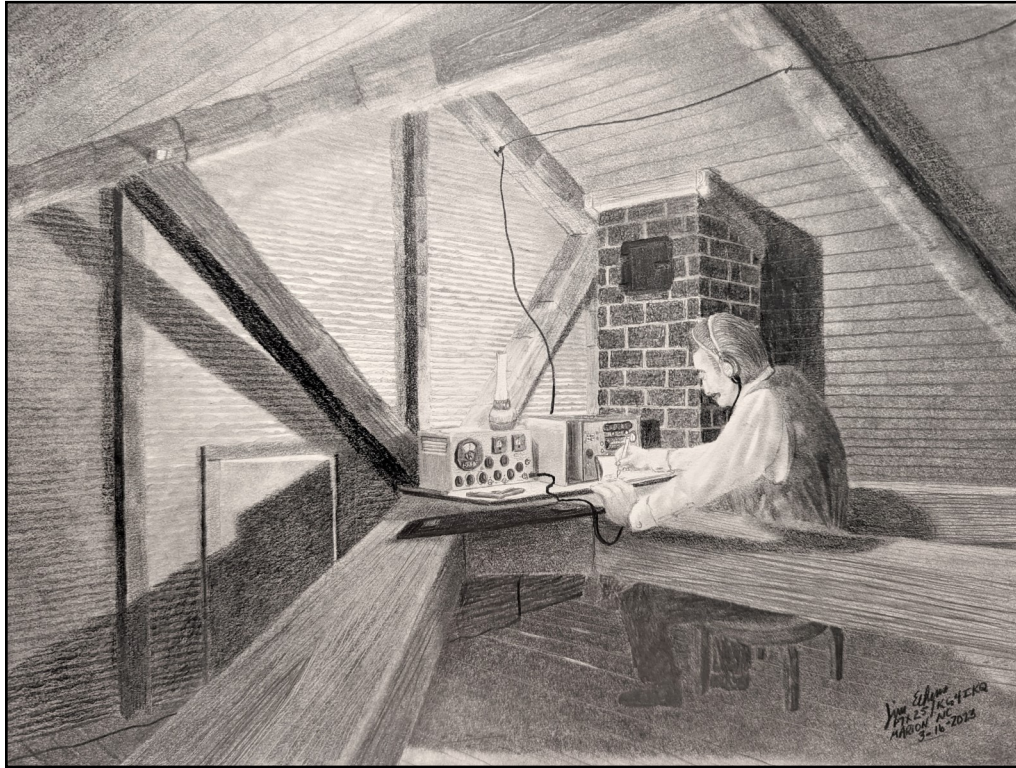
Today's TAKE HOME Message

Tonight, I pulled out my bug key for the first time in a while and took part in the GB program. After that, in the middle of the rubber stamp QSO, the dit side became a continuous transmission state and I was frustrated. I quickly switched to the paddle while being shaken, and completed QSO while trying to adjust the speed. At the end, we exchanged QRQ with each other, and I couldn't believe it was the same QSO as the QRS at the beginning. Bugkey is quite difficult to adjust, but it was the first time that I could not transmit in the middle of QSO like this time. The cause was simply that the adjustment weight fell and touched the main body, but without the paddle, I would have panicked and stopped right there. Bugkey is as grumpy and profound as ever. Today's TAKE HOME message: when using a bug key, prepare a sub key. If the input is a single rig, you can transmit both by connecting straight keys in parallel. 73, Akio JJ0SFV



“Man in the Attic - 1942”

By Jim Elkins KG4IKQ



This drawing spans the decades, a story about Jiri Potucek, a Czech paratrooper, and his part in one of the most controversial clandestine operations of WW2. The Gestapo and Wehrmacht were rolling up network after network in Czechoslovakia during the early days of the war, and had effectively severed radio communication with London. The general area of operations was a long way from London, and it took a lot of time and attempts to get information through and to get things done without radio, so an early objective was to get communications back up and running.

Jiri dropped into Czechoslovakia as the radio operator for the "Silver A" mission to restore resistance radio communication with London. After his mission was successfully completed, he and his teammates went on to assist in Operation Anthropoid, the assassination of General Reinhard Heydrich. He provided the radio communications link that gave the final approval for the mission to continue. (A whole separate and fascinating story.)

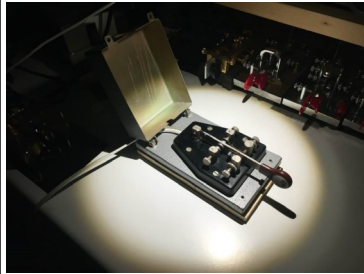
After Heydrich's assassination, he didn't make it to the St. Methodius church in Prague where the other paratroopers were cornered. Potucek was on the run, and was finally killed during his attempted capture in July '42. He was 22 years old.

Potucek was dropped with a primary equipment set of a British Mk VI R/T set, an HF set operating in the 3 to 8 Mhz band, at about 30W. He had trouble with the receiver side of the set, and never was able to hear London. Eventually, he switched over to receive with the backup receiver, a civilian Hallicrafters SX-24 Skyrider, and was able to maintain contact. He operated from several locations, including a hidden set behind a false wall in the attic of a commercial fish hatchery near the town of Lazne Bohdanec. The drawing depicts him with the Skyrider and the Mk VI, in the timber-frame attic of the fish farm building.

In about 2015, 73 years after his death, the current owner of the fish hatchery discovered Potucek's original WW2 antennas still installed in the attic. His radio equipment was reproduced, and the original antennas used during a commemorative special event in 2017, using the call sign OL75SILVERA.

14" x 22", graphite pencil on smooth finish Bristol Board.

Once Upon a Time....



KDM-1 Soviet Union sideswiper. 73 de IZ2FME Miky



My shack in 1977. 73, Tony WA4JQS



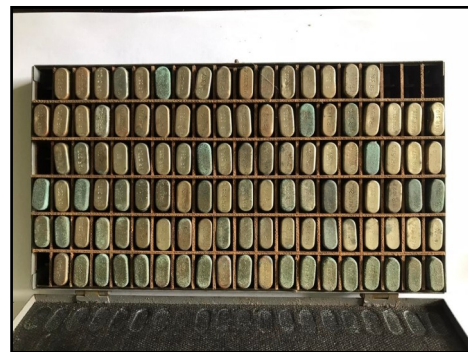
Here is the right side of the shack today. same Drakes just all restored. with a few add on's. 73, Tony WA4JQS



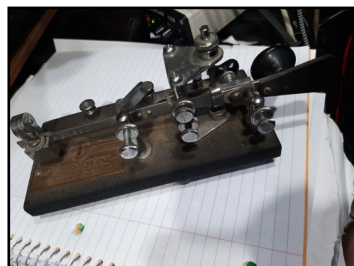
Vibroplex:1918 (L) 1924 (R). Both See regular use. 73, Paul AD3G



W6ZH / Herbert Hoover Jr. at his station, 6 years before his father became our 31st President, in 1929. (Jr. also became President, President of the ARRL.)



Once upon a time.....



1955 Vibroplex "Zephyr" slightly different than a J-36....can you see the difference?



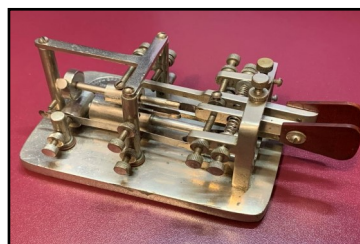
Old stereoscope view-card, titled: "Copying Code".



Great stories!



Italian Royal Air Force - 1930 circa. 73 de IZ2FME Michele



1918 VK land automorse bug



Great prices!

WES March, 2023



Didn't have a lot of time this weekend, but enjoyed some quality WES time. There were some great openings on 10 and 15 meters, for a time it seemed like the only stations on the band were our fine European members, some of my best DX this year was during a WES! Thanks for the QSO's 73, Bill AA2MX



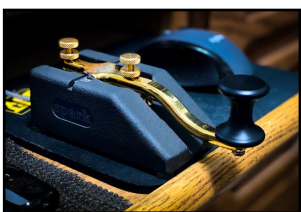
Fun WES thanks for the QSOs. 73, Jim AD0AB



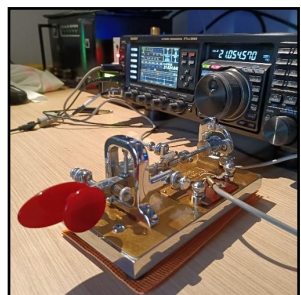
A very pleasant WES with significant openings on the 10m on Saturday and the 15m on Sunday. Windstorm and light rain shook the beams. Thank you all for the QSOs and see you soon. 73, Bob F6EJN



Great weekend, a couple of hours on Sat. with the Bug and a couple of hours on Sun. with the sideswiper. Picture shows which one you heard, either the 1933 Go Devil bug or the Kungs Import SS. Made contacts on 160, 80, 40, 20 and 15 meters, worked KS1KCC on three bands. 80 watts out from the vintage Icom 735 which I bought new in 1992 and carolina windom antenna up 40 feet. Thanks to all who participate. 73 till next month, Frank AA2XB



Always fun times with the WES. Tnx fer the QSO's. Nice to hear all the bugs and cooties on the air. 73 all, Mike AD0WB



Thank you all for the QSOs and fun days of radio. 73, Leo / EA7Q

Good condx, and still as much pleasure, after a few months of absence. I would have liked to be able to spend more time, I hope in the next month. Thanks to all for the QSOs. 73, Franck F8DTU



Good time. Always a pleasure working such fine ops. 73, Bud AA8CL



First time using a side swiper and it showed!! TNX for everybody's patience. 73, Darrell AA9OM



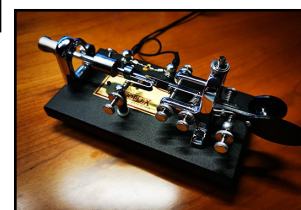
Having fun again - only used the bug this time. I was surprised to hear AUS booming in here Sun afternoon. 73, Rich AE4OK



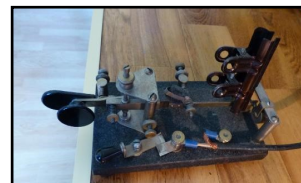
Good propagation conditions, a very fun weekend. 73 everyone, Manuel EA7EGU



Limited time to operate. Saturday bands were wide open on 10 and 20 meters. Got KS1KCC on one band. Wish I had more time to devote to the event. 100W to Hex Beam and Windom. Used two bugs and had a good time as usual. 73, John Paul AB4PP



Lot of fun as always. This month with great openings on 10m and 15m. Thanks all for the QSOs. 73, David CT7AUP

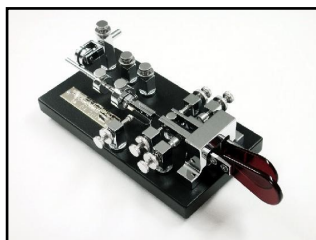


This WES was a great time for my good old Lionel J36 bug key. I used it with its simple tamer as you can see on the attached photo. With it I obtained a 15 wpm speed, not too slow, not too speedy (for me). It was a pleasure to meet usual friends in addition to 13 new members logged. Also a real pleasure was to have a few contacts with the western part of the USA. Next year I will try to do this event with one of my sideswipers as they also want to be activated ! 73 to all, all the best to everyone and see you next time, Bernard F5DE

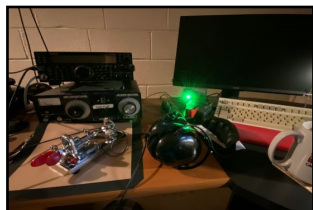
WES March, 2023 II



Great fun a nice to see 15m buzzing. I had 17 QSOs on 15m and 20m and every one great fun. Used a big straight key by Marconi circa 1920. 73, John GORDO SKCC 2133s



The higher frequency bands were in very good shape. Terrific conditions on both 15 & 10 meters. Thanks to everyone who I worked. 73, Steve K2FW



A couple weeks ago I found my vibroplex presentation deluxe that I picked up at a hamfest back in the 80s. It was \$25, firm, according to the piece of masking tape on the bottom. As a kid, I got a replacement weight, but I could never get it working, then lost interest. I schlepped it around and it got grimy, but I unearthed it. The trunion was stuck, and rusty, but I gave it a shot of liquid wrench and it worked free. After fussing with it, I realized it was missing a strap from the dash post to the dit post, so I wired that up. Then all I had to do was learn to send with the thing! This WES was the result of my crash bug course. I will never be as good as a commercial op was, but I can see why they used them. Thanks for all the contacts and I hope my sending wasn't too awful. 73, Bill K3QP



Weekend with good propagation, too bad we were only able to be on the air for a few hours. In this WES, I made my first qso ever with KS1KCC, logged in 10 and 20 meters! Thanks and 73 to all Mark I4IKW



Missed the February WES due to travel. Cleared the decks for this weekend and put in a lot of BIC. Ten Meters was phenomenal on Saturday, just okay on Sunday. The short skip on 20 both days during the afternoon was a treat. The great thing about WES is connecting with so many friends even for a short QSO. So many new SKCC members and so many QRPers from SA, Japan, EU and USA. Keep on posting on the SKCC Sked Page that you are QRP- I home in on those postings and I have to say I worked all that posted-easily- must have a lot of good antennas on those QRP setups. Pix of my Original- one smooth machine indeed. 73 until next month. Keep pounding that brass. Phil K3EW



An interesting WES with all the unique swings, my Hats off to the SS op's. I had hoped to work N2JNZ, it's been awhile. The crew at KS1KCC did a great job TU for 6 bands 599 on 160 WoW !! A QSO with AK0SK was a nice surprise, thank you Sila. I am looking forward to Cycle 25...Yea 73, Thank you all Rick K0KEX The "Racer" handled the Q's very well....



What a great excuse to dust off my McElroy P-500. Thanks to all I worked and see you next month! 73, Carol K2VS



Realized it was bug/SS weekend so after 3 contacts plugged in my cootie and ran with it. Recent station rebuild and not everything in place yet. Thanks for the contacts! 73, Chas K3WW



Nice event, as always. Plenty of bugs & cooties to be had, but as for me I just used my old Lionel J38 straight key. Got my old IC-7200 out of the closet and ran 50 watts to a multi-band vertical. Managed to get our bonus station on two bands. Thanks for all the contacts. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Always a great experience though never enough time. Thanks everyone for being a great community. 73, Oliver K3FA



Had a LOT of fun ... and was horrible with my sending! Geez .. using a small key that I normally use for POTA. Worse problem, I have erred by being on the dark side -- SSB fun with POTA -- I must correct the error of my ways and get those CW ears and fingers back on track. Thanks to the very, very patient and courteous SKCC folks. Also, my new ICOM 7300 radio is still a learning process :-). 73, Jim K3YMI

WES March, 2023 III



Fun contest. I enjoyed using my Begali Intrepid bug, Begali Swing and an old BK-100 coffin bug. Rig: IC-7300 with an Elecraft KAT500 and KPA500 amplifier feeding a 40-meter delta loop and Force 12 vertical flagpole. 73, Bob K3ZGA



Used homemade side swiper. 73, Samuel



Converting potential energy into regulated kinetic energy, the simple physics of the pendulum first gave us an accurate means of telling time, and then, by a stroke of inspiration, a means of quickly and efficiently forming Morse code. I love bugs, and for this WES I chose from my modest collection my antique Vibroplex Champion. It was built in the early 1940s, the year of my birth, and like its owner. It is still capable of making its own unique music. 73, Frank K8FAC



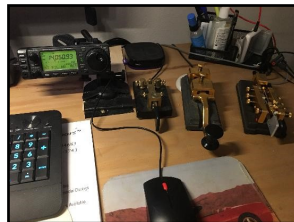
Having cataract surgery soon so we have been mostly QRT. Nice to work the old gang up at KU8L running Ks1KCC last night. Thanks for all the QSO's 73, Larry K8TEZ



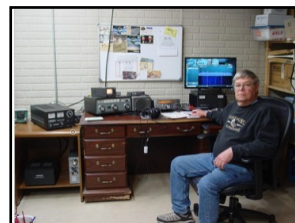
Another fun wes. High-light was working the KS1KCC multi op on six bands. The top three bands were ground wave as they were only about 50 miles away. I like this little single paddle key for kx2/kx3 from qrp guys and has been my main cootie key since I first used it last year March wes. 73, Randy K8ZAA



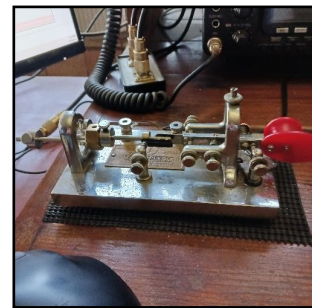
First WES with my new Icom 7300. Still getting the rig figured out. The key this month was a 1952 Vibroplex Presentation. See you all next month. 73, Noel K8NB



Working from the winter QTH near Tampa, IC 706 100w. 30ft wire hanging from a palm tree, good time tnx for the Qs. 73, Ray K9EYT



The bands hr were very good Thanks for all the Q's. Till next time 73, Craig KA9ERV



I was surprised to hear so many cootie's. I knew they were catching on but there were a few and some darn good fist. I handed out mostly /SS but did a few /B. Icom 7610 at 75 watts and 80 meter doublet at 30ft. Got some on 15 and 10 this month. That is getting better! 73, Allen KA5TJS



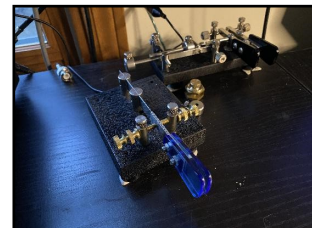
Real nice Condx this month. Thanks to all to whom I worked. 73, Rich KB1FGC



73, Mike KG4IMI



I really enjoy this theme, it was so much fun. As always thank you everyone for the nice QSOs. 73, Eric KB3NSK



I had a lot of fun this weekend. It capped off a week of vintage operation for NRR, though I jumped to my IC-7300 for the bulk of the sprint. I used the bug for a few QSOs but prefer the cootie for speed and accuracy. 73, Steve K9NUD

WES March, 2023 IV



Always a fun event. Bands were iffy at first but settled down nicely. Combined WES with the Novice Rig Roundup and was surprised ow many other SKCC members were also playing in the NRR. Most contacts were with Drake2-NT or Knight T-50 transmitter and a Drake R-4b receiver. Had three Q's with the HW-8. 73, Randy KB4QQJ



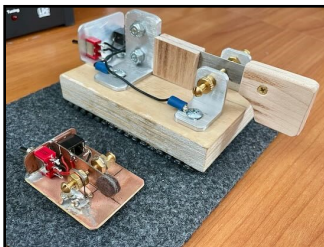
Cramming for the final 20 QSOs to reach my "S". Used my FAT BOY cootie for the first time on this event and really got the hang of that thang. SRI to all those I had contacts with...hihi. 73, Jon KC1FUU



Had a lot of fun during this contest. Used my new bug A MC Elroy from 1938 that a fellow ham generously gave me. There were a lot of FB SS operators out there too! 73, Tom KC3SVR



Not much time this weekend, but I didn't want to miss another WES. Sorry I didn't work enough to get my cootie keying back up to what it should be - thanks to those who had to hear it! 73, Steve KC5F



Really enjoyed the theme for the March WES. It inspired learning to use a Cootie and to put 2 home-made keys - both based on designs form the internet - on the air for the first time. Thanks for the QSOs! Now - which key to use today? 73, Terry KD8RGJ



Great WES. Thank you all: I had to add some weight on my bug to slow it down. It was fun, as usual. Yaesu FT-891, running 100 Watts into attic dipole at 25 feet. Vibroplex key. 73, Sergey KD9EBS



All qso's made with my 1940 Lefthand Vibroplex bug. (That N8KR found for me) Thx Ed WA9BBN for tuning it up. Played only on Saturday. Worked the WI QSO Party on Sunday. (Thx KK0I and WB9TFF fer Q's) 73, Jim KD9GDY



The Icom-761 was my rig of choice for this WES. It performed like a champ. Fun to hear all the Bugs and Cooties on the air this month. 73, Randal KG5IEE



The bands were not to bad here in Texas but they were not great either. I only got to be on the air some of the morning and afternoon Saturday and was out of town all day Sunday...Still had a great time digging and hunting for "Bugs", "SS", "Cooties", "T's" & "S's". Always a great time no matter how long you get to play radio. 73 to all for now, Doug KG5YTS

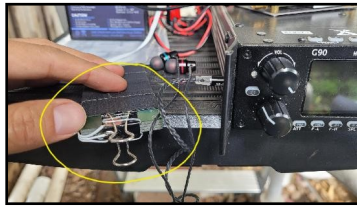


What fun! We were so happy to pass out bonus points. The N8CC station is fantastic, check out his QRZ page. 73, "SKCC" KS1KCC



My trusty sideswiper and I had a great time this WES. Started on 20 meters and then moved to 15 meters, a band on which I've not done a lot. Enjoyed the contacts including Manitoba - the first entry for that province in my log! Thanks for a great time, everyone. 73, Teri KO4WFD

WES March, 2023 V



I'm a new CW op, recently became a SKCC member, this is the first time to do SKCC WES. On Saturday I was tuning my trail EFHW antenna in the backyard, using my DIY paddle key as a straight key to hunt a few POTA and SOTA, and then did 2 SKCC WES QSO's, nice! My 1st QSO was with K7GUD (23806s), after sending his name "PAT" he mentioned "b" which means a bug key. My 2nd QSO was with KS1KCC (20550s), he sent his name "SKCC", I thought "What? Is this a human name?" Then I asked him to re-send his name, he sent "SKCC" again... Later I realized it was the KS1KCC club callsign! HI HI. 73, Jun KG6YJ



The Bug Family from L to R ... 1946 Blue Racer, 1934 Lightning Bug and 10th Anniversary Original .. had a GREAT time .. used all bugs about equally and worked a lot of new peeps and old ones too (jack, KK0I) .. tried my best to send well .. thanks to all !!! 73, George N2JNZ



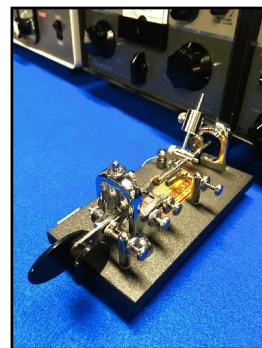
Had family in town and only worked about an hour or so at end of event (eating dinner in the middle of that...hihi. 73, Gary KI7PBR



It was great to work so many new numbers this WES. Just a bunch of new members and some older members I haven't seen before. The bands were really great especially on Saturday. Meant to only do a few hours on Saturday, but ended up doing pretty much the whole day after being pinned down several times in lengthy pileups. Great fun. Was on the air quite a bit on Sunday as well. Rotated between 2 bugs and 2 cooties. Really struggled with sending "/" on the cootie. My main cootie suddenly got a short in it somewhere- the key itself, cable, or switchbox so I finished with a backup. All good fun. Lots of great operators and I forgot how fun WES can be. 73, Bill KJ7GNB



Thanks for your patience with me as I learn this bug! I wasn't on the air long but had a great time. 73, Todd N0IP



A few days of bug practice ever and voila! I am in WES with a bug (and it showed). Jim, W6JIM lent me a left handed bug so that I could do this bug thing for the first time in 58 years of CW. Oddly enough both Jim and I are right handed but learned to use paddles in the opposite (maybe wrong) direction. We were just kids back then. In any event it took some struggle but now it's almost fun. That means the next challenge is the cootie. Please shield your ears! As usual, WES was a great time and we were blessed by superb band conditions with tons of European stations on board. Here 15 meters was the usual workhorse band with decent signals and low noise. I was happy to work KS1KCC on all bands 80 thru 10. What an enormous signal on all bands! KS6KCC will be requesting carrots and other nibbles for next month's extravaganza, see you then. 73, Chuck N0CW



Great to be back in the saddle after being gone for three months. Used the 1919 Vibroplex Original and the Begali HST "Cootie". Was able to catch at least one QSO on each of the bands this time. Thanks for all the contacts folks! 73, Jack KK0I



I had a great Radio time, FUN as always. Got 10 Bugs and 6 Cooties. Congrats! FB fists 28MHz NBS 4ele Yagi - 3/5W - Home-made SideSwiper. TU everyone for the QSOs. BCNU 73, Walt - .. ZUT



W1ZAH had the best sounding SS. Mine was the best bug of course. 73, Leo M0NNQ

WES March, 2023 VI



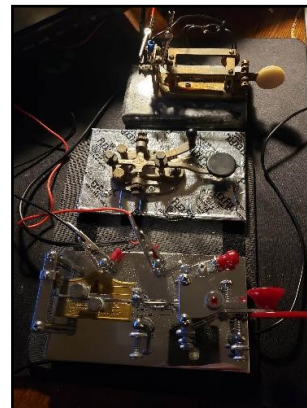
QRL on Saturday. Had a blast on 15m Sunday running a pile up. I felt like a DX station :) Conditions were quite Good. Best SS, Walt LW3EX sounded great! 73, Al N4OW



First time on 10m and it was fun. What a cool band. Also using my bug for a purpose was very nice. Thanks all for contacts! 73, Vic N6DVS



Lots of bugs (and a few cooties) out there! Lots of fun with great fists! It is so nice to have the higher bands open allowing more participation from our DX members. Thanks to KU8L for organizing and hosting the KS1KCC multi. Worked many friends from back home in Indiana . . . and I'll be joining them next month. 73, Ken N8KR



Too many distractions this weekend. Limited run time. Running the IC-7300, SB-220, wires for 160,80,40 es vertical (10,15,20) Vibroplex Lightning Bug es a No Name Cootie. A Big Thanks to N8CC es Crew for 5 bands with KS1KCC. Tnx everybody.. 73 Randy N8KQ



The propagation was finally with us! Worked 10 DX Stations :-~) I got a few extra points by working the gang at KS1KCC on 160, 40 & 20M. I actually split my time between the WES (N8XI) & NRR Club (KN8RHM) and had to Set up SKCCLogger for NRR because the NRR OnLine log is fairly glitchy...Used my Cootie, a modified Vibroplex VibroKey for the whole WES. Worked very well, except when I overdid the number of QSO's. My old FIST ain't used to all the work :-~) Everyone's FISTS were good, in their own way! 73, Rick N8XI



Part time effort with Begali Sculpture Swing cootie key. Ran 900mW to a 160M inverted-L. Award for best ears goes to VK2GR(!). Thanks to all who took time to pull me out of the noise. 73, Marty N9SE



Great WES and how nice to hear so many EU, OC and JA on 10 and 15M. Even worked a few of them QRP. I hardly got DOWN to 20M. Sure makes a difference when the sun is working again. Ham radio like I remember. I also remember the BUG/SS a few years back with some mighty sketchy fists. Was impressed at the sweet code heard by all this year. SKCC has the best bug & SS ops still on the air!!! Used my 1938 McElroy bug (Mac key) and Ten Tec Scout at 5W. Aerials were either my 5BTV vertical or 133 ft. long terminated folded dipole (TFD). Sometimes a 3-4 S unit difference between the antennas depending upon polarization which sure helped. CU all you "egg" heads next month. 73/72, Paul NA5N



Hello all.. rig k2, 5wts, g5rv at 35ft in a n/s inv vee.. used only a hb bug..i now have 88 kryes, all types. For LEGAL QRM ..haha. i do it daily..my other hobby is making callsign aques..have nowmade over 100 plaques for hams..my minny cnc unit is good.. as i got my SKCC nbr yrs ago, then i made and sent the SKCC officers a callsign plaque.. ha,,so they know what callsign to use..haha. Tnx to them guys, and everyone takecare and we will make more QRM in April WES.. haha.. it is LEGAL,,haha. So 7three or 7two..DAVE LARSEN N9ZXLQRP@GMAIL.COM



Always a nice activity. Never seem to have much time to operate on Sunday. Worked KS1KCC on all 5 bands. TNX! to all who make this club work!!! TNX to ALL! for your patience! 73 Steve NQ8T



That was a lot of fun! There was only one thing that was tough and troubling...picking which band to operate! There were CQ WESs everywhere. I worked 4 continents during this WES with 4.8W...amazing. Special thanks to Tim, VK5AV, for his patience in completing our QSO. Thank you to all of the wonderful SKCC members and WES organizers for a great weekend. SKCC Logger is a great tool and adds to the enjoyment! Hope to hear you all next month...I hope you hear me! 72, Will, NQ2W

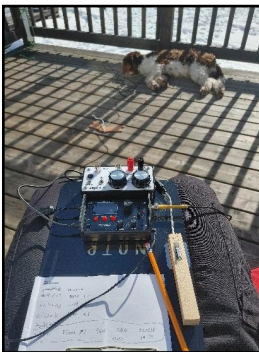


Been a while since I had time to follow through an SKCC weekend. Great to meet old friends again and had a blast using my Vibroplex Standard! 73, Andi OE3IAK

WES March, 2023 VII



Not a lot of time to work WES this weekend. Was also trying to log a few more in the Novice Rig Roundup plus basketball games to watch LOL. Used my Elecraft K4 on Saturday with a Bencher RJ2 key and my Ten Tec Triton IV on Sunday with a J-38. 73, Bill NZ0T



Very nice weather. 73, Dom VA2QDB



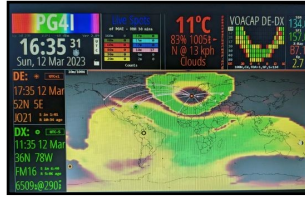
Don't let what they told you in grade school fool you - Cooties are fun! Repurposed Vibroplex single lever paddle turned into a Cootie! Thanks for the QSOs! 73, Cathy W4CMG



Only started late on Sunday afternoon, but still had great fun. All QSO's made with my Woody Cootie. Worked lots of new ones on 10m and 15m. 73, Luc ON7DQ



This was a very enjoyable WES. I operated QRP with the Icom 703 at 5W and the EFLW up the maples, which the LDG RT-100 turns into a multi-band HF antenna. My key was the W6AME Single Paddle (see picture) rigged as a sideswiper (see the small wire connecting both sides of the paddle at the back of the key). It was a real joy to be able to pass the /SS along with 5 extra points to all the stations that returned my weak signal. With the high bands opening early in the afternoon I was even able to contact several stations in Europe: France, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, Italy and even Serbia: Kare's YU7AE took some effort to decode as I was sure that what I was hearing was KX7AE as my old ear kept confusing the YU for a KX, but listening carefully I was able to eventually get the right prefix which resulted in one of my longest distance SKCC QRP QSOs, which at 4328 mi is just some 672 miles shy of the "SKCC 1000 Miles per Watt Award..."). Also, it was nice to contact the special sprint station K5IKCC in two of the bands. Many thanks to all es 73 de Jose VE3DTI.



10 meters was excellent on the first day with an opening to the west coast around 18:00 UTC. Worked several new states on this band. Finally got to enjoy Hamlock, it runs in a Raspberry Pi attached to an old laptop screen. The picture shows 10m west coast spots on Sunday. The band was not as good as Saturday. Thanks all for the nice event! Been using a 10 year old Vibroplex Original at various speeds. 73, Jo PG4I



Sunday pretty much QRT for me (ministry commitments) but had great run on Saturday - for once, no farm interruptions or emergencies! Wonderful condx on high bands. Amazing what you can do with bare-foot rig and single antenna (80 meter dipole) when Mother Nature cooperates. See all next month. 73, Dave W1DV



My most successful WES in more than two years. In 23 QSOs worked 14 SPCs, 5 new members (bringing my total worked SKCC members to 350) and K5IKCC to that. Thanks to all. My TAK-tenna 40 sits on the balcony for exactly 15 years now, and only a few months less the trusted Navy Flameproof key on my desk. 73, Vince S52CC



Fun event. Keys in the picture. Lightning (on left) set for 16 WPM, Deluxe Presentation (center) set for 10 WPM, Blue Racer (on right) set for 20 WPM. 73, Jim W1RO



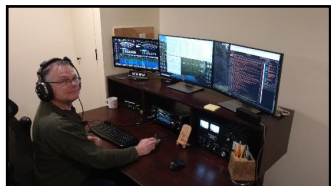
Thanks for another great event ! Used a 1945 Vibroplex and a new W1SFR TBCP. Alternating between the 2 sure keeps the grey matter busy Hi Hi. Heard lots of FB bug and cootie fists. Icom 7600 @ 100Wts. ZS6BKW antenna up 50'. 73, Jim W1WIU

Had limited time this weekend, but still got some fun in. Lots of bugs, fewer Cooties, but the quality of some of the SS fists was excellent. That craft has gotten better in recent years -- must be a lot of practicing going on! I used the VizKey Vertical bug in the photo for the whole contest. Note the cut-off coax adapter fitting on the top for extra weight...it slips on and off easily. Thanks to all. 73, John W1TAG

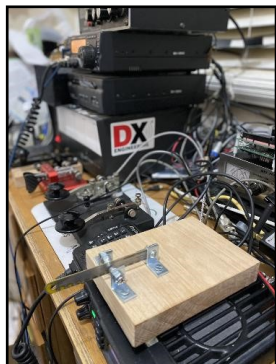
WES March, 2023 VIII



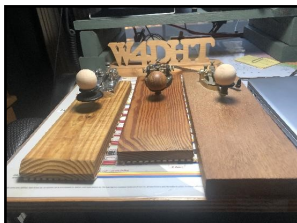
Out of town on Sat so only had a few minutes late in eve and an hour so on Sunday. Condx were very good on the higher bands. I worked 11 bugs and 4 sideswipers. Also got KS1KCC on 3 bands. Most of my QSO's were with the Begali Intrepid and the rest with my "Twanger" SS. Rig: K4D/KPA-1500 and antennas were Optibeam 4 ele on 10 and OB 4 element on 15. It was fun!! 73, de Dave W3NP de West Virginia



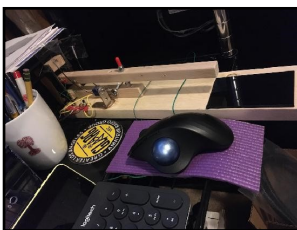
Only had a few hours to operate this weekend. Decided to use QRP 5w this WES for the first time. Wow the bands were in great shape! Worked KS1KCC on 20, 40 and 160. Special thanks to F6EJN, YU7AE, G4PVM and I4IKW. Tnx to all for QSO's. 73, Steve W6WU



Another great Weekend Sprintathon. Glad to participate along with the other OPs using a diy SS from N. Las Vegas, Nevada. Still working on my quest to 'S'. 73, Jason-WV3V.



This month's number of contacts was the highest since joining SKCC. Although, as usual, 20-Meters and 40-Meters were the best bands, several contacts were made on 10-Meters and 15-Meters. Much fun and thanks to the many "Bug" and "SS" operators. 73, Drexel W4DHT



I was on for only 2 hours, but 10m and 15m were buzzing away, with more contacts than I usually have on WES. 16 new numbers also bringing me closer to Tx8! Thank you, everyone! Also had fun trying to guess who was using which kind of key. My key was my current favorite, a wooden homebrew cootie. 73, Jordan W7VC



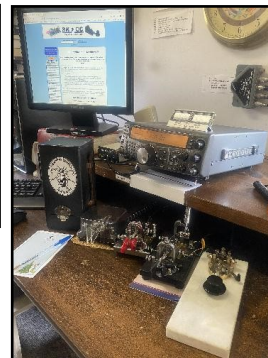
Great activity and propagations, Saturday waerethe best on 10m and on Sunday the best was on 15m band. A lot of new members have been worked. It's time to slowly gather QSOs for S :-). Using my oldie TS-950sd 100W output into 2 el. Steppir at 10m agl. 73, and cu in next SKCC activity. Kare YU7AE



Busy weekend but had to get on WES with my cootie and Bug. Ran QRP and had fun ! Thanks to all for another great WES ! 73, Rich W4RQ



What a great weekend! It was wonderful to hear all those BUGS and Side-Swipers! Great to work so many friends for the first time. QSL Cards on the way!! My bug for this event was the Viz-Key Vertical. Thank-you to all of you fellow CW operators of the SKCC!! 73, Jim W6JIM



TNX to all for helping me complete my Sx1 Quest for Senator. This was a great WES even with the Grandkids QRM in the shack. 73, Bud W5DW now 8344S



I've been away from working the weekend sprints. While it was a busy weekend for doing other things, I did manage to make a showing this weekend. 73, John W9WN



Good condx this weekend. No aurora as has been in the past up here. 73, Bob WL7WH



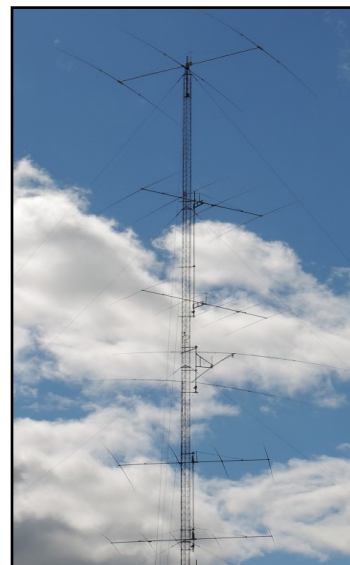
WES Contacts made this month using my Kent Single Lever Paddle, wired as a cootie. 73, Chris WX7V

909 WES QSOs! and KS1KCC

Some ops rent super stations and wish they could have such a station themselves, Jeff N8CC (7541) owns such a station. N8CC was the site of the multi-multi March WES operation as KS1KCC (ops were N8CC, KU8L, AC8W and K8AQM). KS1KCC is the official SKCC club call and in a WES event worth 25 points on each band you work the station.

Here is the list of antennas at N8CC:

- 160m-1/4wave Vertical tower
- 80m dipole at 90 ft
- 80m-5element steerable vertical array (parasitic)
- Full Wave loop for 40m
- 40m- 3L JK403
- 20m-4/4 HyGain 204BA
- Full wave loop for 20m 60 ft
- 15m-5/5 HyGain 155CA
- 15m dipole at 90 ft
- 10m-5/5 HyGain 105CA
- Full wave 10m loop at 40 ft
- WARC JK 1217 jr yagi 12m and 17m
- WARC JK 302 2 L for 30m 120 ft
- 2 wire Beverage listening antennas (6 directions)



And the 40, 30, 20, 15 and 10m yagis are on a 200 foot tower!

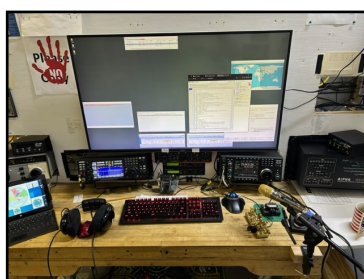
Jeff does a lot of SO2R (single operator 2 radio) work and his normal hf station looks like this:



Although the station is not normally used for a multi-multi operation, it wasn't a big deal to set up two other stations...reroute antennas. The station setups were as follows:



40m station...in the Midwest
"there are no meters like 40m"
for domestic events.



SO2R
Day...15m and 10m
Night...80m and 160m



Curt KU8L at the 20m station

During the WES all logging was done with N1MM and the stations were networked plus a monitor was constantly on the SKCC Sked page.

KU8L was the 20m operator with a bit of 40m work, K8AQM worked mainly 40m while N8CC and AC8W covered 15-10m during daylight and 160-80m during the evening hours when 10 and 15 were pretty much dead. Here is a band by band breakdown of our effort:



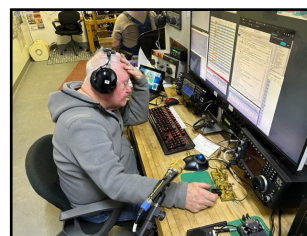
20m...KU8L



40m K8AQM



SO2R....N8CC
15-10m 80-160m



SO2R.....AC8W
15-10m 80-160m

Score - 76,356 Points				
Contest: SKCC				
Band	QSOs	Pts	SPC	Pt/Q
1.8	31	31	0	1.0
3.5	75	75	4	1.0
7	267	267	29	1.0
14	288	288	28	1.0
21	126	126	9	1.0
28	122	122	14	1.0
Total	909	909	84	1.0
Score: 76,356				
1 Mult = 10.8 Q's				
Rescore				

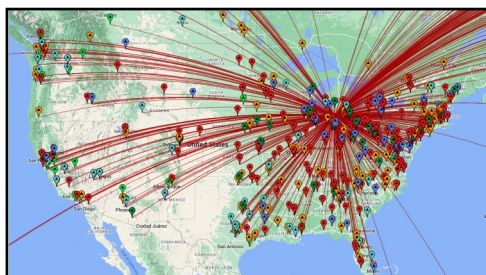
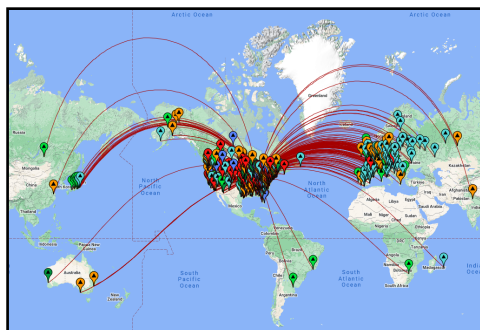
SPC is not correct, too many countries with unknown country codes, final score shown here not correct but band breakdown is correct..

We had a great time and because propagation that weekend was good we really enjoyed the N8CC super-station. Although we made over 900 QSOs, we did not work that hard and took several hours off to eat and joke with one another. We had to take a 2 and a half hour break on Sunday afternoon to allow a Zoom conference call since the only camera computer available was in the ham shack. That gave time for tours of the antenna farm for KU8L who had never operated there before. If we had worked one more multiplier or 10 more QSOs we would have broken 100,000 points for a score...maybe next year!

No one starved at the operation either; between coffee, water, soda pop, chili (bean loaded!), pizza, date bars and "healthy food" (who brought that?) no personal weight was lost that weekend!

All in all; great friends, great gear, great antennas and great propagation made for a GREAT WES activity!

73, tnx QSOs KS1KCC...aka N8CC, KU8L, AC8W, K8AQM



KS1KCC

SKCC

Straight Key Century Club
SKCC #20590S

Straight Key Century Club
10227 Feaga Farm Ct
Ellicott City, MD 21042
www.skccgroup.com

Confirming QSO with	Date Day / Month / Year	UTC	MHz	RST	SPC

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QSL KS1KCC via the SKCC bureau or direct with SASE only.

Confessions of a Casual Contester

Vol. 3 Issue 7

from the shack of David VE4DL

I am not now, nor ever have been, a Contester. I don't see myself becoming a Contester either, if one defines the term to include round-the-clock operations, intravenous fluids and diapers, and frequent relays of cold, one-hand meals. Not my thing, at all. BUT.....

Time has a way of fleeting by unseen. Saw the Theory of Everything this week, kinda reminded me to get on with things. Like this article!

I've been playing with Senior's Flex6400 from the comfort of my home. Not very intuitive, but Paul Reisdorf appears to have infinite patience. I may test that. The radio actually works quite well, but has a lot of surprises for the standard-rig-op. I can get contacts on it, I can even work it split, both CW and SSB, but I've been unable to integrate my logger/control software or my digital apps. Nothing works the way the manuals and forums say they work, alas. Keep beaver-ing away, I shall overcome. In the meantime, a little left-hand legerdemain and the acceptance of a slower rate allows casual operation in phone contesting. For CW, I'll have to overcome the software challenges first.

The very best thing about the Flex is that the auto gain control actually does cap the volume to my phones, so the KW+ stations no longer cause my head to explode. I wish my Kenwood would do that.

I have been playing with new connectors for my rotor control cable. I was right that the PowerPole crimper die is the right size/style to crimp the open pins for the Deutch connectors I bought, and the male connector (female pins) is already on the rotator pigtail. The female connector (male pins) will have to be crimped at rooftop. Lots of coax-seal tape on hand, but the connector pair is waterproof to roadworthy standard, so I'm not actually worried it will let me down in service. I acquired a single chain-link fence top pole, which I will bisect this week to replace the too-small mast originally installed. I have checked that the yagi is not actually frozen into the snowbank it is resting on in my backyard.

It was a surprising weekend for DX during WPX SSB. Worked new entities Indonesia, Morocco and Serbia. Heard clearly but couldn't work Korea, Turkey and South Africa. No Northern Europe. England, Eire and Scotland, no Wales. Aruba, Barbados and Bonaire. Very few VEs. 113 QSOs in 13 hours. Lots of usual suspects heard but not worked.

I'm also enjoying the digital world of DMR via my handhelds. I have them both working as they should on a single repeater. The next challenge will be adding more repeaters in my local area so I have coverage throughout southern Manitoba. Who said old hams can't learn new tricks? Not me!

The XYL and I are exploring new things we can do together in retirement, so it's not all ham radio in the basement and dolls in the sunroom. Some interesting common interests are surfacing. And the spring will bring spackle and paint season to our house, once the Red receeds.

But it isn't contesting. Nope. Not at all. Well, maybe.... yes it is!

SKS March 22, 2023



Fun as always. Got a slightly late start but 40m was good and 80 was quiet. 73, Bud AA8CL



Good condx on 20 and 40 meters. IC 7300 & J38 key to a 4BTv. 73 & STAY TUNED! Daryl K9QEW



Just a dozen for me this eve. Some on 20m, some on 40m. Ran 50 watts from my TS-590SG to a multi-band vertical using an inexpensive CW-Morse str key. Thanks all for the contacts. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



73, Gary KI7PBR



Fun night using my Bencher Straight Key. 73, Jim N4JAW



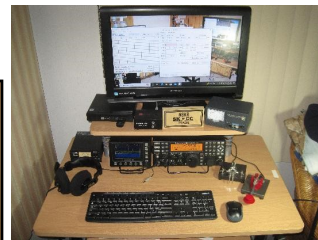
Another fun evening on SKS, Thanks to everyone! 20m and 40m tonight were both good from Florida. See all Y'all next month! 73, Rich W4RQ



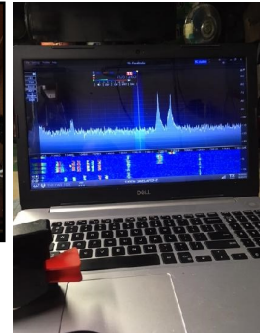
Stayed on 20M until last half hour before going to 40M. Surprised to get call from Stuart VK6MK, nice signal from down under. Worked lots of new folks, really nice to hear you. Thanks to al for the QSO's. Fun as always. 73, Steve W6WU



20M was hot and 40M was even better. I tried 15M, but nothing heard and no calls to my CQ. Thanks to all who pulled out my 4W QRP. 73, Steve K4JPN



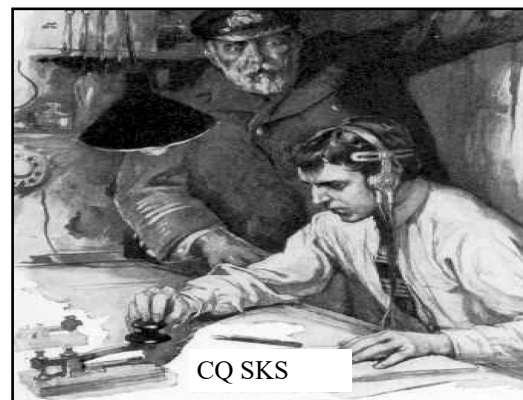
My final SKCC event from Florida this winter. Another fun SKS with many friends from back home in Indiana in the log . . . thanks Steve, Ed, Johns, Rose, Josh, Terry and especially my good friend Rich - W4RQ from here in FL on 2 bands! I tried 10 and 15 meters with no luck but 20 meters was good for 38 qso's with the rest on 40 meters. See you all next month from IN! 73, Ken N8KR



Tried running at the start but I didn't get many responses. I switched to S&P and made a few contacts then went in search of a couple of foxes in the qrp foxhunt. I hunted down both foxes and returned to the sprint with 20 minutes left to the end. My radio was a flex-6400 running 100w to a dipole up 30 ft. My key was half of a iambic paddle used as a straight key. Tnx for the qso's es 73 de Dave k2zc



Another fun SKS! Conditions on 40m were very good here. Used my brand new Xiegu G90 (my Kenwood TS-440S is now a silent rig). 73 to all, Steve NI8W



COMPARING OLD AND NEW K-4 TELEGRAPH KEYS ...AND REPAIR OF THE LATTER

By Matthew G. Vurek, N4DLA, SKCC 4174 © 2023 by the author all rights reserved

At the 2021 ARRL Pacific Division Convention (PACIFICON) outdoor tailgate flea market in San Ramon, California, I purchased a K-4 straight telegraph key that was in excellent cosmetic condition. The K-4 keys were made in Japan by the Toho Electric Company Limited from the early 1950s until the factory shut down in 2010. They were last imported for sale under the AMECO brand but earlier were sold by Allied, Calrad, Lafayette, Midland, Radio Shack and possibly other brands in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. My first metal frame key was also a K-4 that I acquired at a Maryland hamfest for one dollar in the summer of 1978 when I was 16 and my callsign was still WB3GYL. Its frame and lever were brass and may have been made many years earlier. I have used this key for nearly 44 years (it was my only key until 1993) and I never had a problem with it.

The more recent brand K-4 that I acquired (for \$10) was not as robust as earlier production models like the one I bought in 1978. The base is non-ferrous metal (not brass; instead it has brass-colored plating that had peeled off at a small spot) and the lever (what the knob is mounted on) is made of flimsy, non-ferrous sheet metal, which may bend when used by heavy-handed telegraphers. I borrowed a Cen-Tech 47257 caliper from my father, KF6CVA, and measured the thickness of the lever on my 1960s era K-4 as well as the newer K-4 I bought at PACIFICON. My old K-4's lever (made of steel) measured 0.127 inches thick while the newer K-4's lever measured only 0.085 inches thick...nearly one millimeter thinner. The old K-4 had brass trunnion bearing screws (0.192 inches in diameter) while the newer K-4 had steel ones that were slightly smaller (0.150 inches). The newer K-4 had a different style of binding post, a different shape of skeleton frame opening, and a different knob attachment. The older K-4 had deeper bearing cups and its exterior ribs extended across its entire width. The hammer and anvil (the contacts) are silver-plated on both the old and new K-4 keys. Both keys were marked (on the frame bottom) as made in Japan (embossed on the older K-4 but engraved on the newer K-4) but neither had a manufacturer's name. When weighed on KF6CVA's Ohaus triple-beam balance, the old K-4 weighed 173.6 grams while the newer K-4 weighed only 111.4 grams...nearly two ounces less.

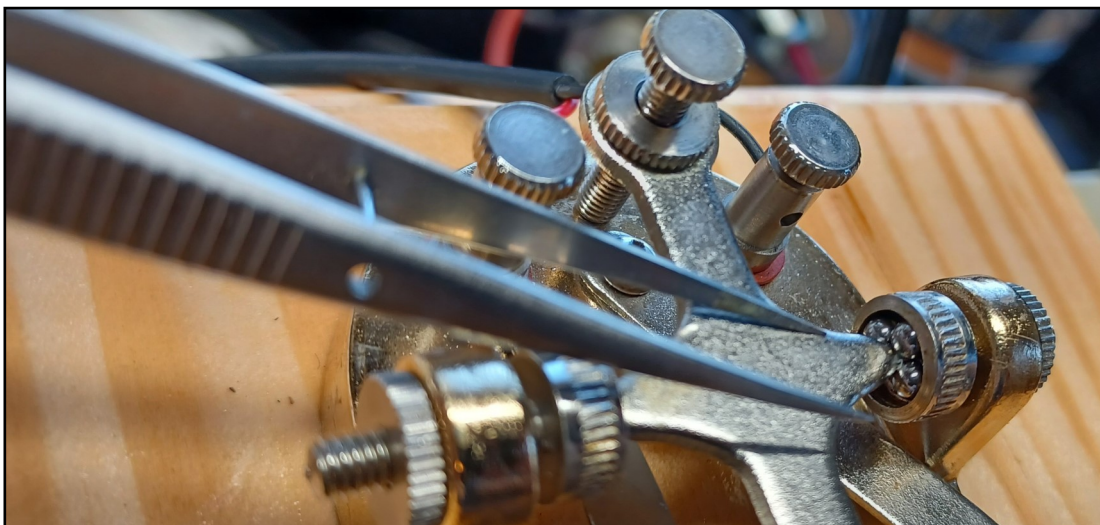
The weakness of the thinner lever on my newer K-4 became evident when it suddenly separated from the trunnion bearing cups (a trunnion on a telegraph key's frame provides bilateral support on the lever's sides) while I was adjusting the set screw for the key's contact gap. I had to adjust this set screw because this gap between the hammer (mounted below the lever) and the anvil (the elevated piece where the hammer strikes the key base above the lever) was problematic due to the poor resilience of the conical spring that returns the hammer upwards after it is pressed to send a dot or dash. The loose lever landed on the key base. With the lever gone, that released the eight tiny ball bearings (four in each bearing cup), which rolled down into the key's skeleton frame opening. Lucky for me, I had mounted the key on a wooden block so the ball bearings' escape from captivity didn't get them very far. I later attributed the lever's "unlawful flight to avoid telegraphy" to my failure to sufficiently tighten the two lock nuts that secure the trunnion bearing screws, which enabled the lever's get-away.

I now faced a dilemma...how to retrieve and then put the ball bearings back in the trunnion bearing cups. These cups had a “lip” around their insides that faced where the lever’s pivot points extended into them. I picked up one of the ball bearings with a pair of German-made Pilling E66 fine tipped stainless steel surgical tweezers that I had “liberated” in 1997 from a former workplace just before it was razed. I thought that since the bearing was small, the tweezers’ fine tip would easily grab it. They did, but I had squeezed too hard and instead the tiny ball bearing went flying, aided by the bearing lubricant on it. Fortunately, it landed back inside the K-4’s skeleton frame; another workbench escape attempt foiled by the key! I picked up the ball bearing again (not squeezing as hard this time) and carefully inserted it into the cup. After repeating the process two more times, I tried to put the lever back inside the cup but as soon as the lever’s pivot points contacted the bearings, they all fell into the bottom of the key again!

I needed a way to keep the ball bearings captive inside the cups when I inserted the lever. I decided to use a piece of Scotch Tape® over the cup’s opening to secure the ball bearings. After applying the tape, I loosened the bearing screw’s lock nuts, lowered the lever straight down and then pushed one pivot point into the right bearing cup. I then tightened the lock nut on that side and then pushed the other pivot point into the left bearing cup. I then tightened that lock nut so the K-4’s lever was secure and centered in the trunnion. The final step was to slowly remove the tape and see if the bearings stayed put...and they did! A few taps on the key’s knob confirmed the bearings worked properly and remained inside their cups. Success!! A tiny piece of tape may have survived buried inside the bearing cups but the lever’s up/down movement was the same as before the repair.



The AMECO K-4’s ball bearing cups and the tiny ball bearings (*Photos by KMINDY*)



The Pilling tweezers point at the AMECO K-4’s ball bearings, which are now securely inside their cup after the lever had been successfully re-inserted. *Photo by N4DLA*)



The lower quality K-4 keys produced in recent years were also sold in lower quality packaging, i.e., a plastic bag instead of a box. The label claims a “brass base” but it seems to only have brass coloring compared to the older K-4 keys. This AMECO K-4 was sold on eBay in April 2022 for \$62.75, not including shipping. The original price tag on it is \$19.95. *(Photo from eBay)*



The physical differences between, the older, heavier, K-4 and the newer, lighter K-4 are visible in these photos. The older K-4’s opening near the binding posts is curved while the newer K-4’s opening is straight. The older K-4’s binding posts are attached from the top while the newer one has binding posts that attach from the bottom. The older K-4 has larger bearing cups with ribbing that extends across their entire width. The word “Japan” is embossed on the older K-4 while it is engraved on the newer K-4. The purpose of the numeral 2 on the bottom of the newer K-4 is unknown. *(Photos by N4DLA)*



An AMECO K-4 key's parts are spread around amongst an assembled one.

AMECO
AMECO K-4 Telegraph Key

Connection and Operation

Two wires connect the K-4 to the device that is to be keyed (code practice oscillator, transmitter, etc). The wires coming from the device will be nominally polarized positive (+) and negative (-) and this polarity should be observed when connecting to the K-4. In Figure 1 you will see that the positive binding post is on the left. It is connected only to the lower front contact. The negative binding post, on the right, is "ground" or "common," connected to all other parts of the key. To attach the wires to the binding posts, refer to figure 3 and unscrew the binding post screw until the hole through the post is clear. Insert the bare end of the wire and tighten the binding post screw until the wire is clamped in position. If your wire has a spade lug you can insert it under the head of the binding post screw and clamp it down against the binding post sleeve.

To operate the key, press the knob down until the upper and lower contacts meet, completing the circuit and "keying" the device. The shorting switch is rotated away from the contacts in normal operation. Rotating it toward the contacts will close the key, causing uninterrupted keying until the switch is opened. This is useful for tuning and adjusting equipment and for sending a continuous tone.

Adjustment

There are three adjustments, each consisting of an adjusting screw and a lock nut. The lock nut holds the adjusting screw in place when correct adjustment has been achieved. Contact spacing and lever tension are adjusted simply by loosening the lock nut, turning the screw in or out, and re-tightening the lock nut adjusting the screw. If you have not developed other preferences or are using a straight key for the first time, the contact spacing should be set for about 1/16" or the thickness of a folded business card. Tension should be light enough that you can easily send with minimal effort but adequate control.

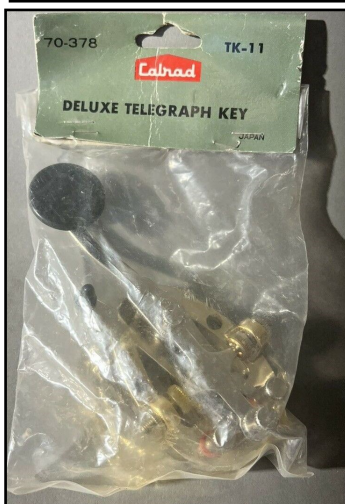
The trunnion bearings should be correctly set at the factory, but if it is necessary to adjust them, refer to Figure 3 and loosen the lock nut. Rotate the bearing cup in or out and re-tighten the nut. When properly adjusted, the lever should sit squarely in the center of the key with the contacts lined up, and move up and down freely with no apparent drag, and little or no perceptible sideways movement or "play."

Figure 1

Figure 2



The older, heavier (and better made) K-4 keys were sold under several brands, including Lafayette and Midland. Lafayette (above) engraved their company name on the top of the lever between the bearing cups, while Midland's box proclaimed the key's brass composition. (Photos from eBay)

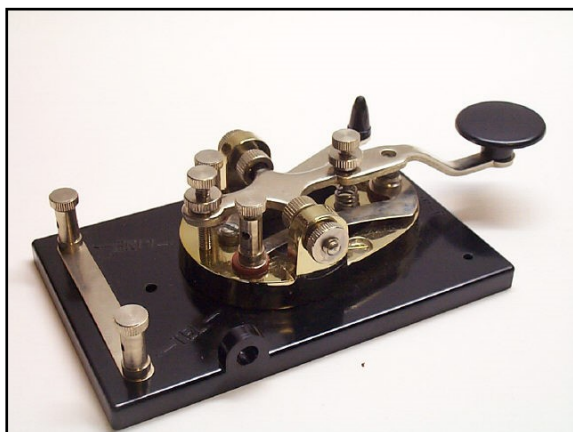


A Calrad branded K-4, still in its plastic packaging. Its skeleton base open was straight across on the binding post side, like the AMECO branded K-4. This key was offered for sale on eBay in April 2022 for the eyebrow-raising price of \$129.99. (Photo from eBay)

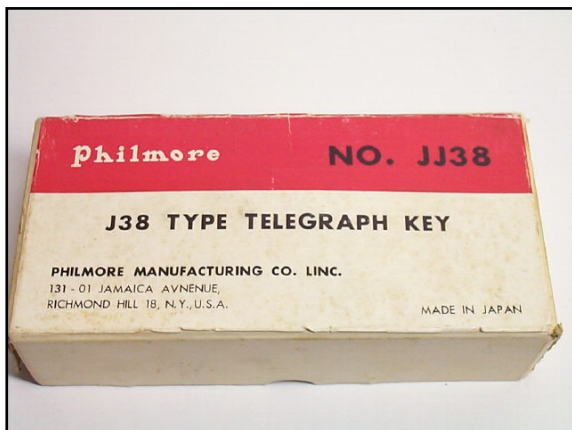
JJ-38 TELEGRAPH KEY



(PHOTOS COURTESY K6IX)



The earliest version of the K-4 was first made in Japan in the early 1950s and was named JJ-38. It appeared to be a copy of the U.S. military's omnipotent J-38 key (note the lettering on the base and the additional terminal posts) but the JJ-38 has a cup that contains ball bearings on the lever side of each trunnion screw, unlike the J-38. The depicted keys were imported in the 1960s and 1970s by the Philmore Manufacturing Company of Richmond Hill, New York.



The key's box had model number "JJ38" but the stock name was "J38 TYPE TELEGRAPH KEY," a nod to its heritage.

K6IX has more information on the JJ-38 at his website www.k6ix.net.

Brag March, 2023



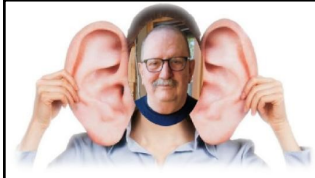
Not many contacts but was a good month. See you in April. 73, Bud AA8CL



Fun month, thanks for all the contacts. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



It was an average month with overall decent band conditions except for the severe solar storm we all experienced and the last couple of days of the month. Had to repair my Drake T-4XC as it blew a fuse and meter shunt resistor most likely due to a final tube short. All parts and final tubes replaced so now back in business. This happened a day after the Bug/SS WES so thankful to make it through that weekend. March was a month of endless rain and occasional high winds here in CA. No antenna or house damage except for the patio gazebo cover shown in the photo. Two of the trees in the background are redwood and tangerine, lawn is tall and very green and we did receive a record amount of snow on nearby 4000 foot Mt. Diablo. Looking forward to April QSOs, 73, Chuck N0CW



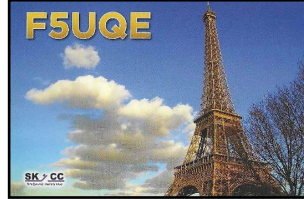
As you can see...I had put on my bigger ears to better hear the USA and Canada Stations...Too bad it will be for next month. THANK YOU to everyone I contacted. 73, André F5JBR



Thanks to all who participated. It was an interesting month with a few band openings. I was busy with family activities, but hope to do better next month. I pray that you know how high and wide and deep is the "Love Of Christ" (LOC). 73, Ric KA3LOC



It's been a great month with some good openings on 10 meters. Finally reached Sx3. Build my first QCX this month and hope to do some POTA activities with it. 73, Jo PG4I



Lots of qsos on ten meters with USA members, propagation excellent this month. Thanks all for qsos. 73, Duc F5UQE



Not my best, not my worst, still lots of fun. 73, Tom KB3CVO



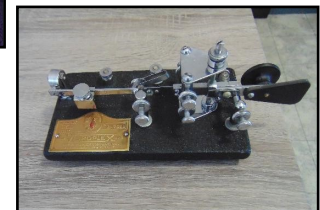
...well, after getting back from the other side of the planet after a 3-month sabbatical, it was great to get back in the saddle again and pound some brass. Many thanks for all those "ears" and "new ears" out there. I truly enjoyed getting my "Morse Code" fix every day! CU all again! 73, jack , KK0I dit...dit



A busier month for me than February, happy to have made more contacts including some marathons. 73, Russ K1RWT



I didn't have much time for radio last month. 73 to all, de KC5"SAM", Virginia



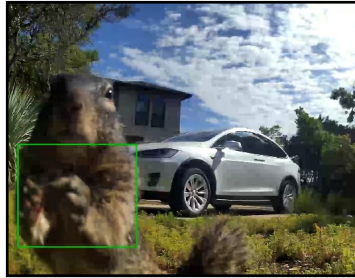
Thank You everyone who help me achieve my Marathon and Senator Awards. Below is my 1945 Viberox Champion. This was my Elmer's Bug. Uncle Wally the original VE3WH. 73, Sam VE3WH



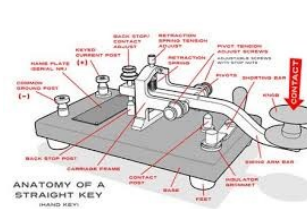
Brag March, 2023 II



Don't believe what they told you in grade school - COOTIES ARE COOL! Converted from single lever paddle to cootie with a mono connector, this was a great way to try out using a cootie with a key I already had. Just a little Loctite on the base, and now I don't have to chase it across the desk :) 73, Cathy W4CMG



Random pic for March.... 73, Pat W5WTH



Had a nice month with brag-most contacts were made in March using my Kent Single Lever key adjusted very close-almost like capacitive touch. Not my favorite key but I did enjoy using it once I got it dialed in. It's a solid key and very well made. 73 till next month! Chris de WX7V

FISHING WITH A CODE OSCILLATOR FOR BAIT

I had a couple of my Grandkids visiting over the Easter holiday. They enjoy coming into my shack to see all my trinkets and watch as I use my straight key. This visit I set up my Lafayette code practice oscillator with a straight key wired up to it and just set it out on a desk. It wasn't any time at all before I got a nibble. My 8 year old Grandson decided to see if the key would make any noise. Bam! I set the hook. I had a print out of the alphabet in Morse code setting beside the setup. He was amazed that I could understand the words that he was sending while I was across the room. (This isn't the proper way to learn code but HEY, I was fishing for whatever I could get)

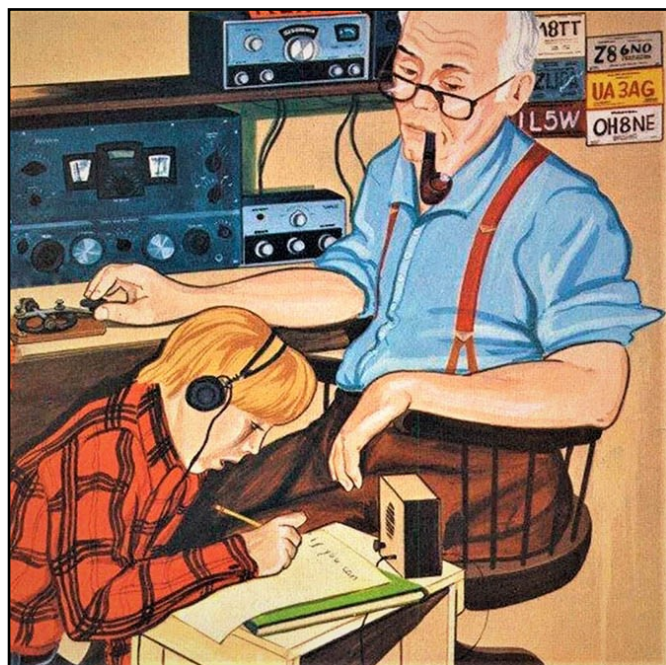
I ordered a CPO kit (Super Simple Code Practice Oscillator) from Four State QRP Group (<http://www.4sgrp.com/kitIndex.php>) and I'm excited about him and me assembling it together.

I believe that I read on another string that this kit was no longer available. Mine should arrive today, Monday April 17th.

Now there are three more fish in the pond that I will try to catch with the same bait. It just takes patience.

Just thought that I would share with the group.

73,
Bud / W5DW / 8433S



Windom Antenna Off-Center fed vs. Center-fed

L. B. Cebik - W4RNL

Ran some models of both a center-fed dipole and a Windom on NEC-2. I used 40 meters (67') at 7.15 MHz #14 copper wire for convenience. Results can be extrapolated to other lengths.

Pattern

Feeding the Windom up to 12.75' off center has no measurable effect on the pattern, either on free space models or at various heights above ground. The patterns are identical. Even end-fed, the pattern offset is a mere 0.03 dB.

A half-wave length long antenna has essentially the same pattern, wherever along it one places the feedline. The pattern changes more radically with height above ground. At a 35' height for a 40-meter antenna, the pattern of an oval, with maximum radiation at 60 degrees upward. At a height of 67' (about a half wavelength up), the pattern is like a peanut, with maximum radiation at about 29 degrees up.

Feed-point impedance

As one moves outward from the center point, the impedance rises from about 70 ohms to about 100 ohms at 12.75' outward from center. If initially resonant, it remains resonant (i.e., little or no reactance). However, at heights below 1 wavelength, the feed point impedance will change a good bit. Between 35' up and 67' up with a feed point 10' out from center, the feed point impedance changed 20 ohms resistive and 30 ohms reactive.

Why a Windom?

The sole reason for a Windom is the ability to set up the feed point for a common feed system that requires no adjustment on the lowest band and on even harmonics. There may be for some a mechanical reason for a Windom, for example, to place the feed point where it makes a shorter straight run to the operating position.

There is no advantage to a Windom in performance as an antenna relative to an antenna of the same length fed at a different point--like the center.

Center feeding for multiband operation is likely to yield better results on odd harmonics and on WARC bands, relative to finding ATU settings for efficient power transfer and best matching. Even harmonics are also usually no problem for an ATU. Hence, if using an ATU is not a problem and center feeding is mechanically feasible for a yard layout, then center feeding is usually simplest.

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For a single horizontal wire of a given length, the feed system does not change antenna pattern or basic performance (although, a badly chosen or maladjusted feed system can adversely affect performance by not transferring power effectively). A half wave wire performs like a half wave wire, whether we call it a Windom, Zepp, or dipole. A 102' piece of wire performs like a 102' piece of wire, whether we call it a non-resonant multiband dipole or a G5RV.

Rules of thumb, whether you pay \$100 for a kit or make your own:

1. Get the antenna as high as feasible.

2. Make the antenna as mechanically sound as possible.
3. Make all electrical connections secure and durable, and able to withstand the chemical soup called the atmosphere.
4. Clean and maintain the antenna periodically--at least once per year. Remember: wire and feedline age, but so slowly that we may not notice the decreasing performance until we do notice that the other operator is making all the contacts we used to make.

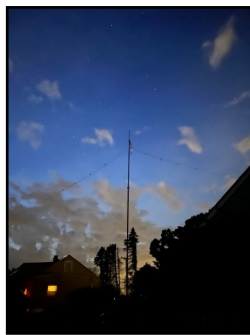
Most of the claimed outstanding performance in advertising testimonials for various configurations of single wire antennas comes from attention to the installation details the manufacturer provides and which we tend to overlook in quickly home brew installations, not from any special difference in the antenna patterns for equal length pieces of wire up the same number of feet.

Incidentally, the single-wire fed Windom is not a horizontal antenna, but essentially a vertical with an unbalanced flat-top, which produces some horizontally polarized radiation, but at lower antenna current levels than the vertical portion of the antenna--which has traditionally been called a single-wire feeder, but which radiates like any other vertical radiator.

Radiation in the shack from this arrangement is like radiation from any end-fed antenna--it likes a ground plane or counterpoise. Parallel fed Windoms--or even End-fed Zepps--show little imbalance between the parallel lines, either in practice or in models, despite some of the abstract arguments for imbalance. If an end-fed Zepp or parallel fed Windom shows excessive feedline imbalance resulting in shack RF, the most likely cause is less-than-optimum feedline installation--which would yield the same effect even for a center-fed antenna.

Take your time with antenna installation, no matter how basic the design. The better-installed antenna performs better longer.

Crazy Storm Damage! De Jim NJ3B



Before



After

Pre and post big wind storm we had here on April 2, 2023 in Industry, Pa, just north of the Pittsburgh Airport. Gusts were 65 mph +. When I lived in SC that mast survived one hurricane and two tropical storms.



I also do radio astronomy. Another windstorm we had earlier when we had the bitter temperatures did this to my array in the back. Those are receiving antennas. Under all that is a 3 element 15 meter Mosley beam. If you look under the tree in the one picture you can see it and it's mast crushed. Totaled. After deductible, the insurance company would write me a check for \$7 and odd cents. I didn't file the claim.

Conversational Morse

By N2KZ SKCC 402

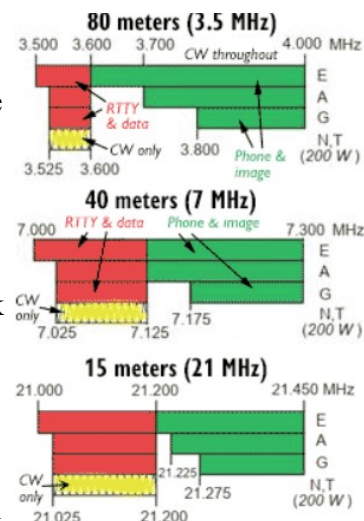
There must be a million ways to learn Morse Code. I have heard of some doozies! Sing Morse Code. Code by hypnosis. Learn while you sleep. Incorporate written Morse into pictures. Crazy charts showing alliances between letters. Nutty associations: "F - Fetch a fire man" Huh? My favorite: Morse Code sent using heavy metal guitars! <https://youtu.be/qaHgdFH3jgs>. You can't write this stuff! There are an equal amount of classic Morse Code *excuses*. Tell me all about the reasons you *can't* learn Morse Code. My ears can't hear the tones. It makes me nervous. I have reached a plateau. My hands are arthritic. I can't concentrate that long. The clicking disturbs me greatly. I had a dream about aliens that spoke Morse Code. It scares my cat! Don't fret. Karl is here to ease your pain!



I have been using and teaching Morse Code for over twenty years. I have met hundreds of people through Morse. I have seen some amazing feats! I once worked a ham on 80 meter CW who was deaf and blind. He loved Morse Code. Right up front, he asked me to send slowly and *deliberately*. I found out why! He would rest his fingers against a speaker cone to *feel* the code come in. Days later, I received a grey QSL postcard from him that had no stamp. (His wife had written the card.) He told me that handicapped people can send mail using a special frank on their letters instead of a stamp. Amazing!

Sending **QLF** is supposed to be a funny Q-sign that means "send with your Left Foot." It kiddingly says "Your sending is horrible!" Well...I worked a ham who had arthritis in his right hand, so he learned how to send with his left hand. When his left hand fell to arthritis, he was determined to keep sending. He mounted a straight key to a piece of plywood he placed on his floor and learned to send with his right big toe! He actually sounded pretty good, too. I never found out if he could send with his left toe! I used to have a 10 meter transceiver in my car and I would send Morse with a straight key on a wooden board sitting on my passenger seat. It was more comfortable than you would ever believe! I worked the world commuting from Manhattan to my home. One afternoon, one of the wires to the key broke off. I actually quickly ended the QSO by touching the broken wire to the key base to finish my message. This is not a recommended method of operation! The moral of these stories is simple: when it comes to Morse Code, there is very little that should stop you! I have a great friend that I met when he asked me to tutor him in Morse as part of his rehabilitation from a stroke. He did very, very well and was so grateful for the attention. I can tell you this.

You can summarize learning Morse in one single word: practice! Why do you practice? With just a basic Technician license, you can get on the air on HF (shortwave) and operate with 200 big watts with no antenna restrictions. No joke. You can work the world right from your shack! The CW frequency allocations for Technicians are just as powerful: (80 meters) 3525 to 3600 kHz, (40 meters) 7025 to 7125 and (15 meters) 21025 to 21200 kHz. Don't you want to try? Rock on! Morse is simplistic. It is just dits and dahs. No aural modulation or computer interfacing required. Use a key, a bug or a paddle and make your signal go on and off. That's it! The robust nature of this Morse is just amazing.



With little complexity, you can send code over the air with tiny amounts of power and be heard around the world. Morse defies distortion, noise, interference and fading. Error correction is built in. Miss a letter or two and you can still retrieve the overall message. Get the message? You bet!

Conversational Morse

When I teach and tutor friends who want to learn code, I take a somewhat different philosophy than most. My approach is logical. A very basic QSO is a simplistic game of fill in the blanks where you look for key words: the other person's call sign, name, location and possibly the name of their rig and type of antenna. An RST signal report is usually sent as well but a simple 5 N N (for 5 9 9 — a perfect signal) is quite acceptable. Quite frankly, all you really need to copy is their call sign and their name. If you quickly look up their call sign on QRZ.com, you might be able to fake that, too! If your conversation continues a little longer than a basic 'give the basics then hit and run' QSO, you may be called upon to send your rig and antenna information and possibly a weather summary about your QTH: 'It is sunny and 55 degrees.' With a little practice, you could handle that too!

The core of my syllabus is built on learning to hear the information that makes your QSO unique. Full sentences are not required. Using standardized shortcuts is always a big help. Two single numbers — 73 — equate to 'best wishes.' My location becomes *QTH*. Is it cryptic? No! It's in code! Listen for call signs, operator names, locations and possibly rigs and antenna types and a weather report. You are done! This is what you focus on. This is what you drill. This is how you build your confidence and enjoy success. QSL? When you are a brand new beginner, you don't really have to comment directly about what they have just sent you. All you have to do is eke out the items they are talking about to make a coherent reply. The specifics are secondary. Copy their call sign and maybe their name. These are the essentials for your ears to capture! Complex detailed content comes with improving your fluency through practice and experience. It can be joyful and fun. I promise! Think of it as trying to have a conversation while attending a loud party or any other noisy location. You can reply with your information and then gracefully say 'TU es 73' - thank you and best wishes - and complete the QSO like a champ! Congratulations! You made it! Another entry in your log book! Before you tell me that this is no attitude to take and this is a miserable way to start learning code, try to remember your very first CW QSOs. Didn't you fight your way through like this when you began to try to receive code? I know I did! When I took my first 5 words per minute code test I scribbled down many smaller words but found myself just a word away from passing the code test! My examiner told me to look very carefully at what I had copied. I looked at K_NW_D over and over trying to understand the message. It dawned on me! The broken word was *Kenwood*! I passed! I earned my CSCE! (Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination). I earned code privileges! I was now a Technician Plus!



The First Steps

Students starting from the very, very beginning take baby steps. I insist that graphical Morse charts with dark black dots and dashes are strictly prohibited. You can use a cheat sheet but the code equivalents must be written in phonetics not graphics. You are listening to Morse like any other language. You are not a computer attempting to make coherence from code. You are a living and breathing human being with ears! In time, you begin to hear distinct letters and then full words and phrases. You immediately recognize **di-di-dah-dit** as the letter **F** and so on. I send one letter at a time and you tell me what letter it is. This is a very important step! *You are becoming a good listener!* When I start seeing you've gained a little confidence in identifying letters, we advance to people's names and rig types. Let's try easy names like E D

and A L — and — the big four manufacturers that I like to call **I KEY!** Icom, Kenwood, Elecraft and Yaesu. (These are the very first whole words I will send to students.) One wonderful rig name to copy is **Ten Tec**. It is very simple in content and has a distinct sound and rhythm to it! It's easy to remember and may become the first words you understand without spelling them out! These lessons are peppered with more letter and number drills but in a very sneaky way. I send them as **v-e-r-y s-l-o-w** call signs!

Let me also share this insider tip: When you are used to sending and listening to code at 25 words per minute, shifting gears down to 3 words per minute takes a lot of care and concentration! Boy! Does it sound different! From the start of your schooling, you really should listen to each character as if it were sent at 15 words per minute. The timbre of the sound of each letter of the alphabet will always be the same but we leave a good pause between each letter to let you consider and think about what each one is. This is called the **Koch method**. Learning the fast sound of each letter can really accelerate your studies. You don't have to learn how a letter sounds sent slowly and 'then learn all over again when things speed up. It just makes sense.

You'll see! I will say this over and over again: *Become a good listener!* At this point in the course, you want to lead your students to find a HF receiver (or access a SDR —Software Defined Radio —over the Internet) and start listening to real over-the-air QSOs. My initial instructions: Just try to *copy the call signs* of the two stations that are talking. That's it! Simple! The call signs will be conveniently sent several times during the QSO exchanges so you will have a lot of chances to check if you have copied the calls just right. Then look up



both operators on QRZ.com and see if what you copied makes sense. QSL? Great places to listen for slow code are from 7025 to 7060 kHz on 40 meters and 14050 to about 14060 kHz on 20 meters. See who you can copy! It's just like you are working them yourself! Later on, my students advance to picking out more details like the QTH and exact rig and antenna type. Be-

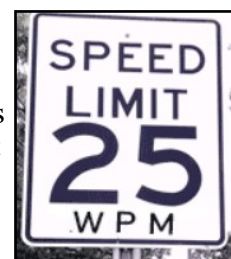


coming a good listener is great fun and really boosts your confidence when you can break the code! When you can reach out this far, you are almost ready to leave the nest and fly on your own! The ultimate test and drill is sufficiently difficult even for seasoned DXing CW operators. *Listen* to CW code practice broadcasts from the ARRL via the powerful signals of W1AW from Newington, Connecticut.. *Send* copy you can find in written material like newspapers and magazines. In both cases, all of the words you'll handle will be complex and way beyond the content you'll hear in regular CW QSOs over the air. When you have confidence sending and receiving advanced content with collegiate-level vocabulary, you have earned your Master's degree in Morse!

The W1AW broadcasts are really heavy sledding for beginners but your listening muscles will grow strong and fast if you put your mind to it! Their progressive speed format gives you an instant read-out of your current speed status. See how fast you can go! Check out W1AW's latest broadcast schedule at:

<http://www.arrl.org/w1aw-operating-schedule>. Searching for other fun ways to build your code speed? While you are outside walking or driving, look at billboards or road signs or anything you can see and try to send all the letters in your head: "Speed Limit 25" and things like that. Any text will do!

Don't forget: Listen to HF CW every chance you get. Sing CW if you want to scare people. Code can be great fun! Another incentive: As you get comfortable sending code, your on-air conversations will grow in complexity and content. You can share your experiences and stories with lots of other people who are just like you. Occasionally, you might react to what is being sent or even laugh out loud. Consider how crazy people will



think you are if they hear you listening to the dahs and dits and you are laughing! The last laugh will be on them... and only YOU will know what is being said. You can read code!

Success

All first QSOs are big leaps! You might be a little scared or apprehensive but you will get through it. This is a unique experience you only have once! Time will fly by and you will immediately earn newfound courage and confidence. Keep going! Let's try for another one. Your logbook will grow and grow and your signals will travel far and wide. Have a nice trip. You will develop a skill you can enjoy for ever and ever. Congratulations! You are a CW operator. A quick note about Morse Code keys: I always encourage beginners to first learn with a basic **straight key**. It is the stick shift in the world of CW. Your



Karl operates a straight key-

sending will be deliberate and accurate. A straight key will allow you to cruise along with your message and then slow down to emphasize difficult content: "OP K-A-R-L QTH K-A-T-O-N-A-H N-Y. SO HW CPY?" Please remember: Using paddles, bugs and keys are an excellent way to send really, really bad code. Rapid sending devices are hard for beginners to control and require advanced skill. Stay straight!



Brevity

If you really want to polish your skills, discover how to operate like a first-class pro. Learn from the people you meet on the air! You will find the most important and meaningful QSOs you can have are with seasoned old-timers who were professional military or marine Morse operators. They handled important and essential message traffic on a daily basis using the most expedient and accurate methods possible. These guys really know their business and are often anxious to share their tricks to new generations of CW operators. They are my most precious moments on the air. The lessons I have learned are invaluable. Listening to all of their adventures is amazing! The finest tip you can ever learn from them can be sent in one simple word: **brevity**. Listen to your heart and always remember this: You have a lot of complex information to send and it needs to be understood with word perfect accuracy. Time is precious and fleeting. Follow the format used when sending old-fashioned telegrams. The cost of the message was based on how many words you sent. You don't want to send unneeded words that don't add meaning to the message. There are some terrific tips to be learned to master this skill! You probably already know some basic shortcuts. Just using my voice, my opening statement might be: "NM9J.. This is N2KZ. Thanks for your reply. Your signal is very good with nice tone. So how is your copy? Back to you. NM9J from N2KZ. Go ahead." Switch gears to Morse Code CW speak and you will get: NM9J DE N2KZ TU UR 5NN SO HW? AR NM9J DE N2KZ K. Short! Quick! Brilliant! Accurate! Learn the jargon: There is no need to patiently send that you have a *Yaesu FT-dx1200 connected to a near vertical incidence skywave antenna*. Cut it down to the essential content: Rig? 100W to dipole. Done! End fed wire becomes EFW. End of message: AR. Back to you: BTU. Really quick 'over': BK. See you again: CUAGN — I am sure you get the idea! Ah! But there is more! An old Navy operator taught me this trick: Give up the endless pro-sign for a period: di-dah-di-dah-di-dah. Just send an X — dah-didi-dah instead. This was a shorthand that was used by Morse operators going back to the beginning of time. It has a very distinctive sound and does not waste time and energy. It is a fine break between thoughts and universally understood by all who know! Another trick has turned up in the last year or so to these ears. Experience the insane madness of a big on-air contest longing for multitudes of QSOs and rare DX. The faster you can make a contact, the more stations you can log. Sending long full locations is simply unacceptable. In vogue now is sending your location simply as a two letter designate. You wouldn't send C-o-r-t-l-a-n-d-t

t M-a-n-o-r dah-dah-dit-dit-dah-dah (*for comma*) N-Y... but simply just N-Y. Much better! There are lots of little techniques like this. All you need is experience and good mileage on the air! You will learn all sorts of wonderful tricks to make yourself sound polished and admirable. Go for it!

Sign Up and Register

To officially join the Morse Code CW community, part of creating your personal identity requires registration in two widely popular CW clubs.

(Membership in both is now free!) The Straight Key Century Club (SKCC) can be found at: <https://www.skccgroup.com>.

The International Morse Preservation Society (FISTS) lives at: <https://www.fistsna.org>. You will regularly hear CW operators request your SKCC and Fists membership numbers as they tally points for operating awards. Join the pack and maybe work towards your own certificates! The crème de la crème of CW operator clubs is the FOC — The First-Class Operators Club... and they truly are! <https://www.g4foc.org>. When you reach a very high level of sending speed, sending accuracy and perfect traffic handling ability, you just may be nominated by a current member of the FOC for admission to the club. You then have to associate with those who already have become FOC members and — without any request or campaigning — be nominated by four other FOC members in the next six months — from at least two different continents — for future consideration. If you shine in their eyes, you may be inducted as a FOC member. Needless to say, it is quite a high honor! Many wonderful applications are available online to improve your code proficiency to expert level. My favorites are CWCOW at <https://morsepower.blogspot.com/> and the G3FON ensemble at <https://www.g4fon.net>. Both sites feature wonderful tools to improve the accuracy and consistency of your keying. The applications they offer are all free for download! You'll enjoy the design of CWCOW. All you need is a Windows computer. Nothing more! If you like, you can use the down-arrow key on your keyboard as a straight key. Send your code and watch the screen. You'll be able to immediately see the accuracy of what you are sending. You can also have real-time online QSOs with other people practicing their code. No license is needed here! You are not on the air. You are on the Internet using a server in California or Florida! Try the G3FON tools, as well. The members of the First Class Operators Club use it to perfect their fists and practice their artful and accurate sending skills. Welcome to the halls of the academies of Morse Code!



Universal Understanding

Morse Code, combined with the clever and useful roster of Q-signals (QSL QRP QSO QSY and so on) seasoned with a little bit of French (DE for 'from') creates a solid method of sending messages that transcends languages and manners of speech. Morse really is an amazing and universally understood language. Morse can also be a miraculous communications bridge to those who can't speak or write. Handicapped people have used code to get their message across. I aided a stroke victim through his rehabilitation by renewing his ability to use Morse Code. What a great way to make new forever friends! For inspiration, look to an organization called HandiHams: <https://handiham.org>.

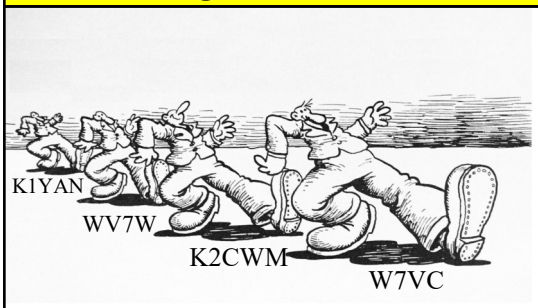
Free Offer

You can obtain a free digital copy of my Morse Code study guide by sending an e-mail request to: n2kz@arrl.net. All of your questions and comments are always welcomed! I am always available for help and encouragement. You have your homework: Become good listeners and study code! See what you have been missing!

73 DE N2KZ dit dit

Slow Speed Saunter April, 2023

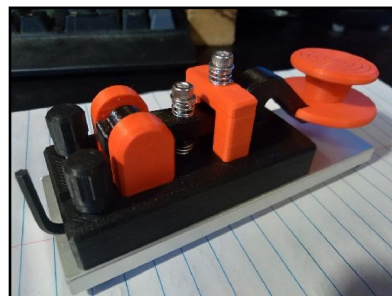
Slow Speed Saunter



Only had time for 3 QSOs but the relaxed pace and friendly ops was great. I'll be back next month! 73 and Happy Easter, friends, Dave



CQS! CQS! CQS! CQS!



Got such a good start earlier today I even got a handful of POTA CW stations (NOT included in my Brag/SSS tally) and I planned to return late this afternoon to do more SSS, but severe t-bangers arrived so had to turn everything off. So only a count of 13 for me this time. Ran 5 watts all day, so thanks to all who heard my small signal. Used a small CW-Morse Str Key. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Bands were bad here and then some antenna issues. Still had fun although I lost several QSOs due to QRN and QSB. 73, Les WB5JWI



Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
KG6YJ	Jun	27223	CA	3
G1KOT	Mike	8188	ENG	3
W4QDV	Dave	21777	GA	3
AH6RT	Mike	26387	HI	2
K9NO	Paul	25345S	IL	1
W9GOO	John	21474S	IN	1
KA3LOC	Ric	660S	KS	6
K1YAN	Gary	7563S	MA	9
AK3X	Peter	7217S	MD	4
K2CWM	Curt	3018S	NJ	13
AC8KJ	George Rowe	8611C	OH	6
KA8HFN	Larry	2046S	OH	8
N18W	Steve	26659S	OH	4
W7VC	Jordan	24194T	OR	23
W4CMG	Cathy	20093S	TN	8
WB5JWI	Les	5013S	TX	3
W15H	Mike	11770S	TX	2
WV7W	Bob	5779T	WA	8
KD9GDY	Jim	18156S	WI	2

Participants and QSOs by SPC

CA: 1 / 3	ENG: 1 / 3	GA: 1 / 3	HI: 1 / 2	IL: 1 / 1
IN: 1 / 1	KS: 1 / 6	MA: 1 / 9	MD: 1 / 4	NJ: 1 / 13
OH: 3 / 18	OR: 1 / 23	TN: 1 / 8	TX: 2 / 5	WA: 1 / 8
WI: 1 / 2				

FUTURE HOME FLOOR PLAN



Future Home Floor Plan

My wife and I are planning to build a new home. She asked me to draw-up what I thought would be a good floor plan for our new home...so I did. When I came to, there was no sign of my drawing, good thing I saved it on my computer!

Wisconsin Jefferson Tri County Swapfest

On March 19, 2023, the SKCC table was present at the Jefferson Tri County Swapfest! There were 13 SKCC members that signed in this year. I added W9GOC to the list as he was busy watching over his own table. So, 14 total on my list. I believe we had 21 sign in, in 2022. Still it was good to see everyone. I handed out 5 SKCC buttons.

I had the special privilege to meet Donna WB9TFF and Gil WB8TFH in person for an eyeball QSO. Another highlight was a young man KD9VGV stopped by and sent his call on my J-38 SK. He is 11 years old. He didn't sign up as a member yet.

Looks like there were 2 new members added. K9ZIP Joe and WB8HD Jim. Looking forward to working them. Thanks to KD9GDX Brenda, my YL, for helping me out.

73, Jim KD9GDY 18156S



L to R: Kevin KF9AQ, Ron WB9YZU, Gil WB9TFH, Donna WB9TFF, Joe K9ZIP, Jim KD9GDY, AA9IK Quentin

Ain't It the Truth!

It's like this— If there is a Little Water on the side of the road- a redneck will fish in it. If there's, well... anything, a HAM will hook coax up to it and brag to his friends how he talked to a scientist in Antarctica on the air conditioner chassis!

I love radio!
...unknown author

True story..... A ham I knew while living in Idaho, in the wee-hours of the morning, would connect to the shield of his cable TV feed for an antenna. I guess no one was watching TV at that time of day ...

“Never do anything to attract enemy fire – It annoys those around you.”

Murphy's Laws of Combat...and stealth antennas!

The quote "better a crappy antenna than no antenna" is spot on.

New/old antenna theory:

“There are no rules here. We are trying to accomplish something.” Thomas Edison.

A Very Low Noise Antenna

Editor...At the end of March several comments on "how to reduce noise" appeared on the reflector. One response from Rich W9RJK regarding a "low noise" antenna is important. Below is Rich's note:

.... I found an antenna that is a noise blanker... I found this in a book... "Lew McCoy on antennas"... (WIICP)... The antenna is a 102 foot dipole fed with 2 rg6 coax lines... This is common cable tv coax... Only the center conductor is used for each leg of the dipole... The shields are tied together at the feed point... At the shack end the 2 center conductors go to a 4-1 balun and shields to ground... From there to your tuner or radio... I had a constant s7 noise on 40 meters and sometimes more... This antenna knocked it down to a s3 and also makes a good difference on the other bands... I have those 100 k power lines a block away from me... I have a Comet Cat 300 tuner... I can tune 160-6 ... This antenna design is from Spencer W4HDL... It is cheap and it works "May the Morse be with you." 73 Rich W9RJK

I have used this antenna for years and found that "if I could hear them, I could work them!" Here is the original article Rich was talking about and comes from the old 73 Magazine February 1984.

J. W. Spencer W4HDX
300 Lido Cove
Niceville FL 32578

This Antenna Is Too Good To Be True

*It's cheap. It works well on all bands.
And it radiates a super signal.*



Completed antenna mounted in tree.
10 73 Magazine • February, 1984

Would you like to have an antenna that is capable of working all the HF bands, or any combination of the HF bands including the new WARC bands, with excellent results, at a fraction of the cost of any of the commercially-available multi-band antennas now on the market? Would you also like to have an antenna with an extremely low noise factor? I'm about to describe an antenna that is just what you've been looking for.

This antenna is a combination of the old reliable Zepp with the addition of a balanced, shielded feeder system which has been described in various articles in past years.

This antenna has been in

use at this QTH as well as other locations for over two years and has yielded many fine DX contacts and many good reports stateside.

To determine the comparable merit of this antenna, I erected separate dipoles cut for the center of each band and fed with a single coaxial cable. Then I connected all antennas so they could be switched rapidly to determine the comparable signal strength of each as compared to the Zepp antenna.

In addition to the favorable signal strength comparisons, I also found that the noise level on the Zepp antenna was as much as 5 S-units lower than the noise on the cut-to-frequency dipole with single coax feed. I noticed this particularly on

Desired Bands of Operation	Length of Each Side of Antenna From Center to Each End
160-10 meters	108 feet
80-10 meters	54 feet
40-10 meters	27 feet
30-10 meters	18.7 feet
20-10 meters	13.5 feet
17-10 meters	10.4 feet
15-10 meters	9 feet
12-10 meters	7.8 feet

Table 1.

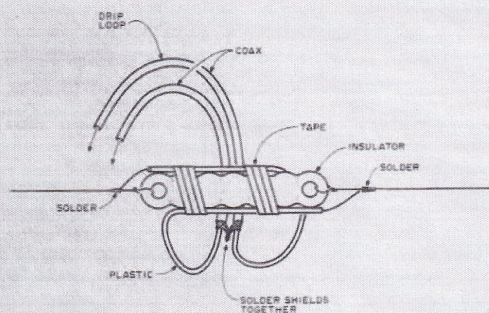


Fig. 1. Method of supporting coax cables.

the model of this antenna which was erected inside the attic of the house in close proximity to the ac wiring of the building, where the noise level dropped from an S-7 on the regular dipole to an S-2 on the Zepp antenna.

To erect this antenna, you simply figure the length of each side of the flat-top from the center to one end by using the figures shown in Table 1.

This antenna can be cut for operation on any combination of the HF ham bands, including the WARC bands which have not yet been released. For example, if your space is limited, you could put an antenna in the attic of the house, as I did at one location where I had an attic length of only about 30 feet, by figuring the antenna for operation on the bands from 30 through 10 meters, resulting in a length each side of center of 18.67 feet. Then I ran the wire in a Z configuration through the attic to compress it into the available space.

I have used various configurations on this antenna, such as the halo and the inverted vee, and all give good results. If you can get the wire running in a fairly straight line, though, your radiation pattern will be more predictable.

The flat-top portion is designed so that it is non-resonant on all bands of operation, thereby avoiding any extremely high or extremely

low impedance points at the feedpoint. It is designed to be resonant between the one-quarter, half, three-quarter, and full-wave points on each band, thereby presenting an impedance to the antenna tuner which is well within range of the tuner on each band and will not cause any loading problems. An antenna tuner is required which has a built-in balun or you must use a 4-to-1 balun at the bottom end of the line if you don't have one built in the tuner itself.

The feedline is made of two runs of RG-8/U cable for powers up to 2 kW PEP, or for low-power operation under 100 Watts output, RG-58/U cable may be used. The lower loss of the larger cable is to be desired, however, even if low power is used.

At the top end of the

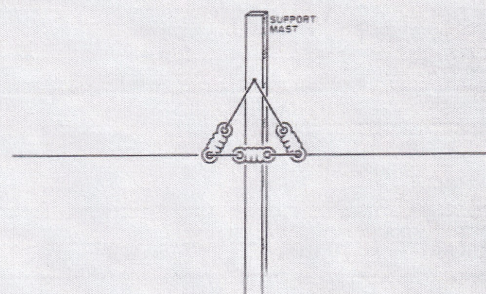


Fig. 2. Method of supporting antenna at center.

feedline, you connect the shields of the two coax cables together but *do not* connect them to anything else. Then at the bottom end of the line, the shields are tied together and connected to the ground connection in the shack and to the frame of the tuner.

The inner conductors of the coax cables are tied to each leg of the antenna wire at the top of the line, and at the bottom end of the line they are connected to each of the balanced-output terminals of the antenna tuner.

The feedline can be run anywhere—underground, through metal or vinyl conduit, or in the open. The advantage of this arrangement, however, is that unlike the old open-wire feedline previously used on Zepp antennas, it does not have to be kept clear of surrounding objects and is not

affected by anything it lies against.

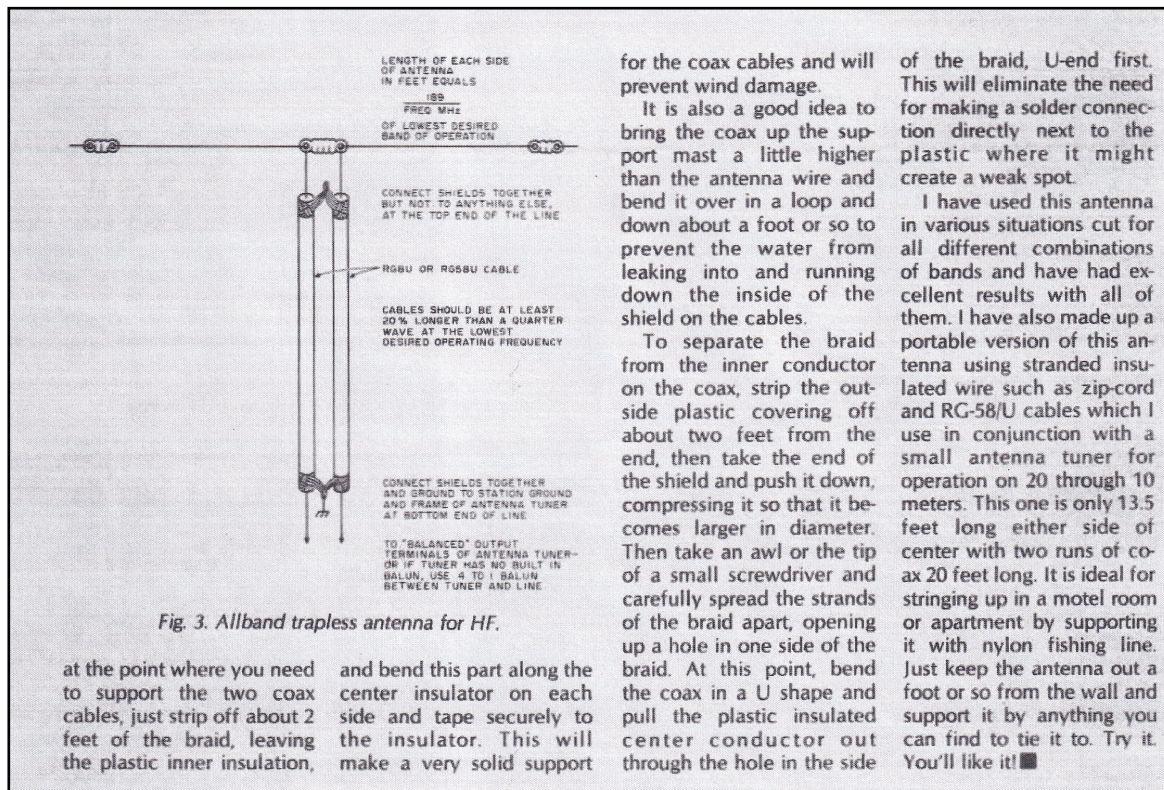
There is only one precaution that must be observed, and that is to cut both runs of the cable exactly the same length. They do not have to be run together, however, as the shield on the cables provides exact electrical separation of the inner conductors even if the two cables are widely separated.

As to the length of the feedline, I found that best results were observed with line lengths of a little more than one-quarter wavelength at the lowest frequency of operation (or anything longer than that). Try to avoid making the feedline resonant at any particular frequency you are operating on, particularly the quarter-wave points, or you may have a bit of trouble tuning on this band. Optimum length seemed to be about 55 feet for 80-through-10-meter operation.

As for the mechanical construction, it is a good idea to use a long insulator, the same type used on the ends of the antenna, at the center of the antenna. Then slip the end of another insulator of the same type over the wire on either side of the center insulator, coming off at right angles to the wire and tying the support wire to these two side insulators so that equal pull is achieved on either side of the center insulator. Then



Center support and coaxial connections.



I built this antenna but made it Band specific, 80m cw and no antenna tuner was needed. The dipole was cut just to a regular dipole length for 3.550 and it worked great. Rather than using RG6, I used RG59 (also 75 ohm) and the coax, 4:1 balun and antenna easily handled my Alpha kilowatt. Over 200 countries were worked and it never failed....like I said, "if I could hear them (and I usually could), I could work them!" Often I used the antenna for receive on 160m while transmitting on my vertical, it worked great there too. I never tried to transmit on other bands other than the 80m it was cut for.

I was introduced to this antenna by NU8Z (11237s) and N8KR (7559s) who also use(d) this antenna with great success. Just follow the directions, you'll be "amazed" how well the antenna works and reduces noise. Word to the wise, "don't ground the braid at the top" and the bottom, just the bottom....tried that, antenna went crazy with swr! And be sure to have the coax feedline 1/4 on the lowest frequency band and 20% more I used 55 feet of coax as the article stated but that is NOT 1/4 plus 20% so I don't know what to tell you...but it worked great on 3550 KHz.

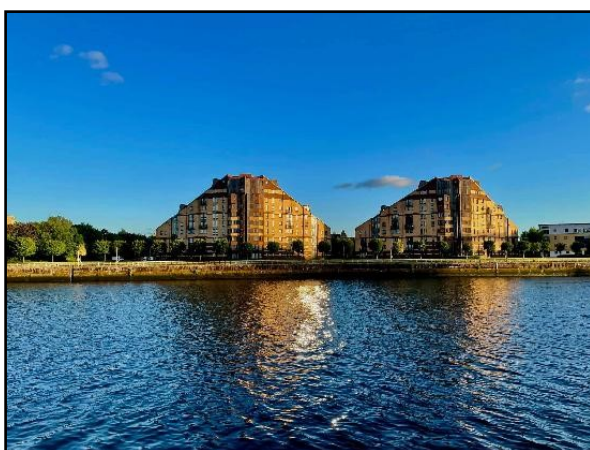
73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM



1844 Telegraph Key

The 1844 straight key, made by Alfred Vail, used to send "What hath God wrought?"

SKSE April 6, 2023



An enjoyable evening. Picture is my QTH in Scotland nowadays. I'm on the 2nd floor and need to put the antenna up in darkness but it's an 80M EFHW sloping from about 20m and away from the building so seems to perform fairly well, although I couldn't hear any Stateside signals tonight. And, I need to stay off 40m because that band causes my neighbour's touch lights to dance on and off! 73, Bob GM3ZDH

Straight Key Sprint Europe Results

Results for SKSE: 06-Apr-2023

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

Overall results

Rank	Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
1	I4IKW	Mark	24889	ITA	22	10	4/9/2	380
2	F5JBR	ANDRE	2574T	FRA	15	13	1/4/3	265
3	F6FJE	Peter	27045C	FRA	14	10	3/5/2	245
4	ON7DQ	Luc	14984T	BEL	15	8	2/4/2	200
5	F8DTU	Frank	8662C	FRA	13	8	1/6/1	184
6	SM7BUA	Mats	122T	SWE	12	7	3/3/2	169
7	PA3JD	Joop	10955T	NED	11	7	3/2/2	152
8	G3ZRJ	TONY	3492T	ENG	10	8	2/3/1	145
9	ON5UK	Luk	13764S	BEL	10	8	1/4/1	140
10	G4IVV	Jon	26874T	ENG	8	7	0/4/1	101
11	GM3ZDH	BOB	6027T	SCO	9	5	1/3/0	90
12	HB9CPS	Geo	20350	SUI	6	3	1/3/1	68
13	NJ8L	Vern	13613S	OH	4	3	1/1/1	42
14	G0RDO	John	2133S	ENG	4	4	0/2/0	36



Good fun and worked 4 great stations ... thanks to S58BZ Ben, I4IKW Mark, YU7AE Kare & SM7BUA Mats. 73, John G0RDO



An SKCC Story

This has not happened to me before. I was chatting with Jim, KD0QV/7; just a nice friendly rag-chew. We were about to sign off when I saw we only needed another 15 minutes to have an hour. He graciously agreed to another 15 minutes and we made a Marathon. This is the first time I've had a "non-scheduled" marathon. I like to chat when the bands are good. This evening they were horrid but for Jim and I it was good on 20 and we talked about radios, especially the Kenwood TS-520 which we both like.

I guess it can happen without planning if you are willing to just chat. Thanks Jim, for number 28. If I can keep this pace I'll be done inside of a year. I didn't think that could happen. It is probably a little self serving as the more of us trying for the marathon the easier it is for me to make the marathon QSOs, but I found that the first few were a bit of a chore and after 3 or 4 they get rather easy. I seem to run out of time before we've exalted a topic. This is fun and a great way to get comfortable with the code.

73, Les WB5JWI SKCC 5013 S

Noise from Longwire Antennas

I now live in an area where noise often pops up from my neighbors so I am always looking for "noise reducing technology" I can use help in my situation because in 63 years of hamming nothing is more true than "if you can't hear them, you can't work them! The following info comes from W8JI's very informative web pages.

The best method of taming a long wire is to install a good low-loss current or choke balun just outside the operating room. This effectively puts distance between the leaky feeder and radiating ground leads outside and away from sensitive equipment.

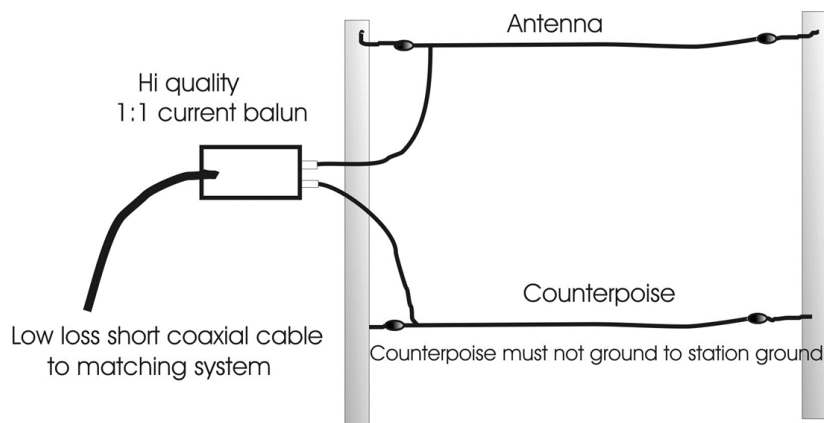
Basic Simple System

A system like this is ideal for a minimal investment unobtrusive [counterpoise](#). This system, even with a minimal RF ground, keeps common mode currents out of the operating area. This system reduces noise and RFI. It generally eliminates the need for a shack "floor groundplane". The balun must be a reliable current balun with high common mode impedance. A voltage balun, or a single core 4:1 balun, will make things worse.

The counterpoise can be a ground system like radials instead of a single counterpoise. It just cannot connect back to the station entrance ground, or the balun's ground. If it is a single wire or a few wires, they should be insulated from earth and kept a little distance above earth. Ideally the single wire counterpoise should be directly under the longwire antenna, and a few feet above earth. Remember the counterpoise will have considerable current and voltage, and might be an RF burn or shock hazard.

Because a [counterpoise](#) is less than perfect, and can even have a fairly high impedance on some bands, the counterpoise system will try to "ground" back through the station gear. **Unun's and voltage baluns** have a low impedance path for common mode currents, and will not isolate counterpoise currents from the shack equipment. A current balun isolates the ground path from the counterpoise to the shack. The balun must be a high quality current balun, not an unun or voltage balun. It should be a 1:1 ratio with high common mode impedance and high voltage breakdown. The coaxial feed line, since it operates at high SWR, should be high quality and as short as possible.

Ideally the counterpoise wire should be elevated above earth. This minimizes earth losses, and the counterpoise should not be connected to a ground rod or especially to the station ground. The required lightning and safety grounds must all be on the coaxial side of the balun. Unless the ground system is nearly perfect with near-zero RF impedance, it is best to keep the antenna's ground or counterpoise isolated from the feed line shield and station equipment.



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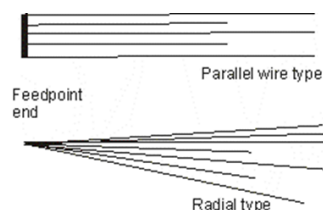
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Improving the System Above

At the expense of simplicity, a better ground will improve efficiency. A better ground would be multiple radials, or multiple counterpoise wires. The ideal system, in which efficiency would nearly equal that of a balanced center-fed system, would be a ground system similar to radials for a vertical. The ground system can include existing wire fences or metal plumbing, or might be a totally new system installed just for the antenna. A good enough ground system, or large area counterpoise system, reduces RF voltage on the ground terminal. If the voltage on the counterpoise or radial ground system is large enough to present a low impedance, station equipment and the antenna ground systems can be tied together. Isolation, such as a current balun, might not be required. The counterpoise, in effect, becomes "less hot" with RF voltage.

Such a system would minimize RFI and electrical noise problems. With a large system of multiple wires, current density in lossy earth surrounding the radials is reduced.

One common misconception is a near-perfect ground needs 120 quarter-wave or half-wave radials. This is not true. Even 15-20 radials can form a very low loss ground. All we can do is install the best ground we can manage. The more wires used in a counterpoise or ground, and the more spread out the conductors are, the less critical and frequency sensitive the system becomes. The point of diminishing returns is generally around 15-25 radials. If 40-60 reasonably long radials are used, any further increase becomes meaningless. A semicircle of 10-20 radials radiating outward from the feedpoint, generally following the antenna direction, is usually good enough to make further work a waste of time. The best systems would center equally on each side of the antenna, if possible. Small systems should be suspended above ground, if possible, to minimize losses.



WES April, 2023



If you worked 2 rabbit stations on the same band, but their states were different, do I count 1 or 2 bonus rabbit stations? Anyway, I just counted 1. lots of fun! 73, Mark AA0YY



Very strange conditions this WES. At times all bands were dead. Very low noise level on 40M Saturday night made for a lot of contacts. 10M was disappointing, only 2 QSOs. Photo shows where all 4 of my dipoles meet. Lost about 10 feet to the metal pipe in the last storm, so all dipoles were about 10 feet lower. Didn't seem to matter much. 73, Bob AC1GF



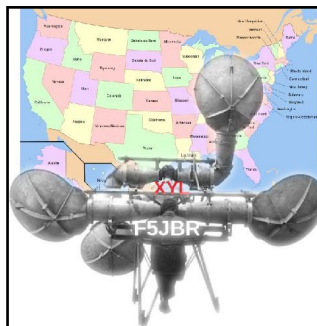
73, RUSS AD2BO



Thanks to everyone for the Qso's. Another fun WES. 73 to all, John AL7JK



Arrived late but enjoyed a lot, the propagation did not help though. 73, Juan EA5XQ



Thank you for all these Easter QSOs. Many new SKCCs but also old ones who have returned to the key. looking forward to seeing you next month. 73, Bob F6EJN



Poor conditions again but that made any QSOs most pleasing. TS 440s, about 80watts, 20ft tall vertical ant and a straight key. 73, John G0RDO

To try to hear the US and Canadian stations better, I asked XYL for help, and we deployed the "big ears" facing North America... I was able to shoot a rabbit and collect a few eggs ... and occasionally some new "T" and "S" !!! Thanks again and see you soon 73, F5JBR/André



Thanks to all the Rabbit & Egg operators for a fun WES. Saturday, 20m was good, 80 & 40 in the evening 15 & 10 was not working for me. Sunday ON7DQ on 15. Another fun WES...73, Rick K0KEX

Small participation, but very nice. 73, Frank F8DTU



Great event with nice conditions. Even managed to snag VK2DVA in the middle of the night after a bathroom visit (hi hi). Ran my old IC-7200 at 50w to a multi-band vertical using an old English Kent Str Key. Thanks all for the QSOs. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Found 4 eggs and snagged a rabbit. 10 & 15 meters not good. Most Qs on 20 meters. Happy Easter, 73, and STAY TUNED! Daryl K9QEW

Operated Saturday only. Managed to break the finger piece on first bug. Then dot contact on second bug came loose. Finished the day with a third bug. Now I have some repair work to do. Didn't find many eggs. 73, Bob K3CKO

WES April, 2023 II



TOUGH CONDITIONS AT TIMES- SFI WAS PRETTY LOW FOR THIS WEEKEND. 10 STILL CAME THROUGH WITH SOME SURPRISES. 15 WAS GO TO BAND HERE, 20 WAS OKAY. 40 WAS PRODUCTIVE ESPECIALLY IN EARLY AM AND NIGHTTIME. 80 WASNT REALLY A FACTOR IN THIS ONE. BECAUSE I WAS AN EGG FOR THIS WES, THOUGHT I WOULD SHOW WHO HATCHED MY FORAY INTO AMATEUR RADIO. PICTURE IS OF MY UNCLE LEE, W3FRM FROM 1950'S OR SO FROM HIS SILVER SPRING QTH- DX100B AND SX100- 3 ELEMENTS ON TEN METERS. THE WAS THE BIG CYCLE TIME AND HE WAS ON 10 METERS MOST OF THAT PERIOD. HE GOT MY DAD, MY BROTHER IN LAW AND I INTO THE HOBBY IN 1958,59. 73, Phil K3EW



Spent the early part of the sprint portable (Hams In Park aka HIP).. 73, Gary KI7PBR



Happy Easter, all. Alleluia! Christ is Risen! 73, Todd N0IP



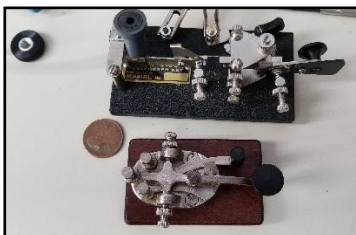
Happy Easter everyone. Thanks for all the contacts. 72, Eric KB3NSK



Set up portable 5 watts QRP on Siesta Key Beach in Florida while on vacation! Fun to participate in WES again! 73, Pete KD2OMV



Hope everyone had a Happy Easter. Thank you to all those who volunteered to be the Easter Bunny / Eggs. I had limited time Sunday with Easter company and watching the Masters). And many thanks for all the QSOs, especially quite a few members that haven't been in the log before. CU ALL AGN down the log. 73, Jack KK0I dit...dit



Thunder-boomers kept me off air for a lot of the WES but still managed to get in and have some nice chats with new ops and old friends. 73, Randy KB4QQJ



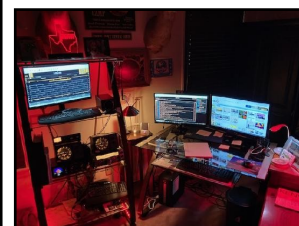
A LOT OF FUN! 73, Mike KG4IMI



73, Adam KN4HAQ



Had a lot of fun in the 3 hours I had to play. Happy Easter! 73, Tom KC3SVR



Another WES come and gone, bands that I could work were up and down. Did not get to spend alot of time on the radio with other things that needed to be done. Had as always a great time playing radio while I could. Only tracked down 5 eggs and Peter Rabbit on two bands. Hope everyone found time to have a nice Easter weekend either playing on the radio or with kids and grand-kids finding their own eggs.. 73 till next month Doug KG5YTS



I couldn't be QRV for a long time. FUN anyway. 28MHz 4ele Yagi - 5W - HMade DSK + 1968 Marconi Marine Co. SK Type 365EZ. TU everyone for the QSOs. BCNU 73, Walt LW3EX - ... ZUT

WES April, 2023 III



There is no reason to complain about band conditions but there were only a small number of 15 meter QSOs and no 10 meter action at all. Even 20 didn't open until late morning with weak signals for the most part. Maybe we've gotten spoiled to the idea of those bands especially here in the west where most stations are 2 to 3K miles away! The photo proves that when you start with a pair of rabbits, you get more. No, this is not my QTH but it is in the immediate neighborhood. Will the real Peter Rabbit please step forward? 73, Chuck N0CW



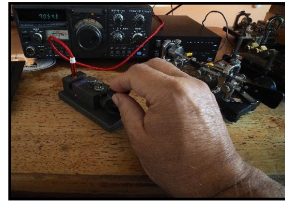
Ten tec argo 6, 5wts ma5b and g5rv. Wrked 20 and 40mtrs.tnx to skcc board mbrs..as usual, more new mbrs.. cu in May to make more QRM,, haha... it's LEGAL,, haha.so, all take care and i still have only 88 keys homemade. So, 73 and if u were QRP 72, Dave Larsen n9zxlqrp@gmail.com



Made a few contacts from my deck with a SW-3B QRP rig. 73, Ron VE3SIF



Had limited time to operate but managed to have fun and collect my second negative Covid test. Good to see a bunch of new members participate. I hope they had fun too. Enjoyed pounding away on my junker. Thanks for the QSOs 72/73, Andy W4NLT



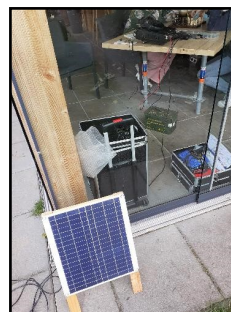
Worked 40 in the WES ☺ ... old buddies like Tony W4FOA , Curt K2CWM , Jack KK0I , Drew AF2Z and Bert W5ZR the magnetic straight key was great for QRS and worked quite a few with it thanks to all who worked me !!!!! de N2JNZ 2836T



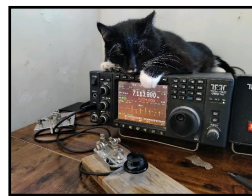
Band condx for me were up and down. But still Fun! I ended up working 21 of the 34 on the list. AC1KV was a double entry on the list. Missed 13 Eggs and worked KS5KCC on 2 bands. VA2KCC NIL. 73, Rick N8XI



Between the holiday, yard work and visitors my time was limited. I decided to use my new to me 50+ year old Ten Tec Argonaut 505 QRP. But found out Sunday morning it had drift and chirp issues on 80M which are likely from the cobbled together power cord I was using. So I switched to my K4 at 3 watts for a few more contacts. The Argonaut Put out about 2.5 to 3 watts depending on band. Antenna was an OCF dipole at 30'. Used my first novice key, an Ameco K-4 with the Argo and a Bencher RJ-2 with the K4. Happy Easter all! 73, Bill NZ0T



Working complete portable with a home-brew vertical, solar panel and batteries. 73, Joop PA3JD/P



Tied up most of Sunday with ministry duties but had a productive Saturday - simple wire antenna and barefoot but for once conditions were quite good here in western NC. Good to see so many relatively new members (high numbers). 73, Dave W1DV Semper cw / ZUT



73, Nan PY2FRQ



Conditions were not very good, no overseas QSOs, but at least the basket is not empty (thanks Bob, F6EJN and Theo, PA3HEN). Good wishes to all, see you next WES. 73, Vince,

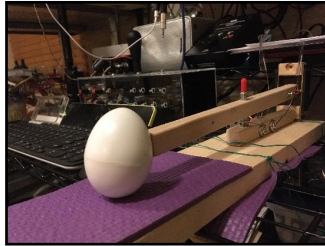


I was only able to work 18 hours, but I still had a lot of fun. I wish 20-Meters had been better in SW Ohio on Sunday afternoon. 73, Drexel W4DHT

WES April, 2023 IV



Thanks to the Easter holiday, I was only able to spend a couple of hours on the air for the WES. In the interest of working as many OMs and YLs as possible, I got on the bug and worked some excellent ops. What a good time! 73, Rod W4NNF



Had a blast being an Egg, 83 given away, 2 to non-members. Realized I wrote down wrong info on one QSO, and there were 5 dupes, which is highly unusual. Just got my Tx8, and got up to 51/200 toward "S"! Almost all QSOs on 20m; 15m never really woke up, and missed the window for 40m. And here I am rocking the HB cootie. Thank you everyone! 73, Jordan W7VC



Fun WES. Thanks all for the QSOs. Bands were sometimes good. Other times noisy/QSB. All contacts with L&R NT9K long lever key. 73, Michael W8MDE



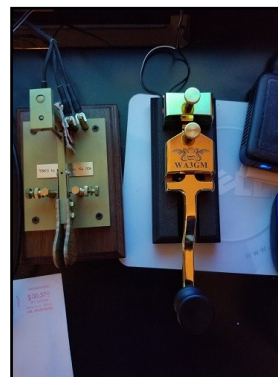
Easter WES always a fun theme, but this year the holiday competed with air time. Still managed to squeeze in a couple of "stolen" hours between Saturday and Sunday. While looking for something in my shack, I stumbled on this old Polaroid of me as a new novice, WN8YSF, dated spring 1976. I was using my first straight key which I still use today, wired in parallel with my SS and Bug. That picture was quite a find! 73, Bob W8YD



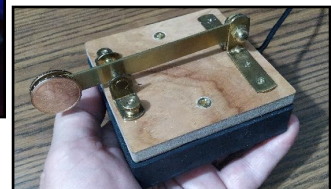
Another fun themed weekend sprint-a-thon. Happy Easter from the Silver State. Until next time... 73, Jason WV3V



Great WES and the bands held fairly well both days. 15 and 10 were very good. a lot of fun. 73, Les WB5JWI



Great to be an Egg station again this year.... Not as much time in the seat as I would have like to but some other family commitments. Thanks to all who worked this Egg Station. 73, Greg WA3GM KS3KCC DAH



Seemingly rougher conditions than last time, but I had more time this round. Surprisingly, after just completing my TKA earlier this week with the homebrew Cootie, I stuck with it, and improved even further. Thanks to all the SKCC'ers picking out my QRP signal. 73, Mark WO7T

First Class Postage Going Up in July!

The price of a first class stamp is going up in July to \$0.66! Better get your stamps now and get those SASE into the SKCC Bureau. You don't want to miss the 2024 K3Y QSLs nor the Canadian Operating event QSL and the other ops who QSL you even if you don't ask for a QSL.

A Trove of CW History Online

By Wes Plouff AC8JF SKCC 10511

Flush with funds from selling off a chunk of its internet addresses, Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC) has helped create an online archive of ham radio publications that includes CW material stretching back to the early 20th century. The Digital Library of Amateur Radio and Communications (DLARC) holds over 50,000 books, magazine and newsletter issues, e-mail list archives and personal memoirs, along with over 13,000 videos, podcasts and audio files. It's all at:

<https://archive.org/details/dlarc>

The archive includes some things a ham would expect: all 515 issues of *73 Magazine* (1960-2003), nearly 100 issues of the *Radio Amateur Call Book* from 1932 to 1996, and earlier callbooks going back to the *Wireless Blue Book* of 1909. I also found all issues of *QST* from 1915 through 1961. Some books and magazines still under copyright require an online "loan," good for up to two weeks.

What's in the archive for CW operators? The goodies include:

- All 89 issues of *Morsum Magnificat* (1986-2003)
- 156 issues of the CWOps *Solid Copy* newsletter (2010-2023)
- 315 issues of the *QCWA Journal*, QCWA newsletters, yearbooks and bulletins (1953-2012)
- Several biographies of Samuel F.B. Morse
- ARRL's *Learning the Radiotelegraph Code* (1970)
- *The Secret of Learning Morse Code*, by Mark Francis (1987)
- U.S. Army TM11-series CW and radio technical manuals (1940-1957)
- *Practical Wireless Telegraphy*, by Elmer E. Bucher (1917 and 1921)
- *Signal Book, U.S. Army* (1916) – includes both American and International Morse
- Vibroplex manuals, parts lists and collector's guide
- Many runs of club newsletters
- *RCA Ham Tips* and *GE Ham News*
- Nearly 1,000 "Morse Edition" podcasts in CW
- *The Victorian Internet*, by Tom Standage (1998)
- A 3-D model of Morse and Vail's original telegraph key

Besides these CW-oriented items, there's a huge amount of amateur radio materials in this collection, ranging from early wireless to today's state of the art.

For the CW enthusiast, there's more to be found in the Archive.org general collection. Use the search box in the upper right corner of most of the web site's pages. I located several books by Alfred Vail, who invented most of the equipment that made telegraphy practical, and also 19th century books on telegraphy:

- *History, theory, and practice of the electric telegraph*, by George B. Prescott (1860)
- *Modern practice of the electric telegraph. A handbook for electricians and operators*, by Frank L. Pope (1869-on)

And from the 20th century:

- A 1946 edition of *Learning the Radiotelegraph Code*
- All 24 issues of *The Vail Correspondent* (1992-1998), a key collectors' newsletter

Be warned that a simple search can turn up hundreds of items. There is help, though, from filters to narrow things down by medium (text, audio, video, etc.), publication date, collection, subject and author.

With all these goodies online, have fun and dive into DLARC.

Editor...From the internet.

Thoughts On Being An Old Buzzard

by W1UJR

Far from being a derisive or derogatory term, the phrase “Old Buzzard” is oft used as a term of fondness in the vintage radio community. Being an “Old Buzzard” has much more to do with a state of mind than chronological age, but often Old Buzzards are indeed the elder members of the amateur service fraternity.

My first introduction to real “Old Buzzards” was as a young JN at radio club meetings in Lancaster, NY. The real Old Buzzards were the grizzled old timers who stood around the coffee pot, not saying much, but watching everything. They were often intimidating to speak with, and did not suffer fools lightly, but under that crusty exterior beat a heart of gold. It was the Old Buzzard who loaned a new minted JN a beat up old receiver to copy W1AW so the new comer could get his morse code skills.

Or gave away a old ARRL Handbook to a newcomer so he could build his first antenna. Sketched out a schematic for the JN’s first antenna tuner. Made that a first shaky contact on HF CW with said JN.

Was the first to give away parts to help the newcomer with his rig/antenna/receiver/project. Answered countless and often seemingly nonsensical questions from the young JN about every radio topic under the sun.

The prototypical Old Buzzard also saw himself as the guardian of something very special, and though they were willing to impart knowledge, like the Oracle of Delphi, they demanded tribute. But rather than the Oracle’s gold, the Old Buzzard was satisfied with simple reverence for said knowledge from newcomers. After all, they were often sharing something which had been a part of their lives since adolescence.

At times, the Old Buzzards requested other tribute, as the young and agile JN was often able to climb a tree, or tower, and repair an antenna, or lift that old boatanchor onto the repair bench, activities which tired old bones could no longer do. Old Buzzards often turned into Elmers, and from Elmers into friends.

I’m sure that each of us can recall a special “Old Buzzard” who was part of our introduction to the amateur service. I had two Old Buzzards, W2UJR, whom I have written about before, and old Tom Watson K2SKJ. Tom gave me my first real CW key, a Nye Master Key, made code practice tapes for me to learn from, and produced a handwritten list of CW procedures, abbreviations and pro-signs. He was an interesting old timer, had his private pilots license, used to own a tail-dragger airplane, smoked like a chimney, was most buzzardly, but had a very good heart. He was an exceptional CW op, a stickler for proper procedure, and used an old Vibroplex bug, complete with corded “wedge” to insert in a hand key.

73 Bruce W1UJR



SKSA April 14, 2023

Results for SKSA: 14-Apr-2023

Overall | QRPp | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | Multi-Op | By SPC

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC#	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
JF1UOX	MISA	26413	JPN	25	7	3/1/1	235
JJ1FXF	HIRO	22608T	JPN	26	6	2/1/1	201
JA1IAZ	NORI	25300C	JPN	26	4	1/2/0	139
JF1JDG	HIRO	26409	JPN	22	4	1/2/1	128
JR2IUB	Take	11167S	JPN	6	4	2/1/1	69
JK1BVN	KAT	26584	JPN	16	3	0/1/1	63
JQ1OLT	Deo	19288	JPN	7	4	1/1/1	58
JF2FIU	MARK	NONE	JPN	13	2	0/2/1	51
JF1EPL	YOSHI	26458	JPN	13	2	0/1/0	36
BI8CZM	Cheng	23269	CHN	10	2	0/1/1	35
JR6CSY	TAKA	26476	JPN	11	1	0/1/2	31
JF1NHD	INO	NONE	JPN	11	1	0/1/1	26
JA0IND/1	Jin	8240	JPN	10	1	0/1/1	25
JS2BGJ	MATT	27288	JPN	8	1	0/1/1	23
JG2JKR	Roy	10424	JPN	3	2	0/1/1	21
VR2CO	SOLO MAN	13192	HKG	7	0	0/1/1	15
JA4MRL	MasaG	6254	JPN	5	1	0/1/0	15
JJ0SFV	Aki	26384	JPN	3	1	0/1/0	13
JG1BGT	UJIE	26599	JPN	3	1	0/1/0	13
JA9MAT	HIDE	12796	JPN	2	1	0/0/0	2



Today's bug key, HI-MOUND BK-100 with hand made ebony cover and improved chattering by optical switch. 73, Nori JA1IAZ



73, HIDE JA9MAT



CONDIX wasn't great this morning in JA but TNX guys who found me during SKSA. WX rainy and TEMP 14C/57F. The black sheet underneath my Vibroplex in my photo is a non-slip mat for car dashboard. I got it at the SERIA, a \$1 store in Japan. This sheet is really awesome and never slip the bug key even by my hard hitting. Give a try! 73, HIRO JJ1FXF



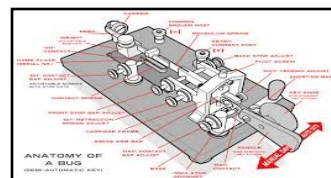
It's raining today in Ome City, Tokyo. SWR for my antenna is not so good. Condition neither. 73, Yoshi JF1EPL



First of all,I would like to say to all stations THANK YOU. And CU NEXT MONTH as MAY. 73, Hiro



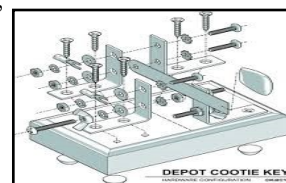
This time I used a very small key. It is an A1CLUB a zodiac key of rabbit. The key is a magnet and attached to the Rig. I forgot and participated about an hour later. In addition, the condition is the worst ... See you again next month. 73, Taka JR6CSY



Thanks to all stations! See you next SKSA! 73, Matt JS2BGJ



This morning, this key. 73, Aki JJ0SFV



Plateaus in Leaning Morse

Editor... A great article written by David Ringer N1EA and posted to our reflector. I'm sure we can all relate to the "plateaus" in building speeds in CW. Well worth the read here.

Sending and receiving Morse intertwine. They are mutually interactive with each other. Here's a nice quote from the book I highly recommend, the CW Way of Life. <https://amzn.to/3ZZTf3B> - or search for "The CW Way of Life" on Amazon.

It's been known for years that there are plateaus in leaning Morse, they are just below the traditional Morse testing speeds of 13, 20, and 25 (Commercial 1st class) WPM.

What's happening as Chris NW6V writes in his book is the way we psychologically perceive the Morse changes at just below those speeds, and Chris has uncovered why. Chris says in his book:

At certain speeds, you are WALKING with Morse, and no matter what you cannot learn to RUN by walking. It's a different skill. So at each of these speeds, you have to perceive Morse in a different way. It helps to tap, hum, listen, anything to get your speed up, once you pass a point, the next speed range will open up to you.

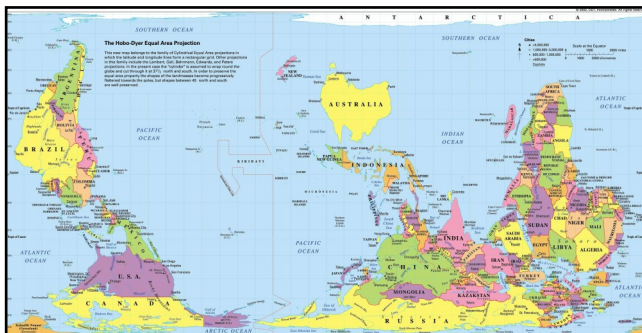
It's rather complicated to explain, but Chris does an excellent job in his book. It's something called "fusing" - it's a psychological perception process and to use the same analogy, you have to learn to crawl, walk, skip, run and finally fly like a real professional - the last and most common hurdle happens at 23 WPM, that where your sending style on a straight key has to change into a fluttering vibration. I've seen people do it, W5EV did it, WA1OMI, did it, DDH4PB, Sylvester Focking used to be able to do it, but he's lost the ability due to age and lack of practice - he could send about 30 WPM on a straight key as many German and UK professional operators could. as they were tested for their first class licenses for ships ONLY with straight keys. USA FCC allowed me to test for my first class radiotelegraph license (25 WPM receive/sending English, 20 Groups per minute cipher groups) with a Vibroplex if I brought one, which I did. I also brought my mechanical typewriter (MILL) as that was permitted for the 1st class with the FCC.

Others like WA1OMI Michael Laronda never had a Vibroplex and just kept sending on his straight key, you find this in Central American where people don't have access to speed keys, they just sending very fast with a straight key. Some of the operators who worked for Tropical Radio Slidell Radio could send 35 WPM on a straight key.

Keep on sending, you will integrate your comprehension of Morse - but you won't be able to count dots and won't be able to count dashes eventually, you will just feel them.

73,
DR
N1EA

Oceania QRS Saunter April 15, 2023



Oceania QRS Saunter Results

Results for Oceania QRS Saunter: 15 Apr 2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
VK2GAZ	Garry	5460C	AUS	8
VK2GR	Allan	7823S	AUS	1
VK7KPC	Peter	2683Z	AUS	1
ZL1ARW	Jim	16633	NZL	2
ZL3TK	Stan	16208	NZL	9

Participants and QSOs by SPC

AUS: 3 / 10	NZL: 2 / 11
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Some very nice contacts made during the event, the highlight for was Ron SM0BRF from Stockholm. My new key is the Begali HST III Sidedwipper. Learning how to operate it. 73, Gary VK2GAZ



1st SKCC member contact. 15/4 22:19 UTC Rx 579 Sent 579 NZL Stan 16208. Pic is of current in use key. 73, Peter VK7KPC

Stan ZL3TK		SKCC QRS SAUNTER 15 April 2023									
TIME Z	FREQ MHz	CALL SIGN	SENT	RCVD	SPC	NAME	QTH	SKCC #			
1	0058	7.029	ZL1ARW	529	54N	NZL	JIM	MANGERE	16633		
2	0725	7.039	VK4IAN	559	55N	AUS	IAN	BRISBANE	18148		
3	0745	14.049	JABAZ	559	57N	JAP	NORI	YOKOHAMA	25300C		
4	0803	7.039	VK3ADK	419	53S	AUS	MERV	BALLARAT	27395		
5	0840	14.049	VK4TJ	569	57N	AUS	JOHN	MURPHY'S CR	44745		
6	1210	7.038	VK2GAZ	449	55N	AUS	GARRY	RICHMOND	5460C		
7	1223	14.050	VK4DFK	529	58N	AUS	DEREK	TOOWOOMBA	26381		
8	2206	14.049	VK5LJ	529	56N	AUS	LAWRIE	GREENOCH	11525T		
9	2216	14.049	VK7KPC	529	57N	AUS	PETER	EVANDALE	2683Z		

A lively and rewarding event, thanks to all participants for making it so enjoyable. Propagation quite good for short skip but difficult on multiple hops. 73 es 77, Stan ZL3TK

Field Day June 24-25, 2023



Field Day is ham radio's open house. Every June, more than 40,000 hams throughout North America set up temporary transmitting stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill and service to our communities and our nation. It combines public service, emergency preparedness, community outreach, and technical skills all in a single event. Field Day has been an annual event since 1933, and remains the most popular event in ham radio.

There is no "official" SKCC plan to be involved in Field Day, but it is a great event to become involved with. Of course you can still use accepted SKCC sending devices and have fun during Field Day.

Information regarding this year's Field Day can be found on the ARRL website and is absolutely free.

A Different Approach to Learning CW

By Wes Plouff AC8JF 10511

Every CW op has heard the saying “CW is a language.” Now a new book by Chris Rutkowski NW6V (SKCC #14374) is making waves by teaching CW – the Morse alphabet and much more – that way. *The CW Way of Life* uses conversational language learning techniques to get straight key operators to the “sweet spot” of operating at 16-23 WPM. The author even advocates starting out by learning International Morse the way a baby learns to speak, by babbling and mimicry. He doesn’t mention the Morse alphabet until halfway through the book. If this seems unusual, it is. Rutkowski starts off with theory, calling CW dits “vibrations.” He stresses the 1-3-7 rhythm of Morse code, and both the downstroke and upstroke of key motion. He throws in terms unusual for ham radio, like “climbing on the dit train,” flicker versus fusion, position of function and shared experience. He suggests training to think less while copying CW. He gets more practical when he talks about the reasons CW ops hit speed “plateaus.” While this sometimes sounds a bit new age-y and overenthusiastic, it makes a good foundation for later chapters.

CWWOL passes on two important practices taught to Rutkowski by his father, a World War II Navy radio operator. First, he shows the Modified American Technique for operating a straight key. The basic idea is to key using upper arm muscles, letting the lower arm and hand act as levers. The hand is held at an angle somewhat like holding a pen, with the thumb and first two fingers lightly cradling the knob. He’s a big fan of Navy keys, because their high knobs make this grip easier. The author claims this technique avoids “glass arm” because the wrist doesn’t flex the same way as when typing on a keyboard.

Second, he advocates “code talking.” Just like French or Spanish class dialogues in high school, it’s important to hold conversations by speaking in Morse, all the better if you have a willing partner. This ties hearing and speaking the CW language to language patterns in the brain, and language patterns to copying and sending CW on the air. The book provides a CW vocabulary of about 100 abbreviations, prosigns, Q signals and phrases, along with walk-throughs of different kinds of QSOs. It’s a far cry from *Learning the Radiotelegraph Code* and code practice recordings. Doesn’t this sound a lot like high school instead?

Who should read this book? Beginners could learn CW this way, and possibly bypass operating QRS. However, *CWWOL* is thin on practice exercises, so help from a “CW Elmer” or organized class sessions are probably needed to supplement the book.

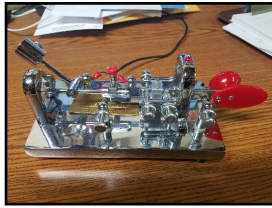
CW ops stuck at lower speeds could get a lot from this book by taking what they already know and trying things the author’s way. Someone in this situation might see “Reading and Writing Morse” on page 103, and be tempted to skip ahead to page 185, “Advanced Key Training.” That would be a mistake. Even though the conversational exercises between those pages might seem like a step backward, they are designed to drill fluency and conversational habits into the brain, instead of just building speed by listening to WIAW code practice. People know what to expect from spoken conversations, and can fill in gaps in what they hear. The same applies to CW communication, but it comes from practice and experience.

The book itself is easy to read, well-organized and full of illustrations. It lacks an index, but it’s written to be read straight through. The author mixes in some good stories to help make his points, including why the Vibroplex bug was a disruptive technology in 1903, and why its inventor didn’t think telegraphers should use it below 23 WPM.

The CW Way of Life probably won’t interest CW ops who can ragchew at high speed, but it can help other SKCC members “speak CW” more fluently.

Chris Rutkowski, *The CW Way of Life: Learning, Living and Loving Morse Code (in a Digital World)*: MorseBusters Publishing (2023), 230 pages, \$23.74 from Amazon. Also available as a Kindle e-book.

SKS April 26, 2023



Fun, got a late start and got called away. Always a good time. 73, Bud AA8CL



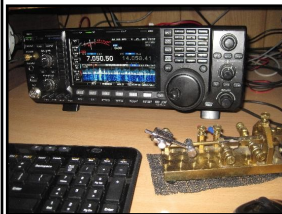
6 on 20M, 10 on 40M, & 1 on 80M for 17 contacts. Ran 50w from my old IC-7000 into a multi-band vertical using a small CW-Morse Straight Key. Always a fun sprint and thanks for the contacts. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Remained on 40 meters for the entire event. Many good signals there. Got to work a couple of my old regulars... N2JNZ, George and K2CWM, Curt. Had a fun time with the "Old Gal" (1919 Vibroplexx Original) and the slap-happy Begali HST. See you all next month! 73, jack KK0I dit...dit



I was on for an hour and had fun as usual !! .. used the Nano Key and found it sends really well .. worked my buddy Jack , KK0I ... great to be back pounding brass !!!! 73, George N2JNZ



So nice to be back in Indiana (although a little chilly!) The yagi is a real plus on 20 meters! Used an Icom 7600 from an estate and it performed well! Split my time between 20 and 40 meters . . . got run off my 40m frequency with 10 minutes to go by digital junk. Too bad they can't listen! Anyway, it was a great time with my SKCC friends! CU next month! 73, Ken N8KR



That's pretty cool...K2IZ called me on 80m! Thanks, John, I didn't even know you were the bonus station when we QSO'd. Surprised me doing the score submission! Now...my apology for my rotten fist...been adjusting my Vibroplex Know Code key. It seems the more I adjust, the more I screw up...maybe it's not the key but I only have one so I can't check that...I'll keep at it and see if I can get it right. In any case, thanks for putting up with my sloppy sending. Thanks for the contacts and the opportunity to participate. Looking forward to the next one...73, Will, NQ2W



Bands were nice to me tonight! Good to hear some friends & the Bonus Station. I camped put on 40m for the 2 hours. C U next month! TNX! to all for making these activities possible!! 72, Steve NQ8T



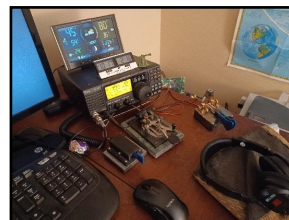
My first SKS or WES with my new KN4YP left handed bug I got 2 weeks ago - first bug I've ever used. I use my right hand to use it, yes I'm backwards! Was a bit nervous as my fist is not as good as I would like it to be with the bug but I guess I was good copy HI. Used my K4 at 100 watts with an OCF dipole at 30'. Worked both 40 and 20 meters. Thanks all! 73, Bill NZ0T



Had to QRT early due to severe T-storm, However I enjoyed the few contacts I did make. Thanks to All! Used my new K4D for the first time in the SKS this month. Love it! 73, Rich W4RQ



It has been a few months since I last did an SKCC event. I enjoyed my challenge tonight with ICOM 703+ dialed back to 4watts and the beautiful Zepp antenna. I did not make a lot of contacts and my signal was not strong enough to keep a frequency so it was hunt and peck for the 2 hours. The fun was getting back on the air. Hope you all had a great evening. 73 from Daytona Beach, FL, Bill W3SI



Great sprint. After a few dead days (magnetic storm?) 20 and 40 were hopping with strong signals. I got a late start, but made contacts cross country. My rig here in Maryland is the same I had in Texas--ICOM IC 718 and EFHW with a Begali single paddle wired to be a sideswiper. 73, Ken WA3RSR

Straight Key POTA Activations

Jeff K9JP SKCC #3008S



I have entered the world of POTA (Parks On The Air) this past few months as a parked mobile CW operator. It has been fun operating from my car while visiting local State and Federal parks. This past month I have worked at least one “Activated Park” in every state for WAS and even a few DX countries. I am using just 5 watts QRP and a “HamStick” type antenna.

My setup is about as basic as it gets. Radio is a Xiegu

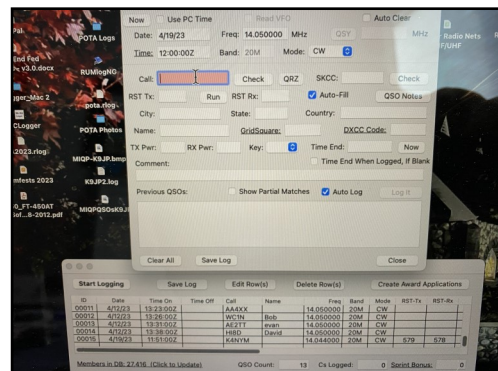


X6100 full-mode SDR transceiver with the output set at 5 watts. I use a 10 AH LiFePo4 battery which powers the radio easily for three or four park activations per day. My mobile antennas are Hamstick-type mobile antennas connected to a five-inch magnetic mount on the roof of



my car.

My key is a 3D-printed straight key from CW Morse. For logging, I use the SKCC Logger program (Thanks Ted, K8AQM for the suggestion) with either my MacBook Air or PC laptop. Paper logging also worked well for me, but that made for more items to take along on these adventures.



I picked up one very good tip on improving the SWR of a magnetically mounted Hamstick antenna and improving the bonding of the antenna to the car. I have added a SO-239 to BNC chassis adaptor connector with a braid ground strap under a bolt for the back

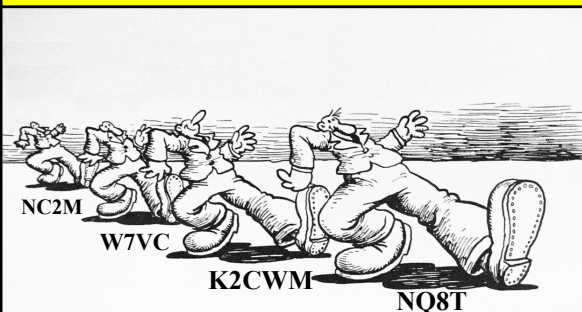


seat. This allows a better bond to the car and improves the resonant SWR of each antenna which is important when operating at 5 watts. You could also use a threaded SO-239-type bulkhead connector in place of the chassis connector as well.

Getting outdoors this spring and seeing something new with each park activation has been pure joy. If you were one of the contacts, thank you for having a great station. Your antennas and radios made it all possible. The improved propagation from the sun's solar flares has also been very helpful as well.

Slow Speed Saunter May, 2023

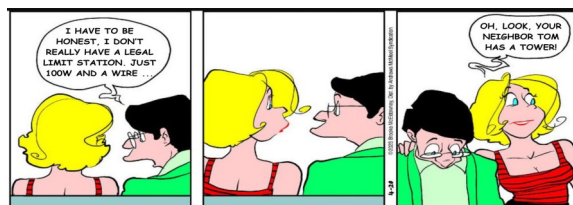
Slow Speed Saunter



Probably my fav SKCC event. Just an easy going fun thing to do. Ran anywhere from 5w to 100w, but most QSOs were at 50w. Vertical antenna. Keys were either a large Kent sk or my old Lionel J38 sk. Thanks all for the contacts and participation. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Enjoyed some good rag chews. Using my EFHW stealth here in the HOA but better antennas planned for the summer. "You just can't have too many antennas!" 73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM



TNX! to all! Nice to meet a few new ones for my log and to re-visit some old friends C U Next Month. 73, Steve



Results for Slow Speed Saunter: 1 May 2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

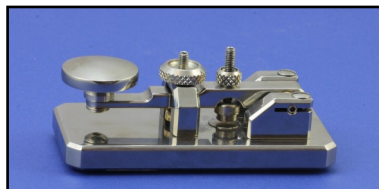
Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
WB6IZG	Bruce	17714S	CA	8
N9PIT	Joe	20588	GA	1
NU4M	Greg	5264S	GA	7
K9NO	Paul	25345S	IL	6
KA9GKE	Rose	17764S	IN	1
W9GOO	John	21474S	IN	5
WA9BBN	Ed	17763S	IN	4
KA3LOC	Ric	660S	KS	8
K8AQM	Ted	1629S	MI	7
KD8RGJ	Terry	26013T	MI	12
AC1GF	Bob	19399S	NH	7
K2CWM	Curt	3018S	NJ	21
NC2M	George	26325T	NY	8
KA8HFN	Larry	2046S	OH	6
KE8PX	Ron	26949C	OH	17
NJ8L	Vern	13613S	OH	19
NQ8T	Steve	5919S	OH	22
W7VC	Jordan	24194	OR	18
W4CMG	Cathy	20093S	TN	2

Participants and QSOs by SPC

CA: 1 / 8	GA: 2 / 8	IL: 1 / 6	IN: 3 / 10	KS: 1 / 8
MI: 2 / 19	NH: 1 / 7	NJ: 1 / 21	NY: 1 / 8	OH: 4 / 64
OR: 1 / 18	TN: 1 / 2			



An Interesting Key By Stefan Bergsiek



in in
the



A small, heavy hand key. Not brass. But made of stainless steel! Stefan's suggestion for the name was "Bloody Key". This should be an expression of the work this key. The adjustment of leverage is done by magnetic force....Mark DL1DSN



Random Gram -- a new CW event! Unlike the typical contact-based CW contest *RandomGram* is all about message content. For those of you who enjoyed the *CW Fun* events hosted by Dick K2RFP several years ago the following will be familiar...

RandomGram participants exchange 5-character random coded groups. Points are earned by accurately transmitting and receiving new code groups during each exchange and intercepting groups exchanged by other operators. There are no power categories, no SPC mult, no "dup" restriction or bonus points.

If you think that sounds like fun please plan on operating in our first *RandomGram* event on **May 10th** from **00:00-02:00 UTC** (*Tue evening in US; Wed UTC*).

See the *RandomGram* page for additional info and FAQ:

<https://groups.io/g/RandomGram>

(This is an open group. You do not need to log in or subscribe in order to view content or participate in the *RandomGram* event.)

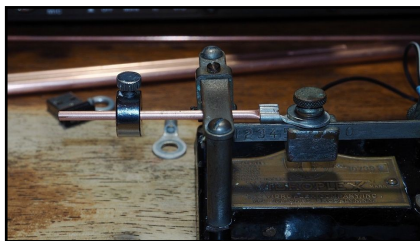
Transmit lists of random code groups are being distributed to participants now. Please see the event page above to apply for your registered TX List.

73,

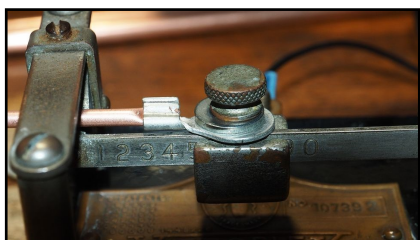
Drew

AF2Z

Taming a Flat-bar Bug



The 1934 Lightning Bug can be a bit quick and with square weights a tamer seemed out of the question .. what few brain cells I have thought this up ... works good !!!! de N2JNZ 2836T



Another way to tame the flat-bar bug is to use "stair gages." available at Lowes and Home Depot for less than \$10 for two....de Curt KU8L 5380S

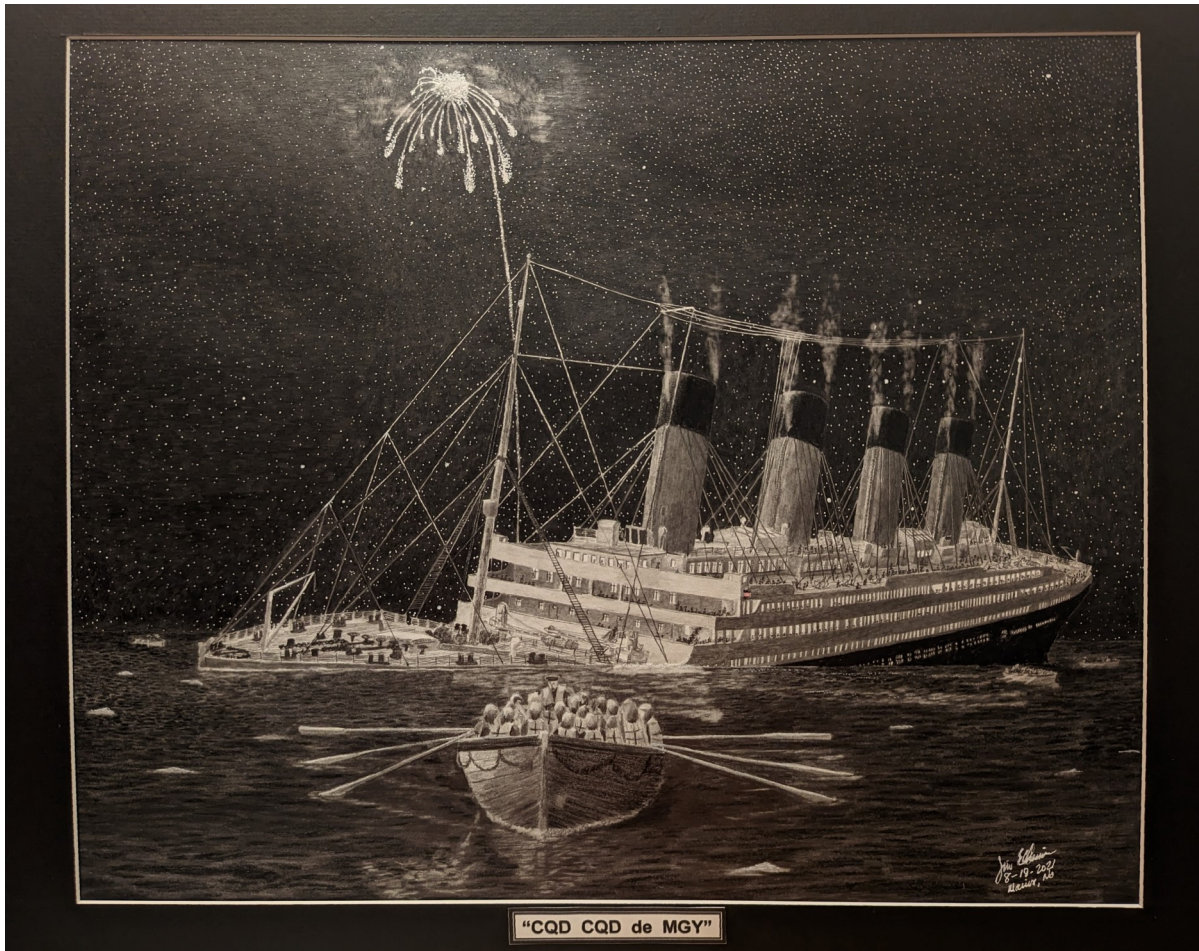


-----CQ-----D-----
"Any Station Distress"
-----DE-----MGY-----
"This Is Titanic"

And so Senior Marconi Operator Jack Phillips began his distress call to any station that could hear him. He would follow up with the information that they had struck an iceberg and give the ship's position. He wouldn't start sending the famous "SOS", the newly approved distress signal, until later in his messages.

In this drawing, water is beginning to pour onto the forward well deck, and Titanic doesn't have long to live. Many passengers still remain on board, and distress rockets are bursting overhead. The ship is motionless, and excess steam is being vented from the funnels. Phillips and Assistant Operator Harold Bride stayed on the radio until the power completely failed shortly before she went under. Although they both made it off the ship as she sank, Bride survived, but Phillips did not. In the drawing, I have reduced the height of the rocket flash, in order to get the details of the ship and antennas larger. The rockets would have reached 600 - 800 feet, about 6 to 8 times the height of the forward mast in the drawing.

The "Marconi Room" (radio room), is an interior compartment on the uppermost deck, between the first and second funnels, where the four antenna leads come together. The Titanic's radio was a modern set of the day, operating at 5 kW. It was a spark gap transmitter, but used



a synchronized spark, an advancement that kept the actual spark that made the signal synchronized with, and at maximum strength with, the circuit that made the spark. Through the circuitry of the rotating parts, the spark-arc occurred at about 850 Hz, so the sound was still a raspy buzz, but was closer to the sounds we would all recognize today. It was not actual CW as we know it though, it would have sounded more like a musical version of an old doorbell buzzer.

The antennas were nearly 450 feet long, and were "T" antennas, with a single feed line up to a connection point on each flat section, but they all connected together at the deck mounted feedpoint; it wasn't four separate connections. In total, the Titanic had a half-a-mile of wire hanging above the deck. The Titanic operated at 500 kHz and 930 kHz, but at the time of the sinking, was operating on the 500 kHz band.

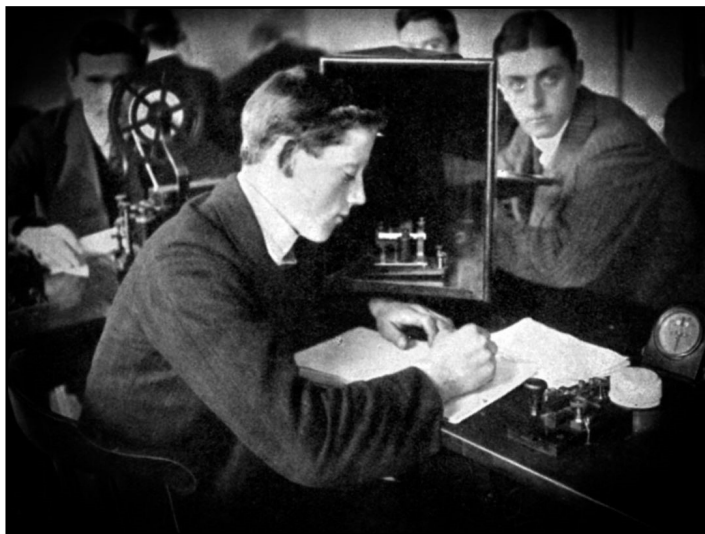
Dr. Fred Archibald, VE1FA, has an excellent presentation on YouTube about the radio and its operation. You can find it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JUcD2YwuqtQ>

14 x 17, graphite on smooth finish Bristol Board, with a white gel pen to get those stars.....

De James Elkins KG4IKQ SKCC 13612s

Titanic

Titanic Live: April 17th, 1912, morning - In Carpathia's wireless room, twenty-one year



old operator Harold Cottam continues a Herculean effort at the telegraph key. Ready to turn in already during the small hours of Monday morning as Titanic's distress calls first came through, he has now been continuously awake for more than three days, save for a lost three hours somewhere over the course of last night after drifting off at his desk. As mentioned, Rostron has ordered a blackout on responses to direct press requests for information (even a direct inquiry by President Taft via USS Chester goes unanswered), and thus only private messages, company traffic, and lists of hundreds upon hundreds of names are transmitted by Cot-

tam, each sent over the wireless deliberately, and letter by letter with near constant interruptions.

Injured badly by frostbite during the disaster, Titanic operator Harold Bride eventually steps in to help, the two young men themselves already friends before the incident. The addition of a second hand at the job means some small measure of relief for both, though the mountain of awaiting messages will mean that neither operator will leave the wireless desk more than momentarily throughout the rest of the voyage to New York.

Photo of Harold Cottam originally published in the Illustrated London News, May 1912

SKCC Gathering in Japan



Left to right..JR2IUB([#11167S](#)), W1PR([#23091T](#)), JJ1FXF([#22608T](#)) and JE1TRV([#561T](#))

We had a nice SKCC gathering in Akihabara Tokyo last night.

JR2IUB([#11167S](#)) Take, W1PR([#23091T](#)) Paul, JJ1FXF([#22608T](#)) Hiro and JE1TRV([#561T](#)) Atsu

From Facebook



HelloHere is Thomas DLIKTP at DF0LQ, tnx fer nice qso. This is my station:
YAESU FT991A
WITH 5 WATTS
ANTENNA IN-
DOOR MAGNETIC
LOOP (40-10M)

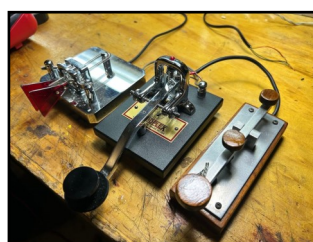


F6EGV

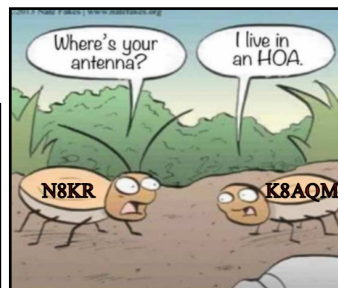
My [PARASET](#) QRG
quartz :3554 - 3560 - 5352 -
5355- 7030 7038 - 7114 -
10123 -10140 73, PAUL
f6egv SKCC 9642



73, Kevin WA9VDF



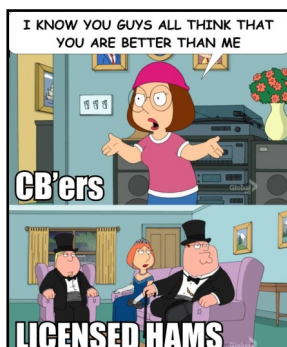
Lets go back to the roots!



Good combination.
73, Akio JJ0SFV



This is "Ai's" (actual name!) cool QSL!



I just got a new key, isn't it nice. Now all I have to do is get my sending above slow-as-molasses-in-January. It's a Putikeeg, I got it on Amazon for about \$130.
KD0FKI

SKSE May 4, 2023



My first SKSE! I did try operating in the first 15 minute QRS slot to work some 'students' but only managed Gareth, G0MFR so excluded that QSO from my score...I still hope it was encouraging for slower Fists to hear. 73, Mike G0POT



TNX to W5WTH, CT7AUP & YU7AE. 15m activity low 20m somewhat better 73, STAY TUNED! Daryl K9QEW



Nice evening, have propagation to USA on 15 and 20m. Using my oldie TS950sd 100w 2 el. Steppir at 10m and J-36 WWII bug. Thanks for nice QSOs, 73 and cul in next activity Kare YU7AE

Straight Key Sprint Europe Results

Results for SKSE: 04-May-2023

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

Overall results

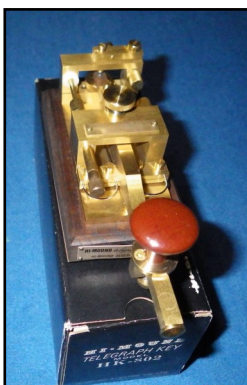
Rank	Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
1	YU7AE	Kare	5790T	SER	26	15	7/5/2	555
2	CT7AUP	David	2419TS	POR	21	18	4/9/3	543
3	PG4I	Jo	11019S	NED	16	9	3/5/1	244
4	G4IVV	Jon	26874T	ENG	12	8	3/3/1	176
5	F8DTU	Frank	8662C	FRA	10	8	2/6/0	170
6	F5JBR	ANDRE	2574T	FRA	12	8	2/3/1	161
7	ON7DQ	Luc	14984T	BEL	9	6	2/3/1	119
8	G0POT	MIKE	2322T	ENG	6	6	3/1/0	91
9	HB9CPS	Geo	20350	SUI	8	5	1/1/1	70
10	M0MCL	Kevin Winton	20026	ENG	4	3	2/2/0	62
11	OK1CBA	OLDRICH	25347	CZE	5	4	1/2/0	55
12	K9QEW	Daryl	2963	IL	3	3	2/1/0	49
13	F4GOU	TOM	10437	FRA	4	4	0/3/0	46
14	HB9IRF	Gerald	12483	SUI	6	4	0/2/0	44
15	NC2M	George	26325T	NY	2	2	1/1/0	29
15	KD2ZUD	Jasper	27215	NY	2	2	1/1/0	29
15	VL7VH	Bob	2940S	AK	2	2	1/1/0	29
18	M0UDB	Dave Beard	27024	ENG	4	2	0/2/0	28
19	F5DE	Bernard	6247S	FRA	1	1	1/0/0	16
20	JR2IUB	Take	11167S	JPN	2	2	0/1/0	14

New Keys in the Shack

Two new keys were added to the shack in May:

Both keys come from a friend in Japan.

73,
Ted
K8AQM/
VE9AQM



THE “WIRELESS ROOM” BRINGS BOTH MARINE AND AMATEUR RADIO TO THE MARITIME MUSEUM OF THE ATLANTIC

Frederick Archibald, VE1FA

Nova Scotia’s Museum of the Atlantic (MMA) is an excellent museum on the renovated Halifax waterfront that receives about 175,000 visitors annually. It displays classic small craft and ship-related artefacts highlighting the rich maritime history of Canada’s east coast. While visitors enjoy excellent displays of colonial shipping, the ages of sail and steam, fishing, the great Halifax explosion of 1917, wartime ships and events, and the sinking of the *Titanic*, until recently there was nothing on the revolution that radio made in ship safety, navigation, and communication.

The Halifax Amateur Radio Club becomes involved

In the spring of 2015 Halifax ARC (HARC) President Brian, VE1CC and HARC members Byron, VE1NFD, Dick, VE1AI, Eric, VE1JEH and Scott, VE1QD, met with Gerry Lunn of the MMA to discuss setting up a permanent Amateur Radio station exhibit in the museum, manned by HARC volunteers.

The MMA was very enthusiastic and expressed its willingness to build a dedicated “Wireless Room” in a prominent location in the museum, to purchase a complete new Amateur Radio station and to install antennas on the MMA’s roof. In turn HARC agreed to supply a list of the needed equipment, set up the station, assist with antennas and to organize HARC volunteers to demonstrate the Amateur station and Morse code to visitors on a regular, ongoing basis.

VE1FA suggests adding a 1940s ship’s radio to the MMA’s wireless room

I’m interested in radio history and restoration. Therefore, in an April 2015 HARC-MMA meeting I offered to restore a classic 1940s Canadian naval-commercial ship’s radio to its original appearance and operating condition. The wireless room display would be split, with one half displaying a modern Amateur station and the other half a 1940s “blue water” shipboard radio station. The MMA liked this idea so I agreed to locate, obtain and restore a suitable 1940s Canadian marine radio, with correct “period” accessories.

After the MMA’s ready acceptance, the ball was in my court! I had heard that the Musee Quebecois de la Radio in Sorel, Quebec had lost its building and was disposing of its equipment. I phoned Jacques Hamel, VE2DJQ, of the Musee. Not only did he have two Canadian Marconi CM-11 shipboard LF-MF-HF integrated transmitter-receivers, the ideal radio, but he generously gave both of them to the MMA project. Merci beaucoup Jacques!



Some of the MMA staff and HARC volunteers in MMA’s Wireless Room during its construction. Left to right: Roger Marsters, Curator of Marine History; Dick Grantham, VE1AI; Laura Pierce; Derek Harrison; Kim Reinhardt, Museum Manager; Jason Climie; standing: Gerry Lunn, Curator of Exhibitions; Jeanne Church; Johanna Kristiansson and Erik Hein, VE1JEH.

The CM-11 was designed and built in the huge Canadian Marconi factory in Montreal. In 1942 it was state-of-the-art and a very good and reliable LF-MF-HF radio for its time. The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) used CM-11s on all of its ships of corvette size and larger, and they were used well into the 1970s. The CM-11 was ideal for the MMA wireless room because: a) it's pretty, with large illuminated multi-color half-circle tuning dials; b) it will run on 120 VAC; and c) it can produce 100 watts (AM, MCW or CW) on 160, 80, 40, 30, and 20 metres.

The first challenge was to get the pair of CM-11s from Sorel to my shack-workshop in Canard, Nova Scotia. Did I mention that they weigh 479 pounds each? True "boat anchors"! They arrived thanks to the herculean efforts of Don, VE1SS and Erik, VE1JEH. Returning from Sorel, Erik's Hyundai Elantra rolled (on its axles) into my driveway with a passenger, about 75 pounds of radio accessories and *both* CM-11s.

The CM-11 restoration

They arrived coated with 70+ years worth of dirt, grime and minor rust, but luckily the electronics were not seriously corroded, water-damaged or modified. Thanks go to Canadian Marconi for using heavy galvanized steel chassis and anti-rust interior paint! One CM-11 was built in 1943 and the other, a CM-11A, was built in 1944.

We were very lucky to have gotten two CM-11s as each had many parts missing, but in most cases not the same parts so I was able to combine the two and get a nearly complete CM-11.

The restoration took me about 150 hours of actual work. The details of all the problems encountered and solved would take most of this issue of TCA so I'll just list the general steps.

- 1) Disassemble the two CM-11s and the power supply into 12 subunits.
- 2) Choose which subunits to restore and which to cannibalize, then swap all the best parts to the subunits to be restored.
- 3) Remove all tubes, lamps, knobs, handles, front panels, drawer slides, ID tags, shields, front panels and bottom plates and then clean everything.
- 4) Overhaul mechanically, replacing all missing, damaged and incorrect hardware. Straighten bends and dents, lubricate shafts, detents and gear trains. Clean all the switch contacts.
- 5) Repaint the subunits and cabinets with computer-matched paint. The original paint was preserved wherever possible.
- 6) Overhaul electrically. First, everything was checked, using an ohmmeter, tube tester and capacitor tester. I replaced more than 90 defective electrical components.
- 7) Apply power to the individual overhauled receiver, exciter and power supply subunits. Locate and repair faults, align units and measure their performance.
- 8) Install the subunits (exciter, receiver and tank-tuner) in the CM-11 cabinet and install the three power supply chassis in the power supply cabinet. Build four new power supply cables to radio and power supply.



The CM-11's CSR-5 receiver undergoing surgery by VE1FA. Numerous defective "organs" can be seen on the bench to the left of the "patient"; and yes, that propane torch was used a few times on seized hardware!

9) Apply power to the complete CM-11 and test the performance on transmit and receive.



Unfortunately, *both* CM-11s were missing: a) their 575 kHz IF filter crystals; b) three cables connecting the radio and power supply; c) the “Marconiphone” AM handset; and d) the “CM-11 test cable”. After much searching I found a radio restorer, Tom Brent, in British Columbia, who gave me an IF filter crystal gratis. Thank you Tom!

Incredibly, Amphenol still makes the *same* multi-pin connectors today that they made in 1942 for the CM-11 cables so I was able to get a set and fabricate cables that mated perfectly with the connectors on the CM-11 power supply and radio

cabinets. However, I couldn’t find the unique test cable that came with every CM-11 and, without it, radio adjustment and alignment is very difficult. Then Jim VE1JG, a former Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) CM-11 operator, put his formidable talents to work and obtained both an original Marconiphone AM handset and the loan of a CM-11 test cable, courtesy of the RCN! He also donated a beautifully restored Signal Electric R-63 brass Morse key, as originally specified for the CM-11.

MMA’s Wireless Room today

Using some “repurposed” MMA floor space, by late 2015 Nova Scotia Museum’s technician Corey Mullins had built a large room with two windowed walls for visitors to look through and a long operating bench against a paneled wood rear wall, perfect for mounting radios and accessories.

A 10-12-15-17-20 metre multiband vertical and a 40-80 metre trap dipole were put on the museum roof, and feedlines run down to an antenna switch common to both the Amateur and ship radios. Both the Amateur station – based on a beautiful new Icom IC-7600 transceiver – and the 1940s CM-11 ship station are now on the air using the call sign VA1MMA.

The CM-11, now bolted to the rear wall and bench on its original rubber shock mounts, is surrounded by the correct Marconi speaker, brass key, Marconiphone AM handset, CM-11 remote control/AM handset box, CM-11 manual, period typewriter, thermocouple antenna current meter and vintage “open” coax switch, 1947 Canadian “Maple Leaf” calendar, and a beautiful 1940s brass Smiths radio room clock with the 500 kHz silent (listen) periods marked in red. To activate the transmitter you have to turn the “Man Aloft” key to “Safe to Transmit”! Below the CM-11 is its power supply, with the steel front panel replaced with a Plexiglass one so visitors can see the four #816 mercury-vapour rectifiers flash electric blue when CW is sent!



A visitor’s view through one of the Wireless Room’s windows. Below the window are some of the keys and oscillators that museum visitors earn their Morse certificates on. On the left is MMA volunteer Arthur, G5DJW/VE1 and the modern Amateur station (rear bench). To the right is the 1940s ship’s station with Fred, VE1FA and the Canadian Marconi CM-11 transmitter-receiver, with its power supply by VE1FA’s knee. Far right is the “organ donor” (second) CM-11 and the remote AM phone and control box for the CM-11. The display is still a work in progress.

On the air!

Using the 73-year-old CM-11, Dick, VE1AI, an experienced CW operator, made the first CW contact (with a Polish station): he was as excited as a kid! Two local RCN veterans – Jim, VE1JG and Wayne, VE1BAB – were radio operators who routinely used CM-11s in the 1960s and 1970s on RCN ships. They're now quite anxious warm up the CM-11 and "work a few" with that Signal Electric brass key or a bug!

In front of the Wireless Room's windows where museum visitors stand and watch, code practice oscillators and keys are set up so that visitors, especially children, can learn to send their names in Morse code. If successful, the visitor receives a nice certificate!

Since spring 2016 volunteers from our club and the MMA have been manning the Wireless Room. It has aroused an amazing level of interest in thousands of visitors. Especially the hands-on sending of their names in Morse code has drawn enthusiastic responses from adults and children alike. As of November 2016, about 3,600 Morse certificates have been awarded. If you're visiting the Halifax waterfront, be sure not to miss the MMA and its new Wireless Room.

Fred, VE1FA, is a retired research scientist and professor of microbiology who worked at McGill University and the Pulp and Paper Research Institute of Canada. He received his first Amateur call (VE2SEI) in 1988 and enjoys DXpeditions, DXing, ragchewing, restoring old radios, homebrewing antennas and gear, and introducing "newbies" to our great hobby! He lives in Canard, Nova Scotia with XYL Helen, VA1YL, and can be contacted at hfarchibald@ns.sympatico.ca.

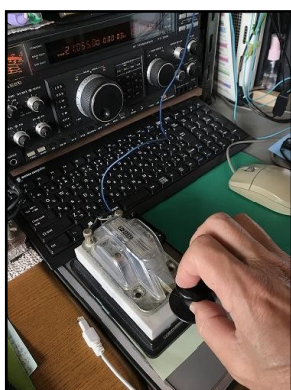
Editor....This article first appeared in *The Canadian Amateur*, magazine of the Radio Amateurs of Canada. This is a great story on how amateur radio can be introduced to the public as well as lessons in history. Thanks TCA!



Fred VE1FA in his comfortable shack and watch cat, "Scrabble."

If not mistaken, that's an old National 5T receiver with plug in band coils, a Collins 51j receiver and of course the CM-11 all on the right of the picture

SKSA May 12, 2023



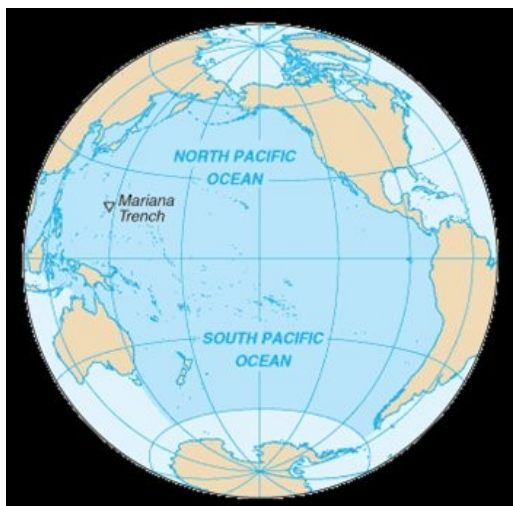
An old key, but still active. My wrist is on the verge of ten-donitis! ?(:P) 73, Mark JF2FIU



73, Hide JA9MAT



Today I used an old key HK-3 from HIMOUND. It's one of my favorites. 73, Taka JR6CSY



Results for SKSA: 12-May-2023

Overall | QRPp | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | Multi-Op | By SPC

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC#	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
JA0FVU	Taka	13456	JPN	35	5	2/3/2	245
JA1IAZ	NORI	25300C	JPN	29	5	2/3/0	205
JF1UOX	MISA	26413	JPN	23	5	2/2/1	170
JR6CSY	TAKA	26476	JPN	27	3	2/1/2	131
JF1NHD	INO	NONE	JPN	21	3	1/2/1	103
JR2IUB	Take	11167S	JPN	20	3	1/1/1	90
JF2FIU	MARK	NONE	JPN	21	2	0/1/1	57
J14JGD	TAKA	5393	JPN	11	2	2/0/0	52
JF1JDG	HIRO	26409	JPN	29	1	0/1/2	49
JO1ZZZ/1	A1CLUB	16199	JPN	20	1	1/0/2	45
JA0IND/1	Jin	8240	JPN	11	1	1/1/1	41
JK1BVN	KAT	26584	JPN	13	1	1/0/1	33
JF1EPL	YOSHI	26458	JPN	12	1	0/1/1	27
B18CZM	Cheng	23269	CHN	7	3	0/0/1	26
K3TM	Roger	5016T	MD	5	2	0/1/1	25
JJ1FXF	HIRO	22608T	JPN	8	1	0/0/1	13
W7VC	Jordan	24194T	OR	1	1	0/1/0	11
JS2BGJ	MATT	27288	JPN	11	1	0/0/0	11
J0SFFV	Aki	26384	JPN	8	1	0/0/0	8
JA9MAT	HIDE	12796	JPN	6	1	0/0/0	6
JK1AKA	Kei	25478	JPN	4	1	0/0/0	4

QRPp - 1W or less

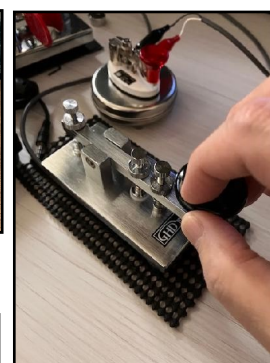
Callsign	Name	SKCC#	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
JA9MAT	HIDE	12796	JPN	6	1	0/0/0	6



TNX FB QSO. 73, Aki J0SFFV



Thank you to all stations! CU next SKS! 73, Matt JS2BGJ



Very first time that JO1ZZZ - A1CLUB official club station participated to SKSA. Used a mini straight key GT705A by GHD, a very smooth key. 73, // HIRO, JJ1FXF



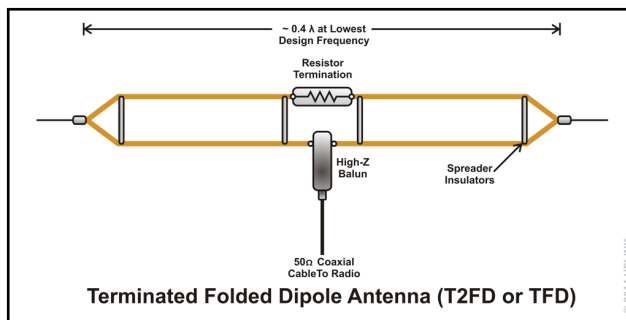
TFD Terminated Folded Dipole (T2FD)

Article by Bonnie Crystal KQ6XA

The Terminated Folded Dipole, TFD or T2FD, is one of the most popular antennas for ALE Automatic Link Establishment. It performs well on the air, provides good SWR throughout the entire HF range, and does not require an autotuner or coupler. There are many commercial versions and homebrew flavors of the TFD. This article attempts to cover some of the historic background and evolution of this broadband antenna.

What Does T2FD Mean?

TFD or T2FD is a term of *initialism** that encompasses a classification group of antenna design. Terminated Folded Dipole is a folded dipole in which a resistive and/or reactive termination is inserted in the middle of the exposed loop of the active metallic dipole element circuit, opposite the feedpoint. The terminology and initialism has evolved over the past half-century, as variations in design have sprung forth, combined with the deep affinity among engineers and radio operators for descriptive jargon. The TFD or T2FD antenna is also known as a *Squashed Rhombic* and it is part of a more general category of Broadband Dipoles. ***Note:** Definition of **initialism** / in·i·tial·ism / i'niSHə·lizəm / *noun*: An abbreviation consisting of initial letters pronounced separately (e.g., CPU). Acronyms are abbreviations that are blended into pronunciation with syllables as if they were words (e.g., NASA or LASER).



Background History of the Name T2FD Antenna

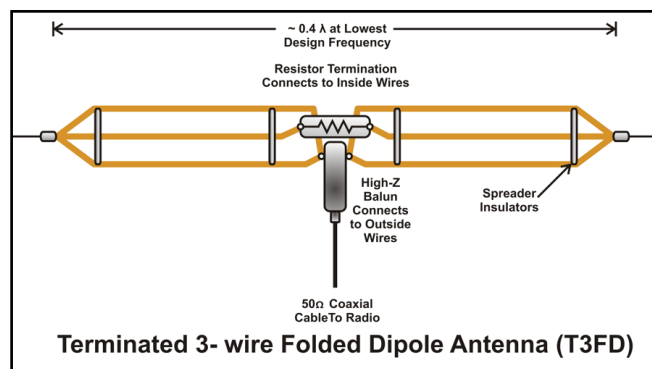
Prior to 1949, the term TFD or TTFD originally stood for Tilted Folded Dipole, Terminated Folded Dipole, Terminated Tilted Folded Dipole, or Tilted Terminated Folded Dipole. [see 1949 article snippet below](#) By 1950 or 1951 it was widely known in commercial, military, and amateur radio. The TTFD term was converted to

T²FD (T-squared FD) and then T2FD with keyboards lacking superscript (the superscript 2 became a numerical figure 2). Insertion of other higher numerical integers (example: T3FD for a Terminated 3-wire Folded Dipole) into the initialism evolved much later, circa 1985 to 1990, as a shorthand for the number of half-wave elements connected in the active circuit of the dipole. Multi-wire TFDs became popular as they were found to have reduced termination losses, wider bandwidth, and higher radiation efficiency. T3FD, T4FD, etc.

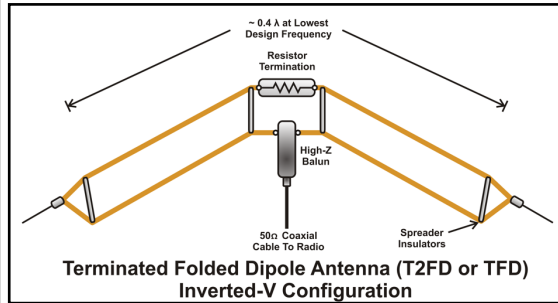
To Tilt or Not to Tilt?

The recommended tilt or sloping dipole configuration in the [T2FD original design articles](#) purportedly achieved a particular beneficial radiation directional pattern for the application or location in which the antenna was developed, and this was widely carried over by other early exper-

imenters. The tilt was later found to be completely superfluous to basic TFD design and performance. The essence of the TFD antenna electrical structure can be applied to most all of the various orientation configurations of normal dipoles. . It has a radiation pattern identical to a



normal dipole of similar size. Tilt or slope is not necessary to the performance of the TFD. Tilt was found to be undesirable for NVIS and omnidirectional applications. Design requirements calling for tilt configuration or sloped installations are less common in modern installations, while the more popular Inverted-V or flat-top formats tend to be favored. Yet the tilt still lives

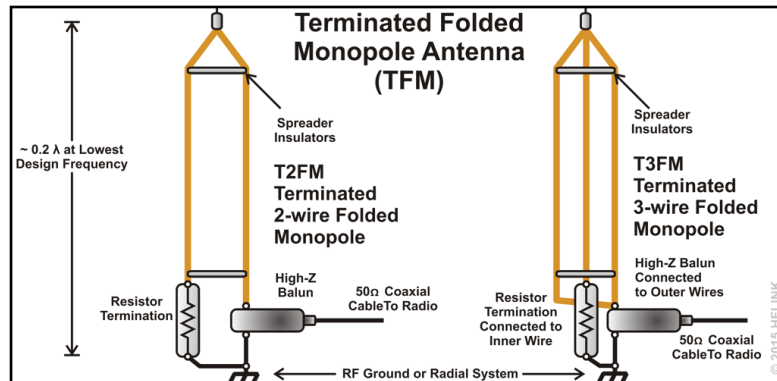


on in antenna mythology and superstition. Some have joked that the tilt made it a more complex acronym while imbuing black magic... therefore adding perceived value. At this point, most will agree that the TFD reputation benefits from such perceived value mystique, while simultaneously acknowledging that it continues to have many detractors. Below, some of the original articles show how the early T2FD was introduced and started to gain popularity.

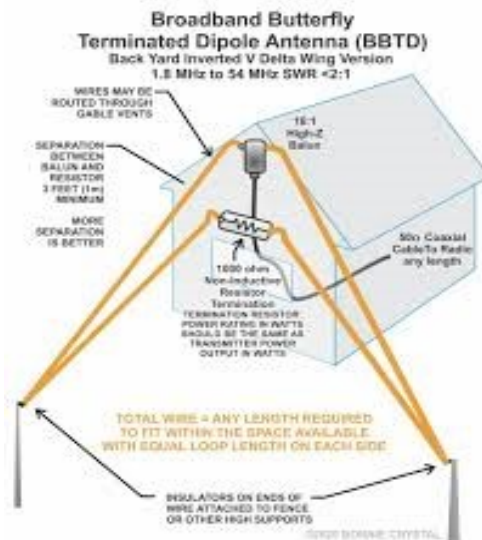
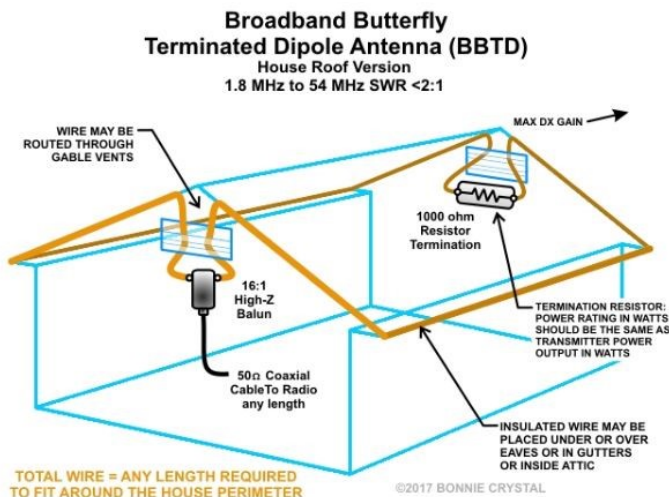
Terminated Folded Monopole Antenna TFM T2FM T3FM

The Terminated Folded Monopole (TFM) is a derivation of the TFD, and it is usually implemented as a vertical antenna over an RF ground plane or a radial system. Like the TFD, the TFM can be designed as a multi-wire or cage antenna. T2FM, T3FM, T4FM, T5FM, etc. The TFM has the same broadband qualities as the TFD, but offers a lower footprint configuration and more omnidirectional pattern for different applications.

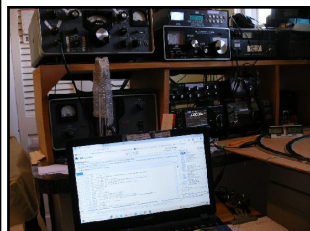
Editor...In reality this would be considered an all band trap-less and possibly radial-free vertical?



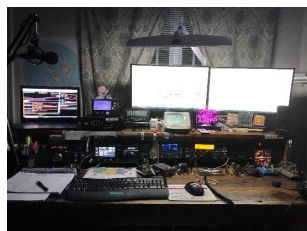
Variations of the Terminated Dipole



WES May, 2023



Great weekend and theme. Was able to give out 300 bonus points. Sat. nite tried to get a pile up on 160 meters but only got three takers. 80 watts into a carolina windom up about 40 feet and a 1939 McElroy straight key. Was able to work everyone I heard. Most qso's on 20 meters. Always nice to hear some old friends and make new ones. 73 till next month, Frank AA2xb



Got in a few times when I could. Bands were better today than yesterday for signals. 73, John-Paul AB4PP



Bands were in poor shape most of the time. Very poor during the day, but better during morning and evening hours. Worked some DX, but mostly short skip on all the bands. Photo shows my 5 band WAS QSL grid. You may recognize some SKCC members on it. Just need Delaware on 10M, and NDAK/Alaska on 80M to complete my 5BWAS. Email me if you want to sked. 73, Bob AC1GF



Thanks for all the QSOs even with the heavy QRN. It was a lot of fun... 73, Jim AD0AB



Great fun! Not bad for an EFHW at 15 ft. Mostly S & P. 40, 20 and even 15m was pretty good from the thumb of Michigan! 73, Stan AC8W and Ted K8AQM



Fun WES. Got most on Saturday and a few on Sunday. Made a big dent in my TKA run. 73 to all. 73, Peter AK3X

Thanks for the contacts. Bands were kind of strange for me here in N.E. Ohio but got'er done. Always fun. Good to see the QRPP and QRP numbers growing. Good to hear old friends and even worked some new stations too. Have a great month. 73, Bud AA8CL



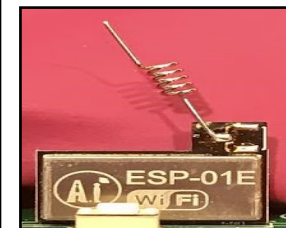
Thank you to those who heard me and answered my calls. 73 de Tom F4GOU



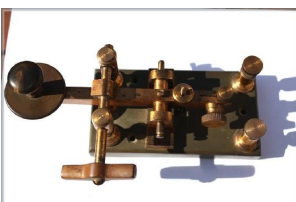
Rig: Elecraft K4 @ 100W; endfed wire & indoor cobweb antennas; Bunnell Double Speed key. 73 and a tap o' the key to all, Drew AF2Z



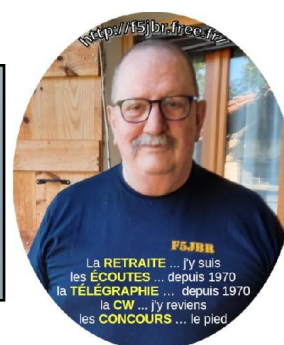
Very strange spread this weekend with high noise levels and local difficulties due to frequent thunderstorms. Thank you for all these QSOs and see you soon in CW. Photo : XM 240 from Cushcraft. 73, Bob F6EJN



Random picture...73, Pat W5WTH



Only had a very short time for this WES and had to enlist the help of son in law Mike to fix the vertical antenna. Thanks for QSOs with F6EJN Bob and EA7Q Leo. Both on 20m. 73, John G0RDO 73



Despite the bad conditions, I managed to make more contacts... thank you to everyone who had the patience to contact me - 73s to all and see you next month - 73, André F5JBR

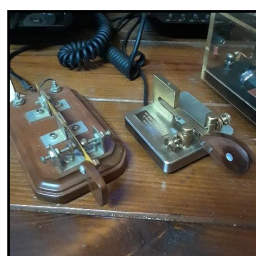
WES May, 2023 II



Conditions generally not too good when I was able to get on this weekend, but pleased to work Larry N1TX in AK again and always enjoy spending time with my Intrepid bug! 73, Jon G4IVV



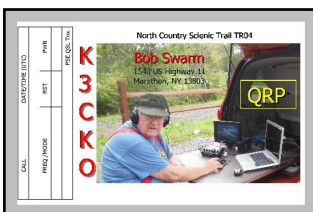
Too much going on this weekend, so I only had time for a couple of contacts, mostly to allow my "first year" number to award a few bonus points. Still fun as always. See you at Hamvention '23. 73, Frank K8FAC



Wow, not a big score this month. Conditions were not too good with solar flares. Did get some new members and 3 Canadians. Only worked 2 of the old guys! Used the 7610 at 75 watts, 80 meter doublet at 30ft. and mixed keys. It was fun as always. CU next month. 73, Allen KASTJS



Enjoyed working the Bonus stations, it brought back memories of Jan 2009 when I discovered the group. The "57" Lightning was made the year I was licensed. June 12th I began my Ham Radio career. Thanks to "SKCC" for my CW abilities today. 73 es Thank you all Rick K0KEX



I kept jumping all over the bands to find which one was open at any particular time. I gave me a good workout on my MFJ manual tuner. All in all, it was fun. 73, Bob K3CKO



Worked mostly from my mobile while traveling home from SC on Saturday. Bands were not in my favor. Sunday was busy with Family and had a grand ole time. Happy Mothers Day to all the Moms now and remembered! 73, Randy KB4QQJ



Conditions in and out both days. Pretty much a 40m show with only 4 contacts on 20m. Operated from my "temporary" basement shack that I set up 8 years ago during some major renovation work in the house. 73, Gary K1YAN



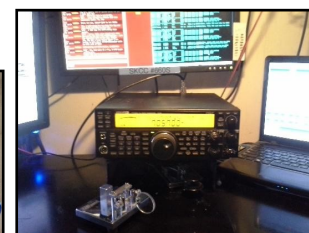
The bands were pretty decent for the sprint. Nice to get some DX this time around. Thanks for all the great contacts! I mostly used the cootie, but did a few with the bug as well, with two mobile contacts. Rigs were a KX3 @ 5W to a doublet, an IC-7300 @ 5W to a vertical, or the X-6100 @ 5W (mobile) to a Hustler resonator. 73, Steve K9NUD



Only got to play for 2 hours but that was a lot of fun. 73, Tom KC3SVR



Wasn't feeling well this weekend so didn't make as many contacts as I usually do. Thanks to First Year members N3KRX, KK0I, & K8JD (2 bands). Ran 50w from my TS-590SG to a vertical using a Kent Str Key. 73, Curt K2CWM



Thanks to all who participated in making WES so much fun. God bless you & your families. 73, Ric KA3LOC



Just had a few minutes to operate while finishing up a Tr(uSDX) build and managed 5 QRP QSOs on 20 in about 20 minutes. If you look really close at that tiny OLED screen you can see it decoding my first QSO- with AC1GF- with his call and WES visible. Tons of fun. Thanks to the folks digging me out. 73, Scott ka9p

WES May, 2023 III



Only had a little over an hour to play this weekend, but it was fun to dust off the straight key. Thanks everyone. 73, Warren KC9IL



Saturday- Ham club breakfast, Fox Hunting and the WES. Not a lot of time to play radio again this weekend. Had fun though! All QSO's 80 thru 15 meters. Hope to QSO with you next month. 73, Jim KD9GDY



Just happened to be in front of the radio at the right time and enjoyed it. Picture is from after it was over. 73, Tim



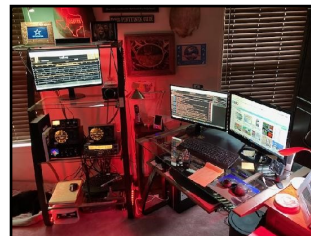
This was a great operating event. I just wish that I had more time to play! 73, Ron, KE8PX - 26949T



Worked hard to get a few in. 73, Mike KG4IMI



Not a lot of time this weekend, plus several lines of thunderstorms. Still a fun event as always. Used the Icom-761 and J-38 for the contacts this month. 73, Randal KG5IEE



No sense complaining about the bands over the weekend. I think they were not the best but you just had to make the best of it. Was good to see 15 meters open some. Hope everyone had a wonderful Mothers Day as well. This contest did however put me within striking distance of my "S" quest. Thanks to all the operators out there that pulled me out of the weeds at times. See you all in June. 73 from The Lone Star State, Doug KG5YTS



On top of Coyote Peak (SOTA ref W6/NC-399) I was setting up to do SOTA activation, did only one SKCC WES QSO with WG0Y before started calling CQ SOTA. All rigs (ATU, QCX-mini 20m 5W, 3x18650 battery pack, DIY paddle key used as straight key) were hanging from the bush branches. :) 73, Jim KG6YJ



Limited time and 20 meters wasn't all that great when I was on Saturday but always fun to get on and work a few SKCC stations when I can. 73, Steve de KJ5T



A great event with time taken out for an opening shift at the pro shop and late lunch reservations for Mother's Day. Managed to catch contacts on each band except 160 and 10. Had a full arsenal to use...the "Old Gal" (1919 Vibroplex Original, Begali HST (cootie), Nye Speedx, and the newly added N6ARA Tiny Paddle (cootie). It certainly kept the boredom down on sending...HI HI. Many thanks for all the contacts and again, nice to see some "new faces" on the air! See you all next month...73, Jack KK0I dit...dit

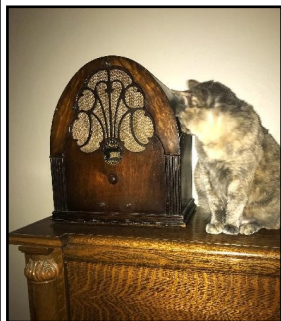


Just working the home shack today...too warm in the Sonoran Desert already for any "portable" setups. Managed to work 10m, 15m, 20m and 40m today. 73, Gary KI7PBR

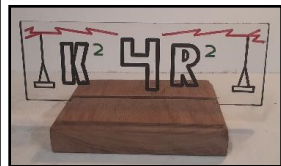


Was only QRV on Saturday, normal PROP, few STNs RX in 10m, had Fun 28MHz 4ele Yagi - 5W - H Made DSK + German SK Firma Richter (Lehr Taste 1) TU everyone for the QSOs. BCNU 73, Walt LW3EX - ... ZUT

WES May, 2023 IV



It was a treat and relief to see the bands get a little better than they have been lately. At least the noise died down even though most signals were a bit weak. There was even a short bit of 10 meter activity at times. A salute and round of applause is due to those members who launched the program year one and are still active today. Sadly, I will miss out on next month's WES due to plans to attend a wedding in my old stomping grounds of Denver that weekend. I hoped to pass out my 57 years of Old Timer points but not this time. Meet the head radio house cat seen here enjoying my new Flex radio. 73, Chuck N0CW



Tentec argo6, amp, ma5b beam at 35ft. 38 qsos at 80wts..21 states..been doing wes, since 5 oct 2010.. ha, legal QRM.. ha. Since 1971 as novice i now have 1049 incoming qsl cards, and 514 dx cards..pix is a plaque i made.. now have done over 100 plaques for hams. For a callsign with 1 or 2 same letter inputs to the number, the 2 or 3 same letters after number, i make a plaque this way for them and send a letter and qsl card to them..So tnx to skcc board mbrs.. c u all. So 73 and if a qrp 2 way qso, i give them a 72. So takecare and c u in JUNE.. 7three Dave Larsen n9zxlqrp@gmail.com



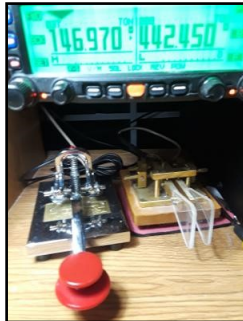
Had a great time, however the bands were not great. Thanks to all who worked thru the QRN and QSB! There were several hours where I just wasn't making many contacts so I started working on my Home Brew Key for the August WES! 73, Dan N1BYT



The propagation was like a light switch (on/off). Saturday was a bust with family, Mothers Day, etc. Sunday 5/14 off and on from 10Z to 21Z. 52 Contacts with 18 1st year STNs in the Log. 73, Rick N8XI



40M was outstanding. Spent most on-air-time, parked, calling CQ. 73, Vern NJ8L



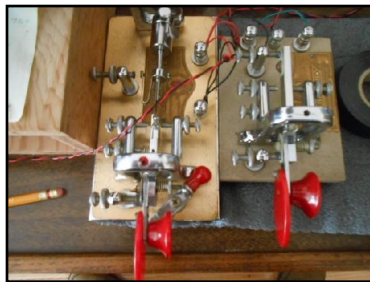
Band conditions were "interesting", to say the least. Thought my antenna had fallen down at times! Had a great time, and I enjoyed being a bonus. Tnx to all who gave me Qs, and suffered though my shaking had and my cat. Going to get that cat a ticket some day, hihi. 73 all, Jerry



Back on SKCC after over a year break. Managed to pick up 55 more of my final 200 needed for S. Only 63 needed now : -) THANKS !! We now live full time in our motorhome and are camping in Florida this week. We move all around the USA. 73, Dennis N4NR

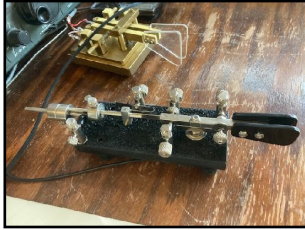


Pictured is my NVIS Yagi . . . Tornado took down all of my wire antennas and bent my tower with a buckled leg . . . but the TH5 survived and is waiting for a new support! In the meantime, a 20 foot high 40 meter dipole got me on the air for WES! See you all next month. 73, Ken N8KR



Nice weekend. Bands finally opened on Sunday afternoon. Look forward to next month. Picture shows the '57 Vibroplex Presentation Bug and '60 Vibrokeyer. 73, George NC2M

WES May, 2023 V



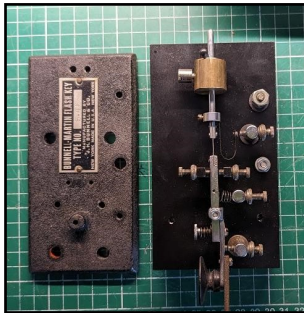
Storms limited OP time for this WES. And we spent the only good stretch of WX Saturday out on the lake. But I managed to get some OP time in Saturday and Sunday AM before the storms fired up. Tried again later Sunday but lightning started getting too near. I still managed to work 5 of the Old Timers and 50 total Q's. Used my K4 and new 80M EFHW at 30' along with my new KN4YB SL170IN bug which I'm getting better with. Thanks all for the fun! 73, Bill NZ0T



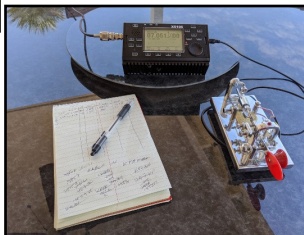
Had more time for operating this weekend, though just barely got things setup after our annual move to ME on Friday. Conditions seemed lousy at times, and prop to EU was definitely below par. But there were a lot of signals on 40 and 20, and I managed to work both Japan and Australia. Can't complain. The picture shows my "new" Begali Sculpture Swing SS key, which got a lot of exercise in CQing. Nice key. Lighter wallet. Thanks to all who participated. Lots of 1st year folks, it seemed. 73, John W1TAG



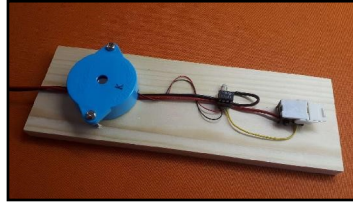
Not the best conditions and little time as well as little WES activity heard, but I thank F6EJN and EA7EGU for two first-year bonus QSOs of only 4 total! 73, Andi OE3IAK



Challenging conditions this WES with weak signals but fun anyway! Not many QSOs but worked 3 new members. Attached a pic of my Bunnell Martin Flash Key on a new base. Used it for the first time in this WES. 73, Jo PG4I



My first WES in the QRPP category. Thanks to Steve K2FW, Jordan W7VC and Paul W1PR for pulling my signal out of the noise! 73, Kevin W2NC



Didn't have much time for WES. I did build a simple (and FREE!) CPO though, with only 4 components from an old telephone, see details on my blog: <https://on7dq.blogspot.com/2023/05/very-simple-code-practice-oscillator.html> 73, Luc



Tnx for the qso's. Working Tx4 with a Junkers and the MAC-key. 73, Joop PA3JD



A new experience for me, but very nice. I worked from our local radioclub with PA 400 watts, a 5el Tribander and a "Swedish Key". Almost a "pile-up" on 15 meter! Thank You all! 73 de Mats SM7BUA



A lot of activity on 20M during this WES, with a little 40M thrown in. Thanks to those who helped my journey toward Triple Key Award by surviving some extra dits from my new-ish Bug fist on my 1957 Vibroplex Original! 73, Cathy W4CMG

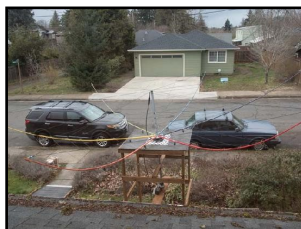


Condx not the best Saturday, but improving Sunday. Still lots of fun making old and new Qsos. 73 All Allan W4EAB

WES May, 2023 VI



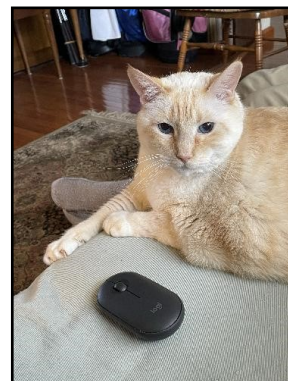
Thanks to all for the QSO's, especially all the first year members who began SKCC. Great to work F6EJN, DL4FN, PG4I and EA4BL as well as those who are close in DE - which is usually difficult on QRP! Was limited to 40M and 20M this time. Had foot surgery a few days ago and couldn't get downstairs to the shack! Had help changing bands on my linked dipole and used my QCX QRP radios that I use for portable ops from the comfort of a reclining chair near the window. 73 all, Steve W6WU



125 QSOs altogether, 1 dup, 3 QSOs were not complete exchanges (including one POTA station dropping by), and 3 with non-members actually sending "NONE". Now at 170/200 on my Senate Run. My logger says on-time was 7.3 hours, but it was more like 7am to 5pm both days on and off. CQ'ed for 2 hours non-stop at one point, netted 22 QSOs. I've been telling people all my hobbies are work-like... Here is my K4KIO Hex Beam 8-feet up, to be on the roof maybe before the next WES. 73, Jordan W7VC



Kinda spur of the moment WES'ing here...only put in a few hours. I was using a DIY 1-tube XMTR (4w)-built it about a week ago...xtal controlled and my Drake 2b RCVR to a Delta Loop. Fun time! 73, Neil WA4CHQ



Quite a weekend, had to shutdown and disconnect the antenna both Saturday and Sunday because of storms. I did work a few stations, including FRA, GER and POR and some new stations. I also had QSO's with three first year ops, so not bad. 73 and thanks for the QSO's Gene W9KMK



I didn't have much time to operate but got to use the (tr)uSDX rig I just finished. I had it apart tuning it today and made 1 contact before I put it back in the case. All my contacts were about 2.6 to 3.0 watts. I was also using a new bug, a Skillman coffin bug I got at the ham-fest in Belton last month. The antenna was an 80m dipole fed with 450 ohm ladder line. 73, Kerry WD5ABC



Operating Location: BLM Indian Rock Campground near McCammon, Idaho Grid: DN32vq Bannock County. See QRZ.com for details. 73, Dave WG0Y



Plastic Ground Rods
No more rusting or corroded ground rods! Use these plastic ground rods that will last many lifetimes!

- Very flexible and easily conforms to rocks, obstructions, etc. when driving into ground. They just bend around the rocks!
- No corrosion!
- No dissimilar metal issues...because it isn't metal!
- Low conductance.
- Impervious to red ants.



I worked from a workplace location, from Mount Fruska Gora, 539m ASL, JN95ud. I used my oldie FT-757gx2, 50-100W output into 4 band Hidaka vertical antenna VS41 (ground mounted). The key was WWII Lionel J-36 bug from my collection. The propagations were quite weak and quite strange. Thank you all for nice QSOs and for new C,T,S. I'm missing a few QSO's for the TX7. I hope it will come soon my "S" award. 73 from YU7AE, Kare

Confessions of a Casual Contester

Vol. 3 Issue 8

from the shack of David VE4DL

I am not now, nor ever have been, a Contester. I don't see myself becoming a Contester either, if one defines the term to include round-the-clock operations, intravenous fluids and diapers, and frequent relays of cold, one-hand meals. Not my thing, at all. BUT.....

April brought some progress on the remote front. The underlying problem with integration was a corrupt driver for the Flex at my end. Re-installed and presto! I have logger control of the Flex6400. My usual logging software is N3FJP's AC Log and the various contest loggers that come with. Once the problem was located, it was only a question of querying the comm ports and assigning the correct ones in ACLog to have full control established. The FlexRadio is a drop-down option in the setup. Save the file and open it in each contest logger as needed. Bingo. I worked JIDX CW remote, using N1MM+, set up was almost as easy, I think 2 more boxes to check? No sweat, no manuals. It actually makes me feel like I know what I'm doing.....(don't bet on it.)

I didn't break any records in JIDX, as a long-wire in an urban setting is still not the best set up for contesting, but it was enough to be fun. Had I more time to commit on the Saturday, my score would have been much higher. Mostly I worked the early and late fringes. I keep missing the one JI I know personally (we went to college together) but I think it's only a question of time. I know he'll be one op on a special event station this month, I'll have a listen for them.

The last of the snowbank in my yard melted out yesterday, and I rescued my 2 el yagi from its precarious perch. It's now up on cinderblocks awaiting its ride to the roof. I'm looking forward to having my *own* station back on the air this spring. Being retired has given more *day-time* to operate but less *nighttime*. I was not expecting that.

I also have HamRadioDeluxe on my computer. I've only opened it a few times, stared at its complexity, and closed it again. I might get around to setting it up this year and putting in the effort to learn it. Whether or not, I have a lot of projects lying about the shack to keep my few idle hours not-idle.

But it isn't contesting. Nope. Not at all. Well, maybe.... yes it is!



A story from the other side of the fence. This isn't about any particular incident, just a depiction of how things might go as the cat and mouse game of RDF was going on between the Wehrmacht and the resistance....de James Elkins KG4IKQ

"PIRATE HUNTING 1944"

A mobile team of the Funkabwehr (Radio Defense Corp) of the Wehrmacht, is closing in on a resistance radio transmitter. They have stopped on a hillside above a sleepy French village, perhaps in the Haute-Loire region of France. No doubt the team leader brought them to a sliding halt on this "road," and bailed out to look things over with his binoculars.

Hopefully, the radio operator already knows they are there, and has departed, or tragically, may choose to stay on the key until the last second, desperately trying to get an important message through.

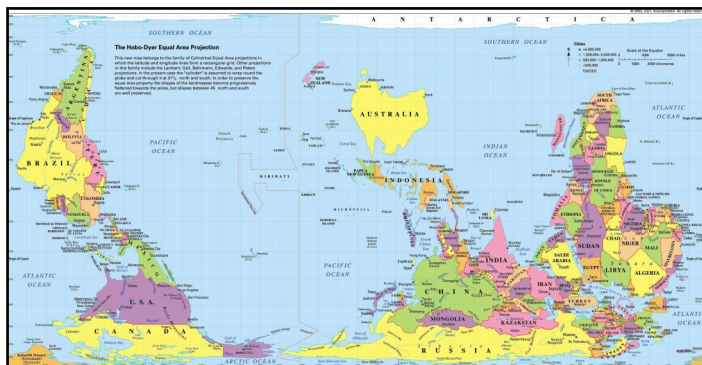
In a village this size, the reinforcements coming in the background will tear it apart to at least find the transmitter, going house-to-house and person-to-person, until they find the operator. More likely, a few thousand francs will change hands, and the operator will be betrayed...But the NCO in charge of the detail has done well to get them this close in the modified Horch 230R, kind of an SUV of its time. The EP2a direction finder unit is probably listening to the operator in the low 80m band, around 3.3 Mhz.

Who is he hunting? Pearl Witherington? Amedee Maingard? Or the "Limping Lady" herself, Virginia Hall of the OSS? What a feather in his cap that would be! Others in his detail however, at his orders have probably climbed out of this dusty hot car a hundred times today, and in the way of Privates in every army in the world, they have other opinions about the whole operation....

14" x 17". Graphite Pencil on Smooth Finish Bristol Board.



Oceania QRS Saunter May 20, 2023



Oceania QRS Saunter Results

Results for Oceania QRS Saunter: 20 May 2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
VK2GAZ	Garry	5460C	AUS	8
VK4DRK	Derek	26381	AUS	1
VK4EV	Ron	10775	AUS	4
VK4SE	Jeff	26260	AUS	5
VK4TJ	John	4474S	AUS	4
ZL3TK	Stan	16208	NZL	10

Participants and QSOs by SPC

AUS: 5 / 22 NZL: 1 / 10



It was very pleasing to hear so many operators calling CQ SKCC. These are my contacts for this month. Bert W5ZR, Jeff VK4SE, Dean VK3DL, Lawrie VK5LJ, Andy VK5LA, David VK4JM, Mark VK3MJ & ZL3TK. 73, Gary VK2GAZ

Stan ZL3TK		SKCC OC QRS SAUNTER 20 May 2023							
TIME Z	FREQ MHz	CALL SIGN	SENT	RCVD	SPC	NAME	QTH	SKCC #	
0019	21.050	VK4LL	521	573	AUS	FINN	BRISBANE	19089	
0044	7.038	ZL3ABX	561	599	NZL	STEPHEN	NELSON	27382	
0054	7.038	ZL2AM	581	599	NZL	IAN	TAIRUA	2755N	
0335	14.049	R7AY	211	55N	RUS	SERGE	KRASNODAR	NONE	
0512	14.049	VK3MJ	571	569	AUS	MARK	GEELONG	25012	
1122	7.037.5	VK5CZ	331	559	AUS	IAN	CLARE	18281	
1142	7.037.5	VK2GAZ	221	55N	AUS	GARRY	RICHMOND	5460C	
1332	14.050	VK4DRK	521	559	AUS	DEREK	WYREEMA	26381	
2149	14.050	VK2NMV	411	57N	AUS	ADAM	DEEPWATER	20432	
2201	14.050	VK4SE	551	55N	AUS	JEFF	Abandoned, QRM in AUS	26260	



Finding the SKCC sked page is a useful tool. Maybe some signal reports are a shade optimistic. Best to say if conditions are unfavorable then appropriate techniques can be deployed, such as QSZ. Grand to hear new chaps giving it a go. See my QRZ page for description of RSN reporting, more meaningful than RST and alerts the other fellow to potential difficulties. Never be hesitant to ask for QRS when needed. 73, Stan ZL3TK

K3Y/KP4 Panning for 2024!

On May 20, 2023 the group had a get together to have lunch and talk about next year K3Y activity. Operators present were KP3W José – coordinator, KP4SJ Pablo sub-coordinator, NP3A Eric, KP3N Osvaldo, WP4F Danny and KP4RD Felix.

Pablo-KP4SJ gave the greetings to the activity to all the operators present. Jose – KP3W -coordinator also had some words. Everyone had the opportunity to comment and give new ideas for the next K3Y activity, but everybody agreed. “If something is working good, no need to fix it”.

After chatting for more than an hour, we enjoyed a delicious lunch at the Metropol Restaurant in Dorado. We had a great time and ready for the K3Y in January 2024.

Next meeting will be this November, 2023. Thanks to all José KP3W and Pablo KP4SJ
P.D. Photos 73, Pablo



ANZAC Celebrations with VK5WT



The key am I use-The original WWII W.T. Army No 8 in the original tin housing



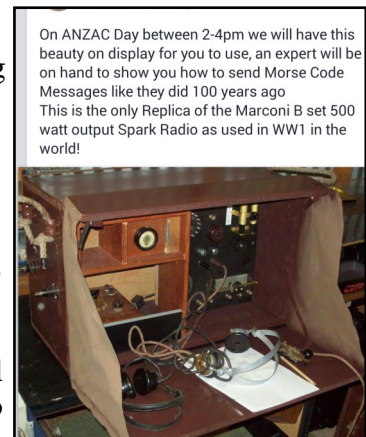
The 2023 Theme for AM-RO (Australian New Zealand Radio Operators) was CW and it did make for a "different" year, as I used CW 95 percent of the weekend. My favourite QSY or crystal frequency is: 7006 KHz, on a WW2 122 mk2 -Linear [HP] version. 100 W CW. I do plan to get a crystal made in FT-243 format for SKCC fre-

quency of 7038 soon. I use a digital frequency counter that sits on top of my WW2 gear to let me use VFO.

Of possible interest to the older members:

I have here a replica of the only WW1 Spark portable set the Army had in South Australia in WWI. As a replica, I have made it "appear" to be working. In fact it uses a loop tape recording on receive, with the spark sounds, and for transmitting, it has a relay wired as a loop spark buzzer through to a speaker for sound effects. It does not radiate at all. It does however create interest when in public. Of interest also: is that the replica....caused a chap to come over and tell me a story.... He said when he was a little boy, he went to a ham radio shed, in Melbourne, where the old timer said over here is the old Adelaide Marconi Spark set....the Pack Set 500 W.

Unfortunately, two years later, in 1972 a fire burnt the shed down with the only Spark set from Adelaide Military set, 1913, so the set no longer exists. This replica is not perfect and physically represents a set that where there were only about six in the whole of Australia. South Australia only had one set. And now it is gone. I have the only replica in Australia, and some original examples exist in places like the UK, but are super rare.



Editor..... For those who don't know about ANZAC Day:

Anzac Day marks the anniversary of the first campaign that led to major casualties for Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War. The acronym ANZAC stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, whose sol-



diers were known as Anzacs. Anzac Day remains one of the most important national occasions of both Australia and New Zealand; however, the ceremonies and their meanings have changed significantly since 1915.



KC4USV

Unknown author



This is the outside of KC4USV in McMurdo, Antarctica - on a nice day. It's been a few weeks since this photo was taken and the weather has taken a sharp turn towards "oh my." This coming Friday, the sun will rise and set for the last time until late August. Our days have gone from sunrise at 0600 and sunset after 2100 to sunrise at 1000 and sunset at 1600. The 10-minute walk from my housing to the ham shack has become a true labor of love, even when conditions end up being horrible for radio propagation. I've had a lot of people reach out asking me what it's like to be outside in extreme cold. Please allow me to answer the best that I can.

If you've ever learned about burn injuries, you may remember that third degree burns are both devastating and "pain free" because the burn kills the nerves in the tissue. The tremendous amount of pain comes after the burn stops, when the body starts trying to repair itself. Standing outside in -71°F wind chills with wind gusting at 23 knots is similar to receiving third degree burns. The change in your body temperature happens

both slowly and quickly. It's slow enough that you feel like you're "getting adjusted" to the conditions, but it's fast enough that it numbs the nerves and you don't truly sense what's happening until you feel your bone marrow slowing down and paralyzing your skeleton system. It usually starts with the feet because they are always in contact with the frozen ground. Toe warmers are a godsend when you have to be in a building that is not insulated from the ground beneath it.

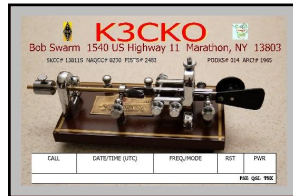
The average human body temperature is 98.6°F and hypothermia starts to set in at 95° . In -50° weather, it takes less than 5 minutes for your core body temp to drop 4° and develop a nasty case of hypothermia. Because of how quickly this happens, medical professionals can often resuscitate a hypothermic patient up to an hour after their body has shut down. "They're not dead until they're warm and dead." We bundle ourselves in layers that are each designed to trap body heat in an effort to stave off heat loss, but it is inevitable that the atmosphere will remove the heat faster than our bodies can generate it. Any moisture in your body would freeze if it weren't already being sucked away by the desert conditions we live in. Hair can freeze and then clumps can break off when touched. Again, you don't feel it when you're being exposed to the cold. What I find to be the worst is when the mucas that lines your nasal passages and throat turn to thin layers of ice inside your body. At that point, you're focused on paying attention to your core body temp because the air in your lungs is effectively dry ice. The possibility of your oxygen levels dropping quickly becomes very real.

I remember hearing once that there's no such thing as "cold" in scientific terms, there's only more or less heat. I've always tried to keep that in mind when I'm working with temperature loss equations in life. $Q=mc\Delta T$. Heat loss = mass times specific heat times change in temperature. Heat loss continues until all objects reach the same temperature. There's no stopping it unless you can supply more heat, and if you can't supply heat quickly enough you need to change your methods. How fast is that, exactly? I'm not sure, but it could be 100° warmer outside and we would still be below freezing. How fast would you change your behavior?

SKS May 24, 2023



Band condx on 40 & 20 very good here. Ran 50 watts from my TS-590SG to a vertical, using my 1943 Lionel J38 hand key (may be my fav key). Thanks for the contacts and participation. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Being this month's special station let me know what a real pileup was like. I called cq for 30 minutes then as a hunter for 30 minutes on 20 meters. Then repeated the same on 40 meters. I operated WITH A ic-7300 AND A g5rv ANTENNA AT 60 FT. I USED A



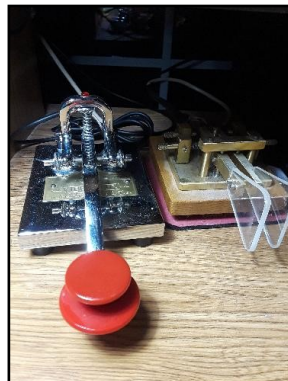
A lot of fun as usual, but where were all the East Coast stations. I only worked a few on the East Coast, yet the West and Mid-West were hopping. Thanks to KK6L who had the patience to pull out my 4W QRP signal. 73, Steve K4JPN



15 meters open early managed 4 Qs then QSY to 20 meters which had QRN/QSB issues. 73, Stay Tuned Daryl K9QEW



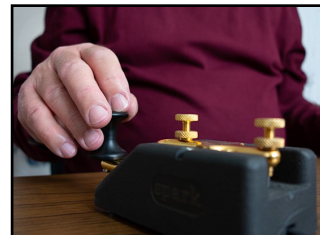
Got on for an hour. Hope to QSO with you next month. Gud to work my friend John W9GOO. 73, Jim KD9GDY



Started on 20 meters and then moved to 40 meters where I found K3CKO,



1 hour of operation mostly on 40M. Was able to pickup 4 new S's towards my next Sx award. Nice to see the renewed interest in the SKS. Hope it continues to the June WES. 73, Vern NJ8L



My first SKS in a while. I started on 15m; good propagation (according to RBN), no noise, nobody around. After 20 minutes, I moved to 20m which was good and clean, then 40m for the last stretch, also good but noisy. Met a few new people. Most important: it was fun. Thanks all and 73, Robert VE2KZW

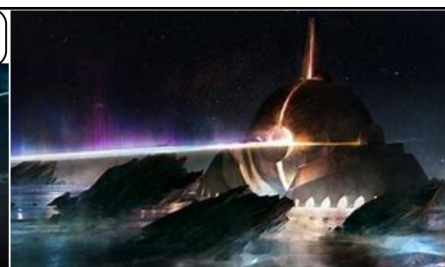


Spent entire SKS on 40 meters. Slow start but the last hour was much more productive. Good to hear old friends and good to meet new ones! A good time was had by all.... see you next month. 73, Dave W1DV



Been a while since I've done a sprint but had a great time as always. Stayed pretty much on 20 meters only. Went to 40 meters but only made about 6 contacts and then back to 20 to finish up. Was hoping for better results but wasn't too disappointed. Used my 1919 Vibroplex Double Lever. Seems to be my go to key. Thanks for all the q's. 73 and cu agn, Bob W0YBS

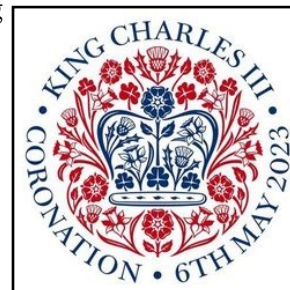
THE FCC JUST RELEASED A NEW LEVEL OF AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE - "EXTRA ASGARD". YOU GET 50KW LEGAL LIMIT PLUS YOU CAN OPEN THE BIFROST ...



King Charles III's Coronation

Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) Canada has approved the use of special call sign prefixes from May 5 - July 2, 2023 in honor of King Charles III's coronation. The special prefixes will be available to all Canadian amateurs who wish to use them during that time frame.

Operators who wish to use the special prefixes will substitute the prefix normally assigned to their province of territory with that of the special prefix. For example, VE3 becomes CK3, VA7 becomes CJ7, VY2 becomes CZ2. For a complete list of the special call prefixes, visit www.rac.ca/special-event-call-signs-for-the-coronation-of-king-charles-iii/.



ARRL Volunteers on the Air Event

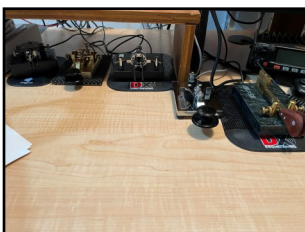
The year-long ARRL Volunteers on the Air event continues, recognizing the support and contributions of ARRL volunteers. Get on the air and make contacts with as many ARRL volunteers or members as possible. There will be week-long activations of portable W1AW/# stations in all 50 states, and in several US Possessions/Territories. For a schedule of W1AW/# portable operations, see the [W1AW Portable Activations Schedule](http://www.arrl.org/W1AW-Portable-Activations-Schedule). Be sure to upload your logs to LoTW and check your score online. Check out the full details at <http://vota.arrl.org>.



Keys!



SKCC WES pic for May shows Elecraft K4 & Bunnell Double Speed key: they are about 100 years different in age but get along well together. 73, Drew AF2Z



My key cadre. The single lever Benchner is set up as a cootie. 73, Bill W9SA

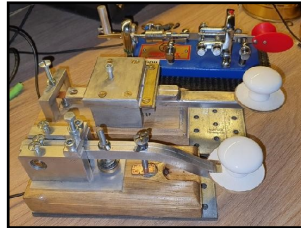


Got to love Steve W1SFR keys 😊. Things of beauty. 73, Daniel M0SDB

Brag April, 2023



Fun month, thanks for the contacts. 73, Bud AA8CL



Too bad some European OM's don't give their Nr SKCC during QSOs. 73 de F4GOU/Tom



The spread was not there...no big deal!!! The friends of the SKCC were present; that was the main thing. THANKS to all, 73 Andre F5JBR



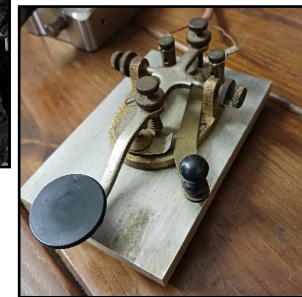
Slow Brag month for me... too many irons in the fire. Hopefully May will be better. If attending Hamvention be sure to stop by the SKCC booth. If you see me 'napping' in the back, just give me a shake. 73, Curt K2CWM



Got a couple of "first time ever" QSOs from new members...that's cool! Picture is what to do with that 'thing' on the side of good headphones. Tape has held for 10+ years! 73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM



Thanks to all who participated in this month's Brag program. Conditions were unusual. Hopefully the higher bands will continue to improve. Everyone have a fun. God bless you and your families. 73, Ric KA3LOC



Conditions were not great here this month. We had a lot of solar activity and poor propagation on some days. Never got the bonus station this month. Used the IC 7610 at 75 watts and a doublet antenna at 30ft. Mostly on the cootie but some Bug and SK mixed in there. CU all next month I hope. 73, Allen KASTJS



As fun as ever. 73, Tom KB3CVO



73, N4OW AL



73, KN8RHM, Rick



Ole Sol was messing with us but fun to work around :-). Thanks John, K2IZ for another Brag Bonus stint. 73, Rick N8XI



Nice month with plenty of new members worked and some serious POTA activity for the first time. Also, sold my TS-520SE to make some room in the shack. I am going to stick to TenTec rigs :-)
73, Jo PG4I

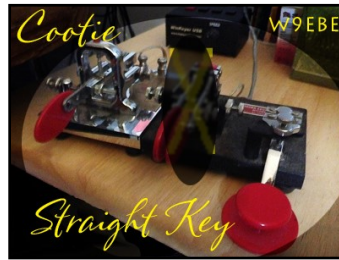


73, KC5SAM, "SAM"

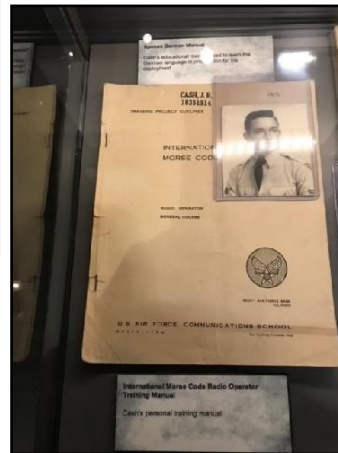
May Brag 2023 II



Seems like summer doldrum conditions arrived early but hopefully they will move on for a while yet. The last half of the month was like being in the bottom of a huge box of cereal (or black hole). Bands produced a lot of Snap, Crackle, and Pop. 73, Chuck N0CW



I haven't been very radio active the past few months, but I always enjoy a few SKCC QSOs using my straight key and/or cootie. Thanks for the contacts! 73, Chip W9EBE



CW pic from Johnny Cash Museum in Nashville.73, Pat W5WTH

W3DVX SKCC 22955 Chatted with AI

W3DVX...What ham radio antenna would be best for 40 meters when outside space is limited?

ChatGPT

When outside space is limited, it's best to look for compact and efficient antennas that can fit in small spaces. Here are a few ham radio antennas that are suitable for 40 meters and work well in small spaces:

1. **Dipole Antenna:** A half-wave dipole is a simple and effective antenna that works well on 40 meters. It requires only two supports and can be easily erected in a small space. The antenna is also resonant, which means that it doesn't need a tuner and has low SWR.
2. **Vertical Antenna:** A shortened vertical antenna, such as a quarter-wave or 5/8 wave vertical, can also work well on 40 meters. It's important to make sure the vertical is properly grounded to minimize noise and increase efficiency.
3. **End-Fed Antenna:** An end-fed antenna, such as an EFHW (End-fed Half-Wave) or an EFZ (End-fed Zepp), is also a great option for limited space. These antennas can be configured as a sloper or inverted L, which can be strung up from a tree or mounted on a roof.
4. **Magnetic Loop Antenna:** A magnetic loop antenna is a compact and efficient option for 40 meters. These antennas use a loop of wire and a variable capacitor to tune to the desired frequency. They have a small footprint and can be mounted indoors or outdoors.

Ultimately, the best antenna for your specific situation will depend on your location, available space, and budget. It's important to consider your specific needs and constraints when choosing an antenna for 40 meters.

Rain Gutter HF Antenna – N6CC.COM

<http://www.n6cc.com/tactical-antenna-systems>

“There are no rules here. We are trying to accomplish something.” Thomas Edison.

Rain Gutter Antennas:



This is a photo of a simple, effective and entirely covert HF antenna. It is the rain gutter along the front of a house. **It is 80 feet long and off-center fed as a Windom with a single wire lead-in to a tuner.** A GRC-109 will drive it directly without the tuner on 80, 40 and 30 meters and it has yielded good results within about 1000 miles at the 10 watt level.

At 10 feet above ground and operated “against” the house wiring/neutral radio ground, it makes for an effective NVIS-type antenna depending upon the freq/time of day. A simple solder lug under a sheet metal screw and then painted over makes the connection. The screw point penetrating the sheet metal is covered with silicone RTV to stop corrosion on that end. This antenna has been in continuous use for the past 15 years. Invisible.

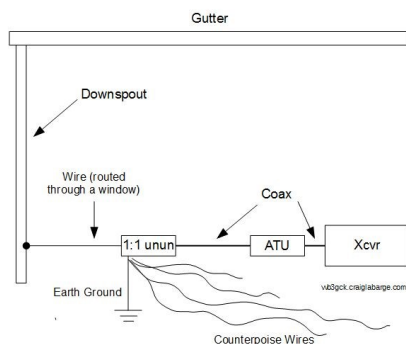
My new gutters are the modern type, formed from a continuous roll of flat sheet aluminum – no seams. Seams? No problem. Sheet metal screws and RTV protection fixes that. Plastic? Just run some insulated wire above, inside or behind them. Simple works. The covered wood rafters provide adequate “RF insulation”, even when the overlaying roofing itself is wet – I see minimal change in the SWR / complex impedance and any power loss appears to be minimal, certainly in terms of distant field strength “S Units”.

The down spouts, especially at ground level can also part of the system so make sure there can be no RF voltage or possible personal contact there. If there is concern, inserting a short PVC section between the gutter and metal downspout will isolate it. The \$2.00 fix; cut to size. Alternatively, make the downspout itself from PVC and run an insulated wire up inside it.

Hardware stores have a wide variety of standard-size PVC downspout stuff. A simple straight section worked here. Good idea anyway, apply Common Sense. Think it through.

SAFETY FIRST!

Basic diagram of rain gutter antennas. Some antennas work better with 9:1 unun and some better with a 1:1 unun. This antenna also uses the down spouts as part of the antenna. If you can do 1/4 wave counterpoise wires that’s great but even random length is good and the more radials the better.



WM0G Rain Gutter Antenna

A couple of years ago I had written an article on the use of my rain gutter on my home as my HF antenna. This is the antenna I have been relegated to use for my HF operating due to the oppressive rules of the local Home Owners Association regarding external antennas. Although, I did remind them that it was now illegal to ban small satellite dishes and yagis for TV reception per the FCC, so they amended that clause in the HOA covenants but still continue their ban on any outside ham antennas. I'll not complain, as I knew what the HOA rules were when I got this house and have accepted them as a challenge to my ingenuity



In my original article I told about the inspiration I had to then use the aluminum rain gutters on part of the east side of my new house as my antenna.

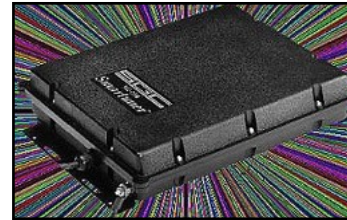
They measure 25 feet vertically and then run 35 feet horizontally for a total of 60 feet overall length and resemble a ready-made inverted "L" or Marconi antenna configuration. In that article I also explained how I had planted a radial system beneath the lawn that consists of ten random length radials and how I've also tied into this radial system the three aluminum window wells that are on that side of the house. According to accepted theory, the more metal and wire you use in your radial system, the better. You should consider connecting to your radial system any nearby chain link fencing, metal lawn sprinkler piping, fire department stand pipes, underground storage tanks, metal drain culverts, railroad tracks, etc.

One of the drawbacks I've noticed on my original rain gutter antenna was that it was somewhat tricky to load on some of the bands using a conventional antenna transmatch. It was impossible to find any decent matching combination on 160 meters at all. Loading on the 80, 40, 30, 20, and 15 meters bands did not present much of a problem. Tuning on 10 meters was a bit tricky at times, as well as finding a decent match on 12 meters and 17 meters. I looked at several possible solutions including one developed by my good ham friend, Friday lunch buddy, stealth antenna compatriot, long time DXer, celebrated author and renowned Physicist - Yardley Beers, WØJF who did all the complex mathematical calculations on my rain gutter antenna and offered me a coil design that could be added to the feedpoint in order for it to load on 160 meters. No doubt that it would work!

Ultimately though, I had decided on using a different approach. I had read a lot about the SGC-230 Smartuner antenna coupler in ham magazines and on the Internet. It seemed like a plausible solution to this problem if it would work as advertised. The automatic antenna coupler is designed for use with end-fed unbalanced antennas such as whips and long wires. It can be configured to be used with dipoles and inverted vees as well. This automatically tunable antenna coupler is an ideal solution for this type of installation due to the fact that the rain gutter looks like a non-resonant end-fed unbalanced antenna.

What is the difference between an antenna coupler and an antenna tuner? According to the SGC manual, "Antenna "couplers" are placed at the antenna and match conditions of the antenna to the feed line in a very precise manner. Antenna "tuners", on the other hand, are generally located at the transmitter output at the radio end of the coaxial feed line. Furthermore, antenna tuners placed at the transmitter allow substantial losses in feed lines to be corrected in order to "fool" a transmitter into working correctly. The losses are dissipated through heat or to ground. A coupler installed at the antenna eliminates these losses by providing a proper match of the antenna to the feed line. The SGC-230 Smartuner is a true antenna coupler".

After purchasing the unit from my local Denver HRO store I couldn't wait to get it installed. Upon physical inspection of the unit, I was impressed by the ruggedness of the construction of the SGC-230. This hermetically sealed antenna coupler was obviously meant to be installed outdoors and was even suitable for installation on shipboard. Included in the equally formidable packaging box was an impressive and informative 81-page installation and operating manual that explained the coupler's inner workings and it even suggested various antenna applications for the SGC-230 with illustrations. SGC builds other models of these type of antenna coupling devices but the SGC-230 Smartuner is the only model that is rated at 200W input. I probably wouldn't ever run that much power, but it is comforting to know that you are not running on the hairy edge of the limits of its power capabilities. Hopefully, that additional margin will translate into many extra years of trouble free operation.



The installation was a snap. SGC gives you an additional quick installation guide (for those of us that don't like to read the whole manual) that was easy to follow. First, I mounted the antenna coupler as close as possible to the feedpoint of the rain gutter per the specification in the installation guide. This is because any portion of the feed wire that is connected to the SGC-230 becomes part of the overall length of the antenna too. So I mounted my unit on the inside wall of the foundation of my basement just above the wooden base plate and below the flooring. This location was just opposite the downspout of the rain gutter, which is my antenna feed point on the outside. A distance of about 8 inches away. I drilled two holes just larger than the O.D. of the intended feed-thru wires through the 2 x 12 above the concrete foundation and on through the outer siding. Then I took apart a piece of RG-8X coax and separated the inner conductor from the braided shield. The inner conductor would serve nicely as the feed wire from the coupler to the downspout. You are cautioned in the instructions not to use coax to hookup these auto couplers on the antenna feed side. The now-separated braided shielding served as the hookup to the outside radial wires and was then connected to the ground lug provided on the SGC-230. Now all that was left was to connect the 50-ohm coax from my rig to the input coax cable harness provided with the SGC-230. There is a set of control wires and voltage wires included in this coaxial cable harness. The 12V hot wire and ground went to my 12V power supply. There are control signal leads that are also provided that are used for an indication of the coupler's tuning. An LED "antenna tuned" indicator was connected between +12V and the control signal wire. When the antenna coupler has found a match, the coupler drives the signal to ground on the control wire, which causes the LED to light. It provides a good visual indicator close to my operating position because I can't hear the quiet auto coupler relays engaging from my operating position. The total time for installation, from getting the unit out of the box to starting the initial testing, was under 45 minutes.

To me, the "proof of the pudding" would be how well it performed in on the air tests. First I tried to load up the antenna on all the bands from 10 through 80 meters. No problem whatsoever. Most bands indicated a 1:1 SWR and initial tuning time was from 3 - 4 seconds for finding a match. The Smartuner automatically evaluates and switches 64 input and 32 output capacitance combinations plus 256 inductance combinations in a "pi" network - over a half-million matching combinations. Once it does find a match, the SGC-230 has 500 memories in which it stores the LC combination in its non-volatile computer memory so that the next time you tune up on that same frequency it is tuned almost instantaneously (less than 10 ms). Now for the band I hadn't been able to get a match on before - 160 meters. I went down to the CW portion, where I usually operate, and it found a match within 4 seconds. Life is good again! I also have not noticed any "hunting" by the SGC antenna coupler once it is tuned to a frequency.

I decided I would wait until the evening to perform some on the air experiments with some people I knew on 75 meters SSB. I checked into the GERATOL Net on 3.768 MHz, which is a WAS net for the extra class ham. I have been active on this WAS net for over 13 years and knew most of the folks checking in. These unwitting participants in my tests were giving me S-7 to S-9+ reports from New England to California and from British Columbia to Florida. I had not let on to anyone before the net that I had done anything to my antenna system and thought I'd gather a few willing souls after the net to give me some further signal reports.

I was getting reports of S-6 in New England later on as the band seemed to be changing a little but I was still getting S-9+ reports from the southern states and was still S-7 into British Columbia and Washington State and S-9 into California. Most of these good folks know that I am using a rain gutter for an antenna but some of them think I am kidding them about it and using something more formidable for an antenna and maybe even a linear! So after telling everyone on the frequency about my latest antenna configuration and new addition, I got a comment from a station in Arkansas and he said, "If I could put in a signal like that out from my rain gutter, I'd get rid of my dipole and my linear too!" He said that my signal had been over S-9 all night at his QTH. The band conditions were decent this particular evening but the reports were consistently above previously logged reports I've had with those very same stations in the past under similar band conditions without the coupler. To date, the signal reports remain fairly constant, plus or minus band conditions. Later that same week, I noticed on the KØMP Telnet DX Cluster that the long awaited K5K Kingman Reef Dxpedition was up and running. This would be an ATNO (all time new one) for me if I could get through the pileups. I knew that CW would be my best chance early on and I'd try for the SSB contacts later on during the DXpedition when the "big guns" had gotten their fill and the "feeding frenzy" was over. I caught K5K easily on 30 meters - no problem, as everyone on that band is fairly equal due to the power limitation.

Later, I worked them on 15, 17 and 40 meters CW. I even got them on 40 meters SSB too! Finally, one evening I saw a spot for K5K on 160 meters. I hadn't actually operated down here before with the rain gutter due to the problems I have previously noted. I heard him and set up split about 1.5KHz up and slipped in my callsign fully preparing to be there for a while as his presence had attracted a fairly good pileup. He came back to me on my very first call! I was so shocked that I didn't answer right away. I just kept staring at my radio - like having "buck fever" when you're out deer hunting. He sent my callsign again. I hurriedly snapped out of my trance and jumped onto my keyer and gave him the usual 5NN 5NN CO TU ES 73 DE WMØG. He acknowledged my reply and continued on to work the rest of the pileup. Not too bad! My very first 160 meters contact on the rain gutter was a rare DX station in a pileup. I was even more impressed now with my new antenna coupler. It had 'played' as advertised and had already justified its pricey self in my mind. I like to imagine that the other guys in that pileup thought that they had initially lost out to some "big gun" topband DXer with his quarter wave length high 160 meters 4-square vertical array and Alpha 87A amplifier -- HI!

Since that time, I have casually worked over 120 countries (using all bands), and have enough QSO's again for WAS, if I needed it, on 75 meters SSB. I even participated in the ARRL SSB Contest and managed to work 45 different countries in 98 contacts, mostly on 20, 15 and 10 meters, on all continents in a little under three hours of actual operating time while being particular on who I called while searching and pouncing. While this is certainly not an impressive "run rate" it is still is not a bad testimonial to the capabilities of the antenna and coupler combination even if one takes into account that the contest guys on the receiving end were using much more impressive antennas in order to hear me. They were still coming back to me on my first or second call except for a few of the rarer ones with lots of QRM on their frequency.

Another idea has popped into my mind since I've been using this antenna. I have a duplicate rain gutter section on the west side of my house and, if I bought another SGC antenna coupler, I could phase the rain gutter antennas together with equal amounts of coax to the couplers plus by inserting a 135 degree phasing line cut for each band, I could then switch them as an end-fired array and have resultant directional gain to the east or to the west. Then I could switch and "tee" them together using just the equal lengths of coax without the phasing line and have simultaneous north/south directional capability as well. The house is almost 70 feet in width so it would be over a quarter wavelength on 80 meters between the rain gutter elements. Hmmmm... Hey, don't laugh -- it sure beats trying to figure out how to rotate the house!

I know now that when I install my next mobile HF radio installation, it too will have a SGC antenna coupler just ahead of the whip. Reports I've read on the resultant combination of the SGC series automatic antenna couplers used with plain steel whips have been very good from 160 meters on up. I also have read independent reviews that it works incredibly well with the equally pricey, but efficient, matching SGC-303 9 foot mobile antenna. No, I don't work for SGC, but I am a satisfied customer, and I don't mind spreading the word about their quality products.

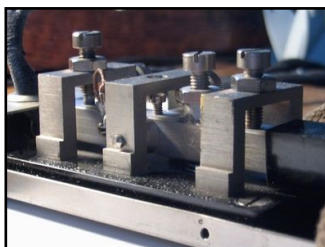
As in my previous article, with regards to my experiences using a rain gutter for an antenna, I write this in fervent hope that some covenant restricted or apartment dwelling ham, somewhere, will be inspired to replicate some form of stealthy antenna system as I, and many others, have done too. I would hope he or she would also then share their enjoyment of being on the HF bands with a respectable signal, despite the covenanted restrictions and physical obstacles around them.

This article is certainly not technical in its content, nor was it meant to be so. It is, however, testimony that one need not have ideal antenna conditions in order to operate effectively on the HF bands. Many books have been written on the subject of stealth amateur radio and all of them offer some very sound advice regarding the subject of stealth antennas. I suggest that if you have a desire to run a stealthy ham station that you consult these books first. Also, go to the SGC web page and download one of their on line manuals for their antenna auto couplers where you will find even more ideas and solutions. See you in the pileups!

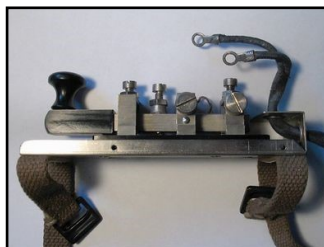
Canadian Bunnell Key



Little project done ...
my Canadian military
ww2
Denis VE9DCD



I have one of the Canadian Bunnells with leg straps,
cover and original box marked "25 Central Ordnance
Depot, Montreal, Oct 62".



This key was
made for the Canadian,
British and American
armed forces during
WW2 and later.

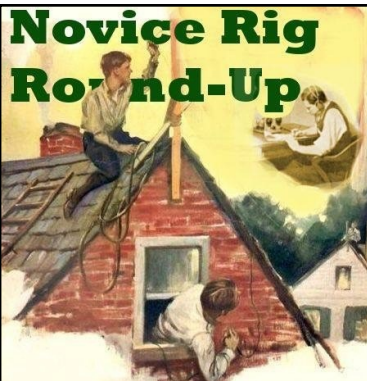


Steve
KC8JYG's
Canadian
Bunnell
key

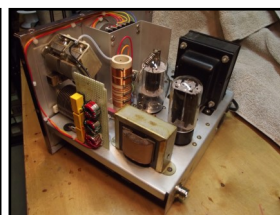
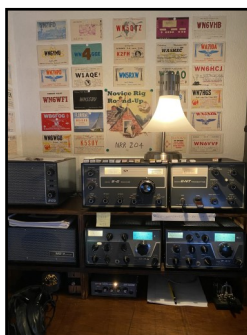


John
KE0ZUW's
Bunnell

SKCC Members Who Were in the 2023 NRR



Novice Rig Roundup (NRR) is an annual 9-day operating event celebrating the old Novice type equipment, and operating restrictions, of over 60 years ago. Each March we put our nostalgic stations on the air to make contacts with each other, and anyone else that cares to join in. NRR is focused on the days of 75 watts input at the plate and crystal controlled transmitters - however, ALL stations are welcome.



2023 Full Results : Totals

Station	TOTAL QSOs	Unique SPCs	Total points
K3KY	228	53	40545
W8NGA	208	59	38822
K4IBZ	134	39	19149
WB4IEA	131	35	18515
K9SB	118	42	17178
VA7MM	126	42	15162
K2YWE	102	37	12136
VE7SL	94	31	12059
NZ0T	87	33	11220
VA1RST	81	30	10140
KN8RHM	79	34	9928
VE7CNF	90	32	8800
KN4LEL	73	33	8217
K1BX	71	28	7084
N2TNN	97	32	6848
W0PWE	79	29	6264
K5MU	54	28	5880
WN1LJD	45	26	4680
W8HOG	47	24	4608
WK3A	46	23	4554
N4KGL	41	28	4172
W7VHW	45	22	3630
W0EJ	38	22	3476
WN8BLX	38	22	3366
WB8JAY	45	23	3289
WN0JII	38	20	3240
W8PU	38	21	3213
KG2LO	41	22	3168
WB9RCE	50	27	3132
AD6W	42	22	2992
KB4QQJ	37	20	2880

Greetings from AD6W! This is the first year I've been able to operate on most days of the NRR, and it was great. 2C/2NT worked well, R4A/T4X not so much - R4A band switch intermittent to the point it became unusable, and I missed the 10 meter action because I discovered I had no crystal in the T4X for 10 CW. It was however wonderful to work the east coast stations on 15 meters this year. See you on Monday nights. 73, Larry AD6W

Another fun NRR gathering. I did more search and pounce VFO style operating on the high bands this year, using my Xiegu G90 at 20W output. My newly acquired Johnson Adventurer was used almost exclusively on 80 and 40m, except for a few odd frequencies on 80 where the station was operating transceive only and not tuning around- then I fired up my FT-1000D to work them. As always I found it satisfying to search for new mults late in the evening on 40m mostly, listening for the western states and provinces. Looks like I managed 45 states this year, over all bands. A highlight of the week was being called by Martin, K5FLU late in the evening on 40 meters. We chatted for about half an hour. He told me he collects old ham gear. For those who might not know, he is 'Mr. MFJ' and owns that company. I continue to buy crystals, just ordered some more of the HC-49S 'shorties' for 80 and 40m. It's satisfying when someone says they are on 3520 and I look and find that I have *two* different rocks that would work there. And I thought I was done with crystals years ago... I really need to completely redo my station. Need a bigger desk so I have some place where my log book will lay flat. I need better antennas. First photo shows my 2023 setup and second shows one of the extra mods I did on my Adventurer. I added a 3rd ceramic wafer to the band switch so I can relay switch the coils on that scrap of perf board. The radio now has a Pi-L output network and hopefully better suppressed 2nd and 3rd harmonics. I also added a string of four 51V zener diodes on the 6AG7 screen for regulation. I think that helped a lot to squeeze out most of the remaining crystal chirp. I've gotten some compliments on the Adventurer's CW note. (15 and 10m L coils not yet installed on the perf board). 73, David K3KY Derwood,

This was my first NRR, what a blast. Did not make a ton of contacts but enjoyed every QSO. I was able to use most of my novice rigs and that made me smile every time I sat down to operate. I made contacts with my Adventurer (my original novice rig), DX40, HT 40, Globe Scout 40a, DX60 and Challenger which was loaded to 125ma as prescribed by the manual to obtain the 75w input. Receivers included 2 Drake 2b's, Sb300, NC 303, HQ170 and even a SX 140 which worked well with an audio filter. I want to thank all for their patience in working a new kid and would like to thank Gene N5GW for letting me know about NRR. My goal is to increase my crystal count before next year. 73 to all Jim K5MU



SKCC Members Who Were in the 2023 NRR II



I had a great time on my first NRR event. My station was a Drake 2-NT, 2-C, 2-CQ, and a Heathkit VF-1 VFO. I restored the Drake novice twins about a year prior and had to make a power supply for the VFO in the weeks preceding the event. I used an end-fed half wave up 20' throughout the event as well as a KN4YB bug. 73 de Steve, K9NUD ..



Many thanks for the most enjoyable NRR. It was a pleasure to work all stations. Thanks to the organizers for making NRR happen. 73, de Dick N4HAY



I had a blast on the NRR, but was only able to make 5 QSO's due to busy family time. I was using my HW-16 xtal control in "Studio B" in the den this year. I'm glad the event is several days long because I wasn't able to get on until the 2nd weekend. It was great hearing the Globe Chief from Dan K2YWE! A great old rig that you don't hear on too much. Thanks for a great event! 73, Steve WA3JJT



Another great NRR! So much fun working with the old Novice Equipment. I worked British Columbia and Puerto Rico using 30 Watts. A total of 30 QSO's and a whole lot of fun. Lets keep it going with the Monday Novice Rig Night (NRN). Thanks to all who supported this great event! 73 Roy – KN4WOJ



I thoroughly enjoyed NRR this year! I operated 15 meters for the first time with my DX60B with VFO and the Collins 75A-2 receiver which I acquired recently. My full wave 80 meter loop (with tuner) laying on the roof of my double wide manufactured home did amazingly well. Thanks for all your patience with my CW but I am getting better :-). I even made a 40 meter contact with my half watt Pixie (which I did not count). 73, N9EGT, Wayne in western Colorado



Well this NRR was fun too. Had a bit of a struggle with the OnLine Log. If not remedied for the next NRR I will use the AC2C SKCCLogger again. Then manually enter my QSO's into the NRR OnLine Log. I was going to use the Drake 2NT & 2C but the 2C broke while pretesting. There is a hole in the picture where the 2C should sit :- (So glad I have the Heathkit HW-16 for backup and NV1 use. I used the Kenwood TS-590S for NV2 duties. Thanks all! 73, Rick - KN8RHM



A lot of fun was had from the Novice Shack! 73, Dan WB8JAY#766

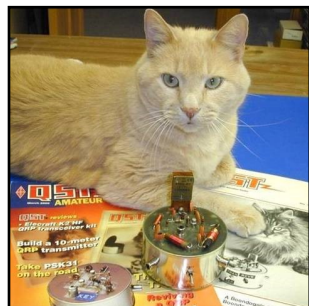
YA KNOW BILL, YOU TALK ABOUT RUNNING BAREFOOT BUT WHEN YOU KEY UP, HALF THE BLOCK GOES DIM ...



SKCC Members Who Were in the 2023 NRR III



Had a lot of fun operating as NR1 for the first time. I obtained several crystals since last year's NRR so thought it would be fun to use them. I used my HW-16 for the first half of the week then switched to my Hallicrafters HT-40/SX-140 for the balance of the event. Unfortunately the SX-140 decided to not work properly so I ended up using the HT-10 with my Elecraft K3 for RX. Thanks for all the fun! 73, Bill NZ0T



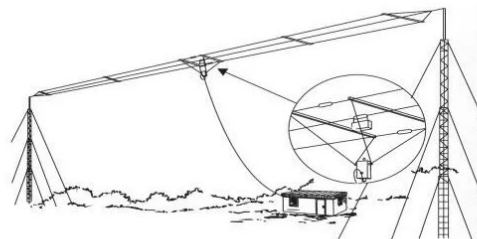
I chose to operate the NRR with my Argonaut 505 and 405 amp this year. I won the Argonaut in a grand prize drawing at a 1974 hamfest and I have had many hours of fun with it. In 2019 it was taken out by a lightning strike and I have just recently finished repairing and restoring it. The NRR was was it's grand return. The most fun I had in the NRR however was the evening when I operated with my 1976 style Tuna Tin 2. The TT2 netted 8 contacts and 7 SPC. Looking forward to NRR 2024. Maybe I will find some crystals and operate with a real novice rig next year. Thanks to all the coordinators and volunteers who make the NRR possible. 73 - Jerry - W0PWE



What a blast! Thanks for all the QSO's. The old Speed-X key got a real workout as did the DX-60 and 75S-3B with the SCAF-1 audio filter. Additional crystals for 80 and 40 m showed up Tuesday pm from Steve at A4FK crystals. Thanks for getting those out, Steve. Since last year, a 2 element 40m phased array has sprouted on the antenna farm at VA1RST. It worked very well. My HG-10 vfo stayed on the shelf in the shop so all my QSO's were Novice! category. Logging was best left to the end of the contest as a miscue in entering data could lead you astray in the heat of QSO battle. I pulled out an old ARRL logbook that had some blank pages for logging. I never could find the right time on 80m this year to complete the NS to BC connection with the west coast gang of Steve, Mark and Toby! The 10m and 15m openings were great, time for a crystal strategy! . Merlin likes vacuum tube gear! See you on Monday nights and next year 73, Roger VA1RST Halifax, NS



I operated in both the Classic Exchange and NRR this year. Transmitters were a DX40 with some crystals and a VF1, and on 40m a BC-458-A transmitter with it's internal VF0. Many of my NRR contacts were done with vintage receivers, a Hallicrafters SX-71 and a Hammarlund HQ-129-X. Much of my equipment came from the collection of Steve VE7SL. Keys were a 1952 Vibroplex bug and an old Swiss straight key. Good 15m and 10m propagation this year made for fun day-time operation. I only received one email from a concerned ham to report that my CW transmitter had a problem with chirp and stability. The DX40 really heats up the crystals. It was good to work other Canadians Jeff VE1ZAC and Roger VA1RST from NS. To-by VE7CNF, NRR 336



Thank you for another great novice rig round up. Worked over 20 members, ran four different combinations of rigs new to the party this year a Eico 722 vfo and a Hallicrafters SX 115. The highest fun factor would have to go to the SX 115 and Eico 720 / 722. Most contacts were made on 40 m with a few on 15. Finished Sunday night with the Drake twins that didn't sound good hi hi . Listened for some past years call signs hope they were just on vacation. I know it was not due to a lack of rigs. thanks again to all. 73 DE WA8PCW Nrr 524



How the QSL Bureau Works

Everyone who wants to use the bureau sends in several SASEs. They are filed by call and then it's posted on our web page as to "who" sent envelopes and how many they have on hand. If you wish to QSL someone and use the bureau (to save money), then the check the list as to who is "good in the bureau."

Example: If you work K8AQM and want to send a QSL, you go to the SKCC web page and down the left side you'll see "Member Services," click on "Bureau" and scroll down through how to use the bureau until you come to the alphabetized list (by calls) and if you see K8AQM listed then you send the card(s) to the bureau because he is "good in the bureau". They are sorted/stored and when K8AQM has several cards they are put in an envelope and mailed to him. Usually once for sure and maybe twice a year if K8AQM is active and has plenty of QSLs sent to him.

If K8AQM was not "good in the bureau" and you send a card to him then at the end of the year that card would be thrown away...so, point being, always check to see that the call for the QSL you're sending is "good in the bureau."

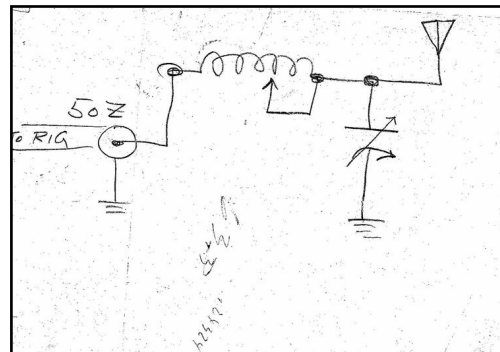
And that is how the bureau works...hope the explanation helps.

73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM
QSL Bureau Manager

It Was That Simple...

By John Smale K2IZ

Since I retired 13 years ago it's been an ongoing project to try and organize and clean up my ham shack, I cannot believe I found this one piece of paper. I got my first license during the big strike against NY TEL back in 71, we had been married less than a year, I had gotten my 1st class FCC Radiotelephone license the year before and I could still copy 13wpm, it was only 3 years since I got off active duty as a Navy Radioman, I took the train into NYC, Washington St. and passed my General, the strike money was tight but I got a call from a guy I knew in the phone company, W2BFN, he was management but that didn't stop us from being friends, he tells me "I hear you got your license, what bands are you on?" I told him I didn't have any equipment and he tells me to stop by his house, he lends me a Heathkit Apache and an HQ-110 along with a roll of wire and this tuner he had built and a 200w light bulb.



He tells me to measure out 135ft of wire and string it between the trees in the yard, to tune the transmitter I had to adjust for maxim brightness on the bulb and move the clip on the coil and tune the variable capacitor until I got the loudest sound on 80 meter CW, it actually worked, until we moved in 75 I was an active participant in the NLI CW nets and made lots of contacts, just a simple coil, variable capacitor and an alligator clip on a piece of braid to pick a spot on the coil.

Editor..."And it's that simple yet today"...I used the exact same circuit to shunt feed a 90 ft tower on 160m (but with a vacuum variable cap).

Scratchy Dits on Your Bug?

Jim Sheldon, W0EB makes a very useful and interesting Dot Stabilizer. He also discovered to many people's surprise that the cause of the dot jitter was at the start of the dot, not the ending of the dot. He has oscilloscope traces to prove it.

I recommend all of Jim's Dot Stabilizers, I am a happy user, and I bought several: one for my Vibroplex La Hiff Presentation, one for my Vibroplex Original and Lightning Bug, one for my E.F. Johnson Speed-X bug, See <https://www.w0eb.com/DSmain.html> I first contacted Jim when he was active in the Eastern Mass (CW) net back in the 1960s.

W0EB's Dot Stabilizer

Says JIM:

Back in the early 1930's, T.R. "Ted" McElroy (Morse copying World Champion, set 75.2 WPM record on July 2, 1939) who also manufactured telegraph keys, came up with a nice innovation he called his "Dot Stabilizer" This nifty little gadget pre-loaded the vibrating dot contact spring by a very small amount, effectively ensuring better dot weighting and came very close to completely eliminating the very rapid contact bounce occurring when the contacts wipe together as they "make" which creates what many call "scratchy dot syndrome".

I was originally under the impression that this bounce was being caused by excess dot contact vibration as the contact "break" occurred, but after quite a bit of research and oscilloscope analysis by myself and one of my users (pictures of the traces later on this page), I have finally realized that it's caused mainly by improper contact alignment, minor imperfections in the contact surfaces of both the fixed and movable dot contacts that do not allow for near perfect mating of the two contacts as they come together and the fact that the movable contact is actually on the end of a spring that is really free to vibrate as the contacts come together during the forming of the dots.

In a perfect world, the factory would achieve perfectly smooth surfaces and perfectly square alignment of the two contacts, but we all know this is really asking too much of them, and the average individual either doesn't have the tools, expertise or patience to achieve this either. Mr. McElroy evidently figured this out and came up with the original "Dot Stabilizer" as he called it.

The DS stops the spring from bouncing too much as they come together at the beginning of the dot. It allows setting this "make" tension at an exact and adjustable point, and this comes very close to completely stopping that "contact wiping" bounce which appears to be the root cause of "Scratchy Dot Syndrome". It does not, however, correct bad CW caused by poor sending habits or failure to keep the bug's contacts clean.

T.R.'s original version required replacing the existing dot contact assembly with his stabilizer and fit only the McElroy manufactured keys. For some unknown reason, most information on the original Dot Stabilizer was either lost or ignored during the WW2 years and later except by a very few people. I'm quite happy that I was able to resurrect something from the past that does such a nice job of making a bug able to send better CW without having to severely modify a nice key.

After accidentally rediscovering it a couple of years ago, I undertook a slight redesign of McElroy's original device to eliminate the necessity for replacing the vibrating dot contact assembly. This allows the device to be easily installed and removed quickly with simple tools. I also came up with a further variation on McElroy's design that can be used on even the "Flat Pendulum" bugs such as the Vibroplex Lightning Bug, Military J-36, Zephyr and Champion models as well as various copies of them and even the Japanese Hi Mound "Coffin" bug.

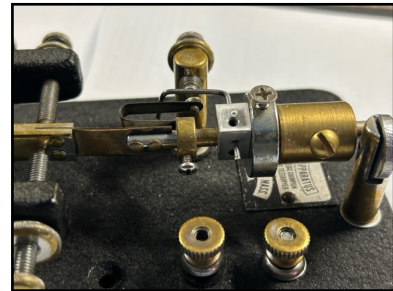
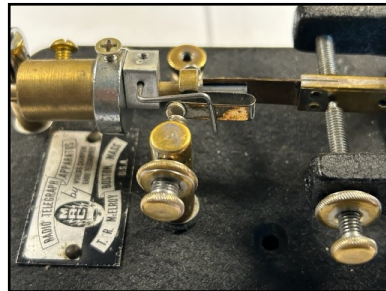
I immediately copyrighted my own design and I currently hold the copyright (C) for this design worldwide, all rights reserved. Anyone wishing to manufacture these commercially

or even for sale to clubs, etc MUST contact me first and obtain written permission to do so. I have the right to refuse to allow this and if this copyright is violated, I will pursue legal action. I currently make "Dot Stabilizers" for the Vibroplex, Speed-X and McElroy keys having the round pendulum and bugs with the flat pendulum, such as the Vibroplex Lightning Bug, Zephyr, Champion and WW2 military J-36 bugs (including the Lionel models) which are based on the Lightning Bug design..

73,

David Ringer

Dot Stablizer



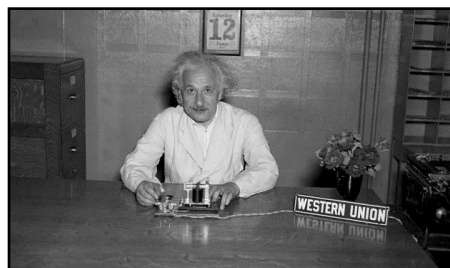
*Editor...This is one of my three bugs that have the "Dot Stabilizer".
Keying is crisp and clean. The stabilizer was easy to install.*

Odds and Ends



I had to cancel my plans to attend Hamvention this year due to a brief illness (first one missed in 48 years). But a nearby SKCC friend (Ted AA4AZ) did go (his first) and he brought me back this mug, along with a get well card from several members at the SKCC booth.
What a fantastic club this is!

Curt K2CWM NJ 3018S



Bet he would have had a killer station!



Ouch!

