

# Solid Copy

The CW Operators Club Newsletter

November 2021 — Issue 142



## DXpedition to C6



WA8Y recounts his week on Bimini. [See story on page 15.](#)

## President's Message

The autumn CW Academy semester is now over and a new batch of graduates is looking forward to a life on the bands using their newly acquired skills.

There is a welcome break before the new year and a new session begins so all the tutors can catch their breath and re-charge batteries; Joe AA8TA gently reminded me that the down time for students and tutors can be a busy period for the administrative ma-



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### CWops "CWT" Every Wednesday

Start: 13Z, 19Z, 03Z (+1), 1 hour each session

Exchange: name/number (members)  
name/SPC (non-members)

**Avoid DX pileups!**

### US Vanity Callsign web site:

<http://cwomc.org>

**CWops "neighborhood":** Look for CWops on 1.818, 3.528, 7.028, 10.118, 14.028, 18.078, 21.028, 24.908, 28.028, 50.098 "and up"

### CWops Officers and Directors

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Vice President: Peter Butler, [W1UU](#)

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chine but hopefully even they will find time to relax and enjoy the festive period....they certainly deserve it.

We've also now had time to digest Bruce's (N1LN) write up of the CW Open in last month's Solid Copy and note that participation continues to increase. This year the increase is not as dramatic as last when there was a remarkable increase in submitted logs of 89% so the fact that there was any growth at all is impressive. The turnout in 2020 was undoubtedly helped by folk being locked down at home, and the year on year growth I would guess is fuelled in large part by the steady increase in membership. It's all great news and our thanks go to Bruce and the team.

A reminder too for our European members that the Friday K1USN Slow Speed conTest at 2000z was set up principally for them, their students and other learners but is as yet only sparsely populated from this side of the pond. Let's spread the word and make this a truly transatlantic affair for an hour each week.

Bill N5IR posted a link to an article last month on our io group via SKCC entitled 'The Uncertain Future of Ham Radio' which attracted a few comments. Not the first alarmist story on the subject I've come across but this appeared in a reputable engineering journal so thought it must be worth a close look with an open mind. The proposition seems to be that ham radio is becoming increasingly digital and reliant on the internet particularly among the newer generations of hams, and that this will migrate many of our activities online and render the RF spectrum irrelevant except perhaps for "emergency comms and talking to astronauts". It's probably only the last half that is controversial.

The author argues that most younger hams prefer to use their computers and digital gizmos to communicate across the world instead of fooling around with things like radios and big antennas. Now I don't know about you but for me CW is, always has been and always will be, about point to point across the 'ether' with all the excitement of living with RF propagation and its challenges. The thought of CW contacts via the internet horrifies me and I would rather find something else to do if, as is being suggested, we might eventually lose our access to the RF spectrum.

But I have to admit she has a point. For many years now my local club has run a special event in September to commemorate the first direct radio contact from Europe to Australia which was made in 1918 from the Marconi Long Wave Transmitting Station near Caernarfon (the building still stands though in some disrepair). I stopped attending when no-one seemed interested any longer in spending the night there to catch the long path openings and get VK in the log which was the ultimate aim - it became a mainly '9 till 5' social affair. So I was surprised 3 years ago when I saw on the club Facebook page a post in big letters stating "GB2VK Contacts Australia!". Being an unlikely time of day I asked which band but before anyone replied a video clip was posted of a member sitting in his car outside the building with a 2m handheld talking to a VK ham who was perfect S9 copy. As I suspected this was digital voice (D-Star I think) connecting into a nearby internet linked repeater.

The point about this is that while most of the 'established' membership was not impressed, many of the newer licensees were excited and inspired by this demonstration. And why wouldn't they be? Their new handheld radios have all the facilities and programming information built in so they can be on Wires-X etc. in no time and talking to the world with BBC quality audio at any time of the

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day. If this is increasingly seen as the 'way to do things' then for me it's a worrying trend. I'm confident any significant threat to the way we operate isn't imminent and not within my lifetime but what about the decades to come? I don't believe any spectrum authority can ignore the present levels of activity on HF particularly on the original (ie contest) bands but it needs to be continued through the coming demographic changes and more attention paid to the WARC bands and the FT8 influence.

Ham radio will always change but whatever happens and wherever we're headed I'll always consider myself lucky and fortunate to have been around in the hobby for these last 50 years. For now let's make sure we keep the bands alive and full of CW and do our best to inspire newcomers with the magic of short wave and A1A. Long live CW, long live RF...!

The link to the article is here: [The Uncertain Future of Ham Radio](#)

**73, Stew GW0ETF**, President

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## [From the Editor](#)

### **A Great Vacation Destination**

In his column this month (above), president Stew, GW0ETF reviews one non-ham's take on how dependent ham radio has become on the internet. You can agree or disagree with what that author, a non-ham, has to say. But I think it is also safe to say that the internet has become a dominant force in all facets of our daily lives, across the board. Not always for the good.

Most of us probably worry at least a little bit about [the Big Brother aspects of this](#). A point that was driven home for me when local friend Scott shared an experience with internet tracking.




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Earlier this year, the upcoming [Bouvet Island DXpedition](#) was in the news as they shared their plans. Bouvet is the [second most wanted country on the ClubLog list](#), so when there is news , most of us tend to read it and, perhaps, do some other investigating, as did Scott. Shortly after, he received an email teaser from Expedia, the online travel agency. And, guess what, those in charge of planning the DXpedition are making the trip to Bouvet a whole lot more difficult than it needs to be. It seems you can book your trip and your stay with just a few clicks, choosing from over 14,000 different, very tropical properties, many close to the beach. No need to erect a cold-weather shelter on the beach after you have landed in your Zodiac. I'm thinking of booking a trip to Bouvet, to coincide with the DXpedition, staying in one of the villas, hoping I can get some time on the air as a guest operator.

You were interested in this property




**Boutique Hotel, 5 minutes from the beach, has 5 Villas, & is great for families.**


Entire home  
1 bedroom, 1 bathroom  
Bouvet Island

**\$120**  
per night  
\$156 total  
Includes taxes & fees

Select your room >



See all 14200 properties in Bouvet Island




English   List your property

Stays   Flights   Cars   Packages   Things to do   More travel

Important: This destination may have COVID-19 travel restrictions in place, including specific restrictions for lodging. Check any national, local, and health advisories for this destination before you book.

Dismiss

See all properties



Overview   Amenities   Policies   Location   Reviews

**Boutique Hotel, 5 minutes from the beach, has 5 Villas, & is great for families.**

**\$120** per night

Non-Refundable ⓘ

✓ Reserve now, pay deposit

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## Update: There's No Place Like Home

I received a half dozen email follow ups to [my October column](#) (page 3, "There's No Place Like Home") on my search for a better computer keyboard. Those who were kind enough to write shared their experiences with mechanical keyboards that they enjoy using. Followed by a [brief thread on the groups.io](#) reflector where there were other suggestions on mechanical keyboards.

Thanks to those who wrote with their suggestions and I've looked on-line at the keyboards everyone suggested. But I am safely back in Kansas with no plans to venture out any time soon. Other than my trip to Bouvet Island, of course.

**73, Tim** K9WX, Editor

Background image page 3 from [Wikimedia Commons](#).

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## News and Notes

### [Jerry Weisskohl AC4BT](#)

**We regret to report that these members recently became silent keys:**

- **AA4NC, Will Roberts (CWops #2371), October 21, 2021.**
- **NR5W, Doug North (CWops #2722), November. 8, 2021.**
- **VE2AXO, Robert Loranger (CWops #1596), November 4, 2021**

**John, K4BAI:** CWops members KU8E and K4BAI expect to be QRV from Bonaire from November 24 to December 1. They will use PJ4/home calls outside the CQWW CW Contest weekend and K4BAI will use PJ4A in the contest. It may be a M/S operation or it could be that they will enter as two single band entries, in which case KU8E will operate as PJ4/KU8E.

QSL all three calls via K4BAI. Bureau QSL cards may be requested by email to [k4bai@ku8e.com](mailto:k4bai@ku8e.com).

**Chuck, WS1L:** After a 13-month wait due to COVID delays, UPS is finally delivering my Alberto Frattini (I1QOD) magnetic Prestige bug. I've been waiting more or less patiently and it will be fun to finally put it on the air.

With some below-freezing nights coming this week I should be able to do some antenna work in

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the woods up behind the house without worrying about ticks. I need to finish staking down the ground radials for the Butternut and then take down the Alpha-Delta 160/80/40 dipole to figure out why it doesn't have an SWR dip on 80 or 160. With any luck these projects will get done before any significant snow. Once that happens its indoor projects for the next several months!

**Lloyd, KH6LC:** On Wednesday 10/20 a few of us got together on Maui and enjoyed a fine lunch at the home of Faye & Kent Carlson.



Left to Right are Tom NH6Y, Alan KH6TU #217, Faye & Kent KH6CJJ #2160, and Lloyd KH6LC #85 holding Mai Tai who's 12.

The photo was taken by Tom's XYL Leslie. We had a wonderful time.

**Duncan, G3WZD:** CWops helps a Welsh amateur radio society mark historic Marconitests

The Barry Amateur Radio Society (BARS) in South Wales has long enjoyed a close connection with one of Marconi's historic achievements. Barry, South Wales is the location of Lavernock Point, one of the sites chosen by Marconi for the first successful attempt to transmit wireless signals over water between two countries England and Wales.

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During May 1897 Marconi, assisted by George Kemp, a group of Royal Engineers and Post Office technicians, set up apparatus to carry out communication tests without the use of wires across the Bristol Channel. The successful conclusion of these tests marked the end of Marconi's period as an amateur. A few days later he formed his company.

The tests took place on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 1897 when Marconi's assistant, George Kemp, sent several Morse code messages from the transmitter site on Flatholm Island in the Bristol Channel to Lavernock Point, where Marconi had set up the receiving apparatus.

BARS previously commemorated these tests in 1972 but planned to conduct another re-enactment of this historic moment in the development of wireless telegraphy; this time it would be filmed for broadcast on prime-time television. The event would be featured in an episode of "Britain by Beach", a series commissioned by Britain's Channel 4 which will air late November 2021 on Saturday evenings. Following my reply to a note posted on the CDXC reflector asking for a volunteer CW operator, I was invited to assist.

Unfortunately, the original plan to set up the transmitter site on Flatholm Island was cancelled following changes to the production schedule. The only day available for shooting was the one day there was no warden on the island and visitors are not allowed unless a warden is present. Plan B was to set up both sites at opposite ends of a large field at Lavernock Point.

Following several emails and phone calls with Glyn Jones GWOANA, the BARS Chairman, I drove to Wales (taking my old Kent straight key for some degree of authenticity) and met the BARS team at the Marconi Village Holiday Park early morning on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

Conditions were dire with a heavy drizzle and a stiff on-shore breeze (it would have certainly been a miserable trip out to Flatholm on the rigid inflatable had Plan A come to fruition!). We nevertheless set up the gear at the transmit and receive sites using a pair of FT857D transceivers on 2m CW. Communication would be in one direction (as were the original tests by Marconi and Kemp). The film crew and program presenter arrived on-site and I was delighted to see the presenter was none other than Anita Rani, a well-known TV personality who will probably be familiar to many UK CWops members.

The rain eventually cleared, and the day turned sunny and bright, ideal filming conditions at last. I was at the TX site (this was only a few yards from the location of the original receive site) with one camera crew and Anita was at the RX site with another crew. I was instructed to slowly send a series of messages that were originally sent by Kemp (who fortunately kept a detailed diary of everything he transmitted). I started to send "How are you" followed by "Send us news" and other short phrases from the original list. I was sending at around 10 wpm but word soon came back



**Flatholm Island emerges from the mist and rain; the closest we could get**

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on the 2m FM talkback channel that this was too fast. After several successive reductions in speed, I ended up sending at about 5wpm character speed with 10 second gaps between letters; anyone who has tried that will know it is pretty hard to remember what was the last letter you sent.

In fact, this was probably about the speed that Kemp was using in the original tests!

The receiving and transmitting sequences were re-shot several times (including some close-ups of my keying, which I hope passes scrutiny!) and then word came back for me to send "How are you Anita". Glyn had been schooling Anita to recognise her name in Morse and she did, much to her obvious excitement! This was all captured on-camera and I am sure will feature in the broadcast. Eventually I heard "That's a wrap" over the FM talkback link. Job done so time to pack up and make the 150-mile journey back home to Cornwall.

I thoroughly enjoyed helping BARS mark this historic moment in the development of wireless; they are a friendly and hospitable bunch of folks and I hope to visit them again, preferably on one of their club nights.



**Top: G3WZD at the key; Bottom: GW0ANA schools Anita**



**L to R: Philip, MW0DHF; Steve, 2W0VOG (Secretary); Dave, MW7ALT; Justin, Foundation Trainee; Nigel GW1CUQ; Anita Rani, Presenter; Glyn, GW0ANA (Chairman); Bernard, MW0GBW (Treasurer). Present but not in picture: Gordon, MW1EAA**

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**Bill, K3WJV:** My 2nd amp, the Acom, finally got my vacuum relay issue corrected. Since I'm so2r I will again be trying to run frequencies on occasion in the CWT's. The amp was down since August and I'm going to be a bit rusty so bear with me for a few weeks, hi hi.

I will now be able to give my new K4 some operating time. You can tell which rig I'm using, since keying is heavier on the K4.

**Randy, W8FN:** After many months of various delays, my new (old) HDX-572 72' crank up tower was finally set on its base October 21, 2021.

Now I have to start the long process of finishing some cleanup, installing the ground system, getting the AC service for the lift motor, assembling the antenna, etc.

I hope to have the system up and running by next spring. It sure will be nice to have a real antenna instead of the wires I'm using currently.

**Dan, KB6NU:** I'll be reprising my talk--Having Fun with Morse Code --at the 2022 Orlando Hamcation, assuming it's not cancelled at the last minute.

In conjunction with that talk, I'd like to update my book, the *CW Geek's Guide to Having Fun with Morse Code*. And, I'd like to get your input. If you'd be willing to help me, email me directly (cwgeek@kb6nu.com), and I'll send you the manuscript from the first edition.



The W8FN tower

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## 2021 CW Open – Update

**[Bruce Meier, N1LN](#)**

I would once again like to thank everyone for their participation in the 2021 CW Open. ICOM America is currently working on the trophies and plaques. Once they are completed and sent to me, I will repack and send them to this year's winners.

I have also been advised of two omissions in the TEAM SCORES. Both have been corrected and are now included in the October Solid Copy posting. Unfortunately, both of my errors were in the SEVEN ZONES team. Thanks to Doug (KR2Q) for bringing these errors to my attention and to Vic (4X6GP) and Ricky (IK3YBX) for their patience while getting fixed.

If anyone has noticed any additional errors, please let me know so I can get them quickly addressed.

# John Comella, N8AA Wins SWODXA Award

[Bill Salyers, AJ8B](#)

Last week at the Southwest Ohio DX Association meeting, the W8OK Award was bestowed upon SWODXA member John Comella, N8AA (CWOPs #723). The award is given to the SWODXA member who exhibits those traits that Frank Schwab, W8OK embodied. Frank was a co-founder of the Dayton Hamvention® and the founder of Dayton Sky-Warn. Frank was a well-known top-flight contester and CW operator. He soon rose to the top of the DXCC ranks and eventual membership in the CQ DX Hall of Fame.

Frank is known to have said “CW is an art...be an artist!” Members who are considered for the W8OK award must exhibit the following traits and characteristics:

- Operating ethics and courtesy.
- Station activity.
- Observance of FCC rules.
- Contribution to the club such as participation in club activities, contests, etc.
- Contributions to amateur radio such as helping new hams or foreign operators in any way practical.
- Attitude toward fellow hams.
- Attitude toward the public, including neighbors – e.g. managing TV, BC and telephone interference.
- Perseverance in listening for new countries, obtaining QSLs, striving for DX goals of various sorts, and ferreting out DX information.

This is [the most prestigious award given to a club member](#) by the SWODXA.

John has been licensed since 1954, coming up through the ranks starting as a novice (ex-WN8QXQ and W8QXQ). He has been a SWODXA member for over a decade since moving to Southwest Ohio. A partial list of his DX accomplishments includes: Top of the DXCC Honor Roll, 9 band DXCC, and he's one Zone short of 5 band WAZ. He also has completed 6 band WAS.

John is an avid contester with entries in a wide variety of contest formats. He is an accomplished CW operator and he gives back to the hobby as a member and instructor with CWops. He's been on the other end of a DX pileup from CY9C – St Paul Island.



**SWODXA president Tom, NR8Z presents the award to John, N8AA.**

When SWODXA asked for help updating our Constitution and By-Laws a few years ago, John

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stepped in and did a tremendous job sorting through much conflicting and changing input. The club owes John a dept of gratitude for creating the foundation that supports the club to this date.

Other CWops Members to receive this award are N8BJQ (#103), K4ZLE (#562), and AJ8B (#1567).

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## CWops 2022 Dayton Dinner - May 19, 2022

**Peter Butler, W1UU**

Location: Spaghetti Warehouse, 36 W 5th St, Dayton, OH 45402. Starts at 5:00 pm local time!

Meal: 4 choices from a fixed price menu, payment of meal, beverages from bar, and tip are the responsibility of each person in attendance with a seating ticket

Requirements: You must reserve a seat! In advance! Payment is made for your ordered meal. This system has been used in every past year.



Number of seats: 100 maximum in main dining room. There is an overflow of 10-15, but not in the main dining room

Bill Perkins, KC4D will be handling seating arrangements. There will be rows of tables. There will be a head table for those who will be speaking and making presentations

- 5:00 pm, KC4D -Begin seating of members and guests. Instructions on meal orders and payment (please use a credit card, not checks)
- 5:45 pm, W1UU -Introductions of head table followed by table self-introductions of those present. Message from President Stew Rolfe, GW0ETF
- 6:00 pm, K7NJ - CWops Premier Award : "Advancing the art of CW"
- 6:10 pm, W1UU -Recognition of Gold, Silver, and Bronze CWT and QTX winners for 2021
- 6:15 pm, CWA-Program progress and performance
- 6:20 pm, CWops - Scholarship program details for an award in 2022
- 6:30 pm - Door prizes (using your seating ticket) from a drawing
- 6:45 pm – W1UU closing comments and adjournment.



In preparation of this dinner meeting, a committee is needed to solicit door prizes!



# Giving Back Update

[Rob Brownstein K6RB](#)

CWops' Giving Back (GB) program is meant to provide on-air QSO experience and practice for anyone who wants it. It was initially intended as a way for our CW Academy students to get some on-air experience. We all know that when there is activity on the bands, these days, it's usually a DXpedition pileup or a contest. Today's CW aspirants have had little chance to work others who are skilled at CW, operate at moderate speed, and are committed to helping. That's the mission of Giving Back. The GB volunteers get on the air at approximately 7 PM local time and seek out CQers, or call CQ, and engage in routine QSOs including some conversational tidbits. Here (next page) is the current schedule:

<b>Giving Back Operating Schedule 7 PM Local</b> <b>40 meters 7.035-7.045 MHz and/or 80 meters 3.535-3.545</b>											
UTC+9	UTC+7	UTC+3	UTC+2	UTC+1	UTC/BST	UTC-1	UTC-4	UTC-5	UTC-6	UTC-7	Hawaii UTC-10
<b>Mon</b>											
JH2HTQ JO1DGE			ON5CFT		GM0EUL G2CWO		WA2AKV WB2LQF K1CHM W2XS WK4WC	K8UDH	NS6W KE7VE	N6HCN	KH6LC
<b>Tues</b>											
JH2HTQ JR1WYW	E25JRP		SV2BBK		GW2CWO G0POT		WE5P W2TE KW4WA AC0BQ N4TMM		K7NJ K0ES KE7VE	K6RB AA0IZ	
<b>Wed</b>											
JH2HTQ JS2AHG			ON5CFT		G0HKC G4XWJ		W4HXX K3ZGA WB1LLY NU2Q	K5XU K2MZ W2ITT	KU7Y K2MZ KE7VE		
<b>Thurs</b>											
JH2HTQ			SV2BBK		G0POT		K1KHU K4LRC K8BMA		KE7VE		

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Giving Back Operating Schedule 7 PM Local 40 meters 7.035-7.045 MHz and/or 80 meters 3.535-3.545											
UTC+9	UTC+7	UTC+3	UTC+2	UTC+1	UTC/BST	UTC-1	UTC-4	UTC-5	UTC-6	UTC-7	Hawaii UTC-10
<b>FRI</b>											
JH2HTQ JR1WYW			SV2BBK ON5CFT DL1LAF		GW2CWO MI0WWB		VE3FXX N2GSL		KE7VE WB7S	K6RB	
<b>Sat</b>											
JJ1FXF				LA1IO			VE3FXX		KE7VE		
<b>Sun</b>											
JS2AHG JJ1FXF				IZ8NXG			W5DT		KE7VE	K6RB	

Here are the results of last month's GB efforts:

#### Volunteer: Stations Worked

**AA0IZ:** AG6NS, AI3A, AI6QZ, AJ6QL, K4ZNC, K6ZGN, K7CLA, KA6IOM, KB0HXL, KD6NOF, KD7GOM, KF7WJY, KG5GGI, N0GRA, N6XQX, VA3RXB, VE7DXF, W6DAR, W6NFU, W7AEH, W7AMI, W7IHN, WA6OUW, WB6GCL

**G2CWO:** M0YZX, UR8QX, I3JUK, MM0MKW, DL1WM, IC8/UR8QX, SP5EOS

**GW2CWO:** EI4KX, S52TW, DF7TV, JK1BQS, YL3KE, OK1YR, R3BL, OK1AY, HB9AXG, SV1NZB, YL3ALX, PA3GUO, I7CCF, DC8VS, SP5NZF, DL6KW/M, RW3AG, F5OKB, I5ECW, HB9BQZ, OE5KAP, DD5RK, EA7KNQ, EA1CEI, DL1NKS, SM4CUQ, DL3SET, IK1ZUV, UT2UN, OK1SNY, EU1AEX

**IZ8NXG:** DF4FQ, TA2AO/4, DL9DWR, F5MDM, DJ7PR, F6DQV, EA4XT, I1BPU, S57V, E73KW, W3ICM, OH2ENW, DJ3GS

**JH2HTQ:** JA6GXP, JS6UEK, 7N2XZB, JA2NWQ, JR6SBI, JS2DJM

**JJ1FXF:** JE6LZN, JM8QGN, VK3MJ, 7N2XZB(2), JE0ERZ, JE3AIE, JJ1IAW, JS6UEK, VK3NOP

**JO1DGE:** JR1JWR, JM8QGN, JE0ERZ

**JS2AHG:** 9M4CAK, 9M2LAN, JL1QQA, JA7OTE, N6FMF, WB6GCL

**K3ZGA:** K1RWT, K1YAN, WA3SCM, KB5RXL, NP4IW, N1WSD, KR4IS, KB8UMD

**K6RB:** AA2UP, K7BNY, WJ7S/P, KK6R, W6JBF, W4MUB(2), KD9Z, N5IR, W2IW, KK7XV, KT7MAN, KV5V, K6JJR

**K7NJ:** DM3XI, K4UX, W4HXX, W0QL, WA4JYX, K2VL, KB3FTE, EA8AF, W2FN, KC9YL, K0FL, AF6DR, WA1WJJ, W5OBT, KE0ZUW, WB4DKF, KD2FSH, WA7RV, W7FY, N8FDI, AA0RQ, KO4OIP, AA6GA

**K8UDH:** WB7BNE, N9FGC, K1OV

**KE7VE:** W7UJ, W4VN, W6ZL, N4F, W6IA, W6RFU, W6AYC, N6PN, K6KQV, N6ED, N6O, AA2IL/6, W6TED, WD4O, KI7NRI, WB7UBC, KG7MVH, K2YS, N6GC(2), N2XTT, AA9L, N9SES, WB0L, KR2Q, W0DQ/7, WA4TAR, VE4OP, NE3I, W2LCW, KC9IL, KG4CEJ, W6SX, N4BA, KN4RD, KG5U, W3TW,

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AC5XK, W8LVN, KT5C, KM5G, N4BP, K1DW, W8FN, N5KB, KM4FO, KI6OY, K5OGX, KI0Y, WN1F, W5WJN, KN4EUK, W4WNY, W1RCP, N0CW, KW6G, W7XP, KB4GYT, W6VD, KA6IOM, K1OV, K4WLO, NE5A, K6EE, WA7LNC, N4ARY, N2MA, K4BAI, K1DJ, N8PEM, N3QE, N2GG, KV0I, AE4DT, KA2BKG, K6JT, KK7XV, N7US, W1WE, W8FJ, W6IX, W1GU, WS7L, WI9V, W9UIY, K5CM, K1EBY, W9MA, WX5T, W7EVC, KB3NSK, KC0QWE

**KH6LC:** KI7NRI, WB0IRU, N6HI, WK6L, W3ATT, N6AF, WA6KDO, DL2CC

**N2GSL:** WB5RYB, WB9IWT, KB9RPG, KC9JQN, N3JP, KC8ZWP, AE4DT, VE3SIF, K9DCC

**N4TMM:** W7Y, WA1GXC, AC4FZ, W1MX, N3JIT, KB4RGK, K3JN

**N6HCN:** KW6AR, KB0W, AJ6QL, KT7MAN, WA6MCL

**SV2BBK:** UA6AHU, F5SGP, DJ7UP, IT9DNW, DL6OCH

**W2ITT:** W4KLA, W4MKG, W3WR

**W5DT:** W2JAZ, N3FMZ, N2ANL

**WB1LLY:** WB8CCR, W3WR, KO4OIP, W7AEH, WD4AXJ, KC2SIZ, VE2GDI, W3JJB, N3MHZ, AD9Y, NP2KW, KF2TP, N0IPA, KE5PYF, K0WHW

**WB2LQF:** N3TIP, HA8CT, KK6QON, K4EWG, N2ANL

**WB7S:** KA2KGP, VE7ARN, N1CMA, NQ7B, KN6KNE, KX7DX, KA1ULN, W2IW, N5URL, ND4K, N5WX, NK9G, WA7RV

Those interested in working these folks and practicing should look for them at around 7 PM in each time zone. They will usually send a "CWA" just before signing after a CQ.

**73, Rob K6RB,** Giving Back Manager

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## How We Were

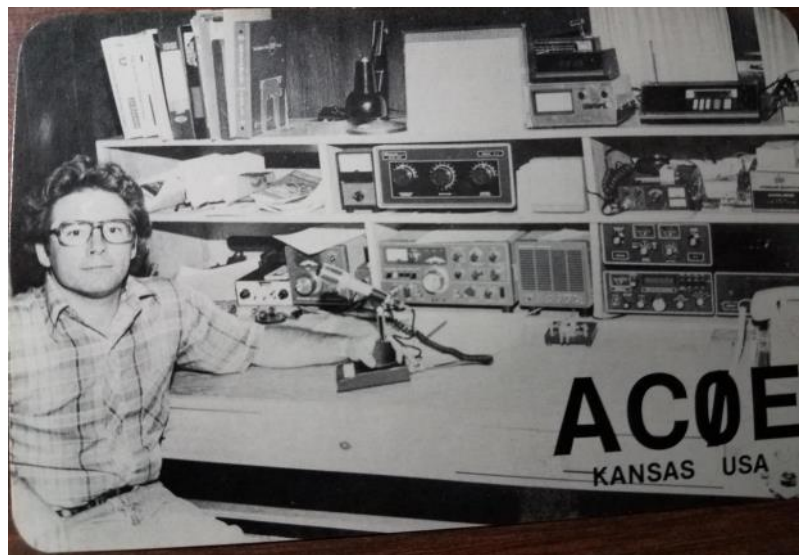
### [Hank Garretson, W6SX](#)

AC0E, Jim Douglass, CWops # 2780

1980 - My Station when I lived in St. Francis, Kansas. It was at the top of Cycle 21. HF bands were open world-wide 24/7... (don't even ask about the "wavy hair")

Please send your "How We Were" picture(s) and story to [w6sx@arrl.net](mailto:w6sx@arrl.net). Then-and-now pictures particularly welcome.

**CW Exuberantly! Hank, W6SX**





# C6A DXpedition to Bimini, Bahamas

[Steve WA8Y #2289](#)

## Planning

In February 2021, I saw a post to CWops Groups.io requesting some CWops join a DXpedition to Bimini, Bahamas. My wife and I winter in Hollywood, FL and Bimini is about 50 miles East of Miami. I SCUBA dive in the area and Bimini often comes up in casual conversation. The diving and fishing are much improved over South Florida. And I read novels set in South Florida and the Caribbean. But a DXpedition? My wife said OK! She knew I'd want to go on a DXpedition. And she was not going to stand in my way. I needed more information. Who are these hams? What are their plans for antennas, stations, etc.? Who will operate and on what bands? Where will I stay, sleep and eat?

It turned out most of the team belonged to the St. Augustine Florida ARC, I was invited to join them for Field Day. There would be a photo op for the QSL card. I would get my shirts and hats and we'd all shake down our equipment.

I decided to bring my own radio and antennas. I brought an IC-7410 and my newer Windows 10 laptop. My go to FD antenna is a ZS6BKW antenna, similar to a G5RV but using 450 ohm Window Line instead of 110 Ohm TV Twin Lead. Both are Center Fed Zepp 80m thru 10m antennas. At my QRZ page you'll see more elaborate FD antennas, but they were too heavy and bulky for transport to Bimini.

My wife and I arrived in St. Augustine a day early. We met Richard NN2T and his wife Linda KN4KJC at the Field Day site. One Bimini teammate was in charge of the band/operator plan and another was in charge of antenna location at the FD site. I was feeling better about the DXpedition. The St. Augustine ARC showed me a good time. I made 500 Qs on CW and the rest of the club made another 500 Qs on SSB and FT8.

After Field Day, my wife and I traveled further South to Hollywood, Florida where we learned the DXpedition leaders had canceled the DXpedition. They cited possible hurricanes as the reason. Well, its South Florida in the summer. I saw that possible problem in February. But, some of us decided to move forward. Instead of travel by private boat we would travel via commercial ferry. If the ferry decided to cancel, of course we would trust their judgment. At that point maybe our travel insurance would reimburse some of our expenses.



**Richard, NN2T clearing customs in Bimini. Note the garden hose.**

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But many things remained uncertain; 1) How much would it cost to get our gear to Bimini, 2) How would we transport it from the port to our cottages, 3) Where would we set up antennas? *I still had no firm answer from the landlord, would he even allow antennas on the property.* 4) How would we get coax to antennas on the beach when there's a road between us and the beach? 5) Would Bahamian authorities object to coax laying on the road? 6) Would cars damage it? *Covid-19 cases in the Bahamas were climbing, bars and restaurants were closed.* 7) Where is the nearest a grocery store? We would have to find out after arrival.

On Tuesday July 13<sup>th</sup>, Richard and Linda drove from St. Augustine to Fort Lauderdale and Juan AC6ZM/C6AZM, arrived by air. On Wednesday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 11 am; we all arrive in the Bahamas by ferry with all our gear.

### Wednesday, July 14

We cleared customs by 1:30 pm and our man in Bimini, (Barry) was there to meet us. He rented a pickup to collect our gear from the port. Richard and Linda had rented a golf cart from him and it's there, too. Whatever does not fit in the pickup fits in the golf cart and we journey to the cottages we have rented. We reach mine first and Juan and I unload. Our goal is to get my station on the air before the 1900Z CWT.

We work quickly to get the ZS6BKW antenna up. Juan noticed three power line transformers and there was a golf cart rental store next door. The cottage I rented had an abundance of potential noise sources. I didn't see those on Google Earth.

We got the antenna up by 1830Z, I had 30 minutes to set up my station before the 1900Z CWT. Richard and Linda set up an Eagle One antenna in their big front yard. They were making FT8 Qs by 1820Z. While I set up my station, Juan got his [Eagle One antenna](#) mounted on the balcony and joins me on the air before 2100Z.

I was 5 minutes late to the CWT and only made 22 Qs. I was not getting out. Our location is noisy, my antenna is too low, so low that it would not tune up on all



**Top: AC6ZM raising center of ZS6BKW antenna . Bottom: Eagle One on Steve's balcony**

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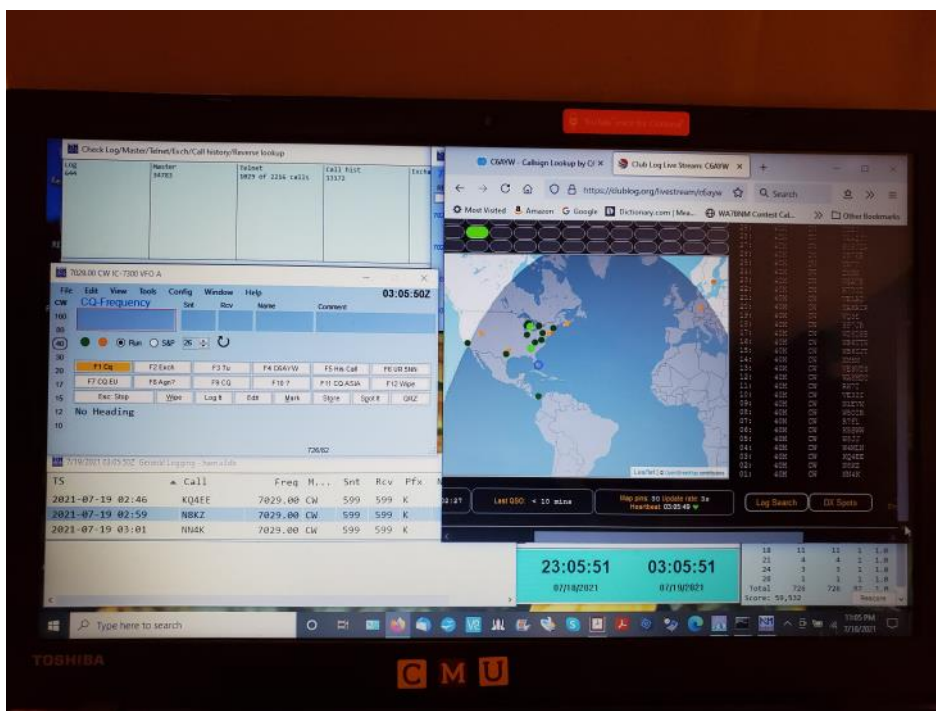
bands. Our antennas are surrounded by buildings. Mine was up ten feet on the ends and 20 feet high in the center. The ZS6BKW antenna was a real performer at FD but now there was no way to give it a clear shot at the horizon, my cottage was antenna challenged. There were no tall palm trees on the property line, like I saw on Google Earth. It looked like a hurricane had torn the siding off my cottage and destroyed a home behind us. The exterior of my cottage looked nothing like the pictures on VRBO. I knew the beach was across the road. There are very few buildings on the beach side of the road. I didn't know if I dared run coax across the road or if I could set up my verticals on the beach? But that was my dream.

My friend Bill, AF4R had told me you can run coax across a road if you put it thru a garden hose. He shared valuable knowledge from his DXpedition in the Bahamas. Juan and I found some garden hose in the hurricane rubble behind the cottage but for now we decided to stay on cottage property. Richard brought two 100' garden hoses.

Juan got his Delta loop set up between a tree and the balcony. We were both on air and running a frequency. Juan was using an IC-706 with separate ATU and I had my IC-7410.

Our stations were set up on opposite ends of a dining table with our coax run through windows. We were jamming, and I don't mean that is a good way. We tried to work thru it. Even with

band pass filters on both stations, the Eagle One vertical on 40 meters was generating S9+20 hash on 20 meters. After the 1900Z CWT, I worked many European stations on 20 m.



**Top: Coax pass thru at Richard's cottage. Bottom: Livestreaming up and running, showing us what the world could see.**

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### **Late Wednesday July 15 0220Z (10:20 pm EDT)**

Juan gets the Club Log livestream working and my Qs begin to upload. The livestream operates in the background using a very small bandwidth, (only 500 bits per log entry) and log entries appeared in just 3 minutes. I'm glad he was there to set it up. It required a small bit of file pointing using the Command Prompt window. He quickly became an invaluable IT resource. One other thing about our cottage, at least it had good Wi-Fi.

We both participated in the 0300Z CWT until the power went out at 03:55Z and we grabbed some shut-eye. Power was restored an hour later and I wondered if that was the norm in Bimini. Turns out it was.

I got up for the 0700Z CWT. The propagation and/or activity, quickly faded after the CWT.

In the morning, Juan reported propagation was good to Asia on FT-8 with many calls from VK, JA, and YB while using the IC-706 and the Eagle One. So, FT8 was working thru the high noise levels.

### **Thursday July 15**

Juan moved down to Richard's cottage and the big front yard full of trees. I lost power for an hour and Wi-Fi for about 9 hours. Richard, Linda and Juan swatted mosquitoes and set up half a dozen antennas. Richard's cottage had no access to the beach or the bay. What Richard saw on Google Earth didn't match the geography of what he had on the ground. He couldn't run coax across the road to the East side of Bimini because there is a high security fence preventing access to the harbor. However, Richard's neighbor Duval, like all Bahamians, was friendly. He allowed Richard to run coax (300 feet) thru his property and out to the beach on the ocean side.

While my Wi-Fi was out, I scavenged some garden hose I found in the rubble near my cottage. Linda helped me raise my phased verticals in the front yard. My front yard was a very small, narrow space, but it does have an ocean view to the West. The verticals worked but I still had a high noise level.

Juan asked for help with his 6 meter beam. He was missing the Gamma match and needed help figuring out how to build one. My solution was a coax jumper. After that I returned to my cottage for more operating. Juan completed his beam, and sent me a message on WhatsApp that the "SWR is 1.17:1", Yahoo!



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Rain prevented Juan and Richard from erecting it until the last day when they got it 20 feet in the air using military surplus camouflage masts. Juan made about 600 6 meter contacts on FT8.

I planned to put up my verticals on my beach. But before I do, I'm invited to move my radio to Richard's Cottage. It's great, all of us were together in one space. We collaborated over Richard's propagation maps from PSK reporter, using various antennas. It turned out an antenna on the beach was an antenna on the beach. Didn't much matter if it was an OCF dipole high up in an Australian Pine or an Eagle One vertical type antenna stabbed in the sand and rock, they both worked great!



I made a fresh start at Richard and Linda's cottage. I un-box a brand new IC-7300 and started running a frequency. While I did that, Richard set up three Spiderbeam Masts in the front yard to make a three element vertical parasitic array.

After dinner I discovered that the three of us are one too many. It was hard to find an open band. Juan and Richard had the only two open bands (40m & 20m). Plus, Richard had two stations, using two bands. He was running two FT8 stations simultaneously, one on a good band another on a band where conditions were too poor for CW. Juan gave me a band and I stayed up

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way passed COVID curfew. I walked home on the beach by starlight and phone light because I didn't want to get caught breaking protocol.

## Friday July 16

I slept at my cottage and waited until 7 am (when curfew ends) to walk back to Richard's cottage via the road.

The noise level at Richard cottage was minimal and there were plenty of antennas and band pass filters to go around. Problem was, there were still only two bands open. I struggled to make any contacts on 80 m, 17 m, or 15 m. But when Richard went to bed I QSY'd to 40m CW using Richard's Eagle One on the beach. I worked 40m late into the night.

## Saturday July 17

I got a couple hours sleep on a bunk bed in the same 2<sup>nd</sup> bedroom Juan was using at Richard and Linda's cottage. I got up at 5 am and worked a lot of JAs, until the band closed around 9 am. Juan planned to be in the NAQP RTTY contest. We tried getting my IC-7300 set-up for RTTY but it didn't happen. *I got it working using one USB cable, once I was back in Michigan.*



**My 3rd station on our 4th day on Bimini.**

While it rained that morning, I packed up and got ready to move my station to a cottage belonging to Rick, KN4CV. Rick was a member of the original team and, while I'd only met him once, he trusted me to use his cottage while he was away. It took me the rest of the day to move my antennas to the beach in front of Rick's. The beach isn't really his, boaters and bathers walk all over the sand in front of his place. There was a lot of foot traffic, so I buried my radials but not the coax. Juan helped me set up two verticals and a dipole. We needed a shovel to dig a hole in the sand for each vertical. He borrowed a conch shell from nearby Coconut Brian's Beach Bar. *Conch shells are everywhere. At some point he wrote our call signs on one, it's on our QSL card.*

## Sunday July 18

I adjust one of the 40m verticals by folding some of the wire back on itself and got a low SWR on 30m, 40 m, 15 m and 12 m. I tried and failed to tune the other vertical for 20 meters. With curfew just a few minutes away I ran 40m all night and into the next morning. Late that night my spots at TF4X peaked at 30 dB, but no one from Iceland ever called.

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## **Monday July 19**

Juan used his sling shot to shoot a line high in an Australian Pine tree that gave shade to Coconut Brian's Beach Bar. We pulled up a 20m vertical dipole I had brought. Juan returned to Richard's cottage for more Qs.

I didn't have as many JA and Asia callers as yesterday but my RBN signals peaked in VK at 7am. I was pretty happy with my new QTH because I could work 40 or 20 meters without too much interference from the rest of the team.



### **Verticals on the beach**

That afternoon, signals were booming. I had just started to Run CQ EU on 20m. I had so many callers, some asked for split. I tried split and got surprised. N1MM+ used VFO B for TX. Instead of "CQ EU up 1" I needed my macro to send "CQ EU dn 1". Oh no, my F Key macro was wrong! But there was another problem. N1MM+ would only send the function key macros if I was transmitting on VFO A! I was sending manually at 30 wpm but soon sent "No Split" and the pile-up only grew. That afternoon, Juan had the same thing happen to him. He runs SO2R at home but he too was surprised by Split mode from the DX side of the QSO while using N1MM+. We never did get Split mode working and that was the only time we needed it.

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That pile-up would have to wait because earlier that day the team had decided to meet for a drink at Coconut Brian's. That's when we all found out I had to move out of Rick KN4CV's cottage on the beach and across the street to his rental. Rick didn't tell his wife I was operating from their place and the assumption had been that I would close up each night when curfew started at 7 pm. Instead, I stayed up and played radio into the wee hours of the morning. That's why things hit the fan at Rick's house back in Florida. Rick didn't tell his wife. She was trying to set the alarm (remotely) and I had coax running thru a sliding glass door.

Later, Rick and I had a video chat and he offered his cottage across the street, rent free. I'd have to run coax over the road, but Barry said that was n't problem. Problem was I didn't have enough coax for all three antennas. I should have moved to Rick's rental because I would have been back in operation much sooner. Instead, I collected up all my gear and moved back to my noisy place.

## Tuesday July 20

I spend most of Tuesday setting up one 40 m vertical and my 20 m vertical dipole on Hideaway Beach. I needed help shooting a line over a short palm tree near the side of the road. Juan used his sling shot.



Left to right: Juan AC6ZM, Steve WA8Y, Linda KN4KJC and Rich NN2T.

It was the last afternoon, the last night, I made the most of it. I stay up until the bands went dead, then packed up as much gear and clothes as I could.

## Wednesday July 21

I got up at 5:30 am to make breakfast and be ready for my last gray line to JA. I worked half of the 1300 CWT before I shut down.

I put on a bathing suit and rushed down to the beach. I dismantled the 40m vertical and 20m dipole in record time. I'm glad I had a manifest, because it told me what to pack where. It all fit in the correct suitcase or box, with room to spare. *How did that happen?*

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After a late lunch, we toured the island once more in the golf cart. I wanted to take a picture of one of those conch shell piles seen everywhere along the bay shore. People eat conch in South Florida too, but here they are so plentiful. Barry told Linda he can sell a big shell to a tourist for a \$100 and a small one for \$60 (if he cleans and polishes the shell). We stop at a pile of conch shells and Linda decides to take one for a souvenir. It stinks up her backpack, I give her a plastic bag. All the shells in these piles have a slot next the point. The Bahamians cut a slot, then use a knife to evict the conch (a large snail that tastes a bit like lobster and shrimp).

The Balearia (Dancer) Fast Ferry was a very smooth ride both ways. I was sort of napping when I felt a bump, I go outside to check, yep we just enter the Gulf Stream. The current is so strong the water is more dense and it makes a bump!

Would I do it again? Sure! And Richard has already finished a second trip. He and his family rented a house on the bay side and were there during the CQ WW SSB. I'd like to return for a low band CW contest this winter, but I have no plans. Juan wants to go to another Caribbean island, maybe St. Kitts will be next.

The team made over 5000 QSOs, I uploaded 1377 Qs to Club Log. Richard and Juan had a lot more BIC (But In Chair) time and made more QSOs. Richard's Qs were mostly on FT8. Juan had the most seat time and used at least 3 modes, CW, FT8 and RTTY. He set a new record for C6A in the NAQP RTTY contest. Richard and I made slide shows and the three of us presented them to the St. Augustine ARC and the Bay Area DXers.

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## WKFlex: CW remote with SmartSDR and Winkeyer

[Max Mucci, N5NHJ \(I8NHJ\)](#)

I'm a CW guy and a SmartSDR remote user.

I'm very happy with the performances of SmartSDR but I was missing both the CW sidetone and sending code from my paddle/keystroke.

I understand it can be achieved in different ways, using a Maestro is one of those. I also understand there are software applications which can do that, but I was looking for a light, simple, and elegant solution. I spoke about my idea with Dave, N1BIT and we came out with a working prototype written in Python and, eventually, a graphical app written in C#.

### **Editor's Note:**

This article is adapted from a post to the FlexRadio Community (<https://community.flexradio.com/discussion/8024988/wkflex-cw-remote-with-smartsdr-and-winkeyer>) and appears here with the permission of the author. Navigate to the above link to read the comments and the author's responses. You don't need to be a member of the Flex Community to read the posts.

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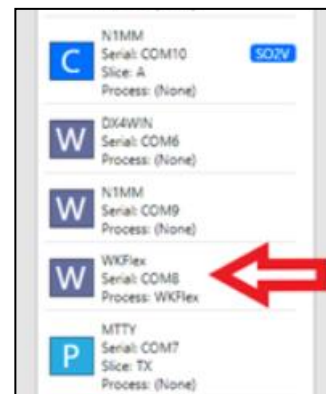
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The prerequisite for the system is to have a Winkeyer by K1EL, nothing else. Also, the app works **ONLY** with a Winkeyer or devices which emulate the Winkeyer, no other devices are supported.

WKFlex creates a tunnel between the local Winkeyer and SmartSDR, allowing to send CW without extra cables, interfaces, or difficult configurations.

The following steps should have you up and running in minutes:

**Step 1:** Add a dedicated Winkeyer interface to SmartSDRCAT (right)



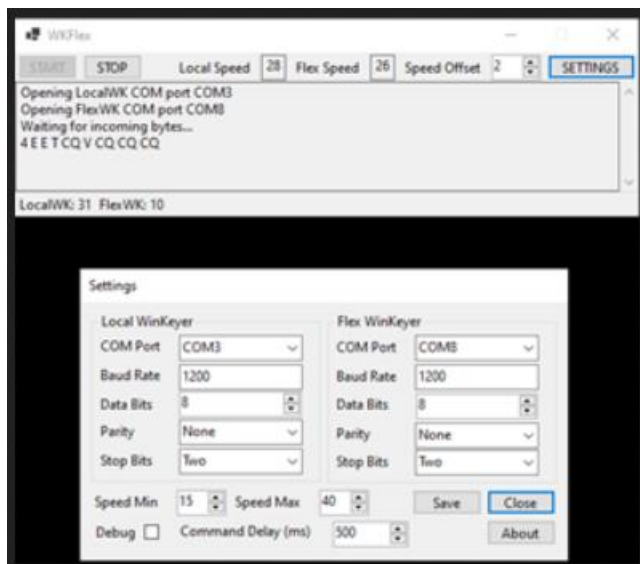
**Step 2:** Check your Winkeyer COM port. If you don't know it already, open Windows device manager.

**Step 3:** Download WKFlex from this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/s07x2489nrsup6f/WKFlex-V11.zip?dl=0>

The software is not signed, so Windows will complain. If you trust me download it, if you trust Windows don't!

**Step 4:** Unzip WKFlex in a folder of your choice. It doesn't require to be installed, just unpack it. If you want to remove it just delete the folder.



Double click on WKFlex.exe to run the app.

Click on *SETTINGS* (bottom, right).

Enter the COM ports parameters, and the speed range for the Winkeyer \*\*\*\*, click on *SAVE* and *CLOSE*.

Now click on *START* and enjoy your paddle!

Nothing happens? Check and make sure your Flex is in CW mode.

The *Speed Offset* control in the main window can be helpful for high latency, low speed network connections. You are sending at higher speed than the Flex radio, avoiding gaps between letters.

Feel free to contact me or Dave if you need help.

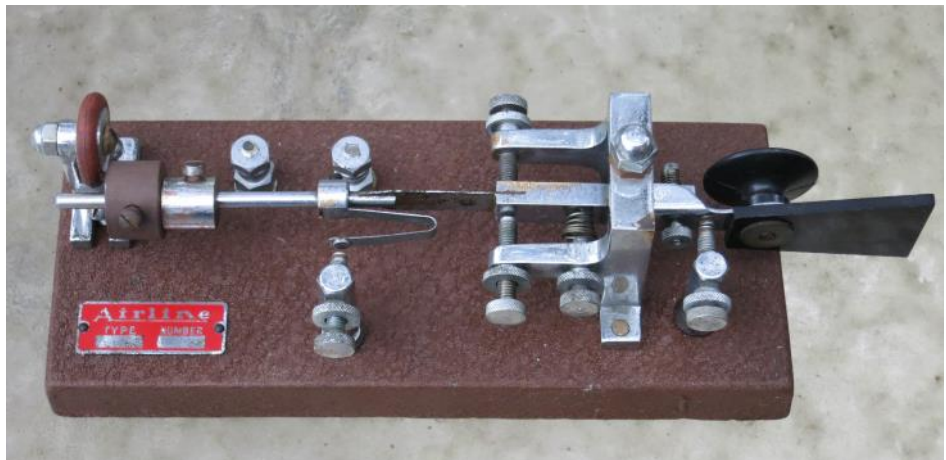
# Some Telegraph Key Mysteries

[Ed Goss, N3CW](#)

While one would think that by the year 2021 just about everything that could be known about the telegraph key would be known, and that there would be no such thing as a key mystery. Reality shows that is not the case. This article presents a quick overview of eight historical key mysteries for the reader to consider and help solve. Although all the research conducted by the author on what is shown here will not be presented in this article, the results of that research have only added to the mysteries.

## THE MONTGOMERY WARD AIRLINE KEY

The Montgomery Ward Airline key shown here was first described in a K9YA Telegraph newsletter (January 2017), with hopes of someone recognizing the key or being able to provide some details about it. No further information was received, and so the mystery of this key's origin remains. The key obviously looks like an Electric Specialty (ES) device,



sometimes called a Cedar Rapids or CR speed key. Adding to the mystery is the "Airline" label. Keys sold by Montgomery Ward typically were name brands, but this key actually has a Wards-branded label on it. Continued detailed searches for any mention of an Airline key have to date not yielded any results, and no collectors contacted have recognized this key.

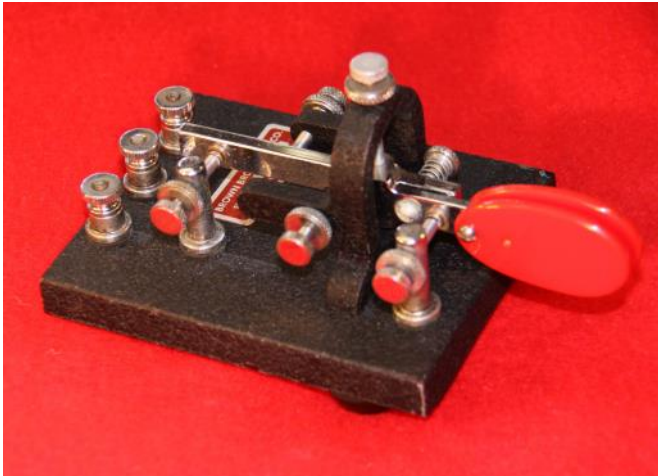
The key's Airline label shows no evidence of marking ink or mechanical stamping of any numbers or identifying marks. The years when this particular label design appeared on Montgomery Ward products help to estimate the age of the Airline key, with somewhere between 1941 and 1945 as probable years of first fabrication. One possible explanation for the key's existence is that the key is a Montgomery Ward device that was actually produced and sold during the 1940s or early 1950s. Other possibilities include the key being a prototype made from Electric Specialty parts as a result of a business arrangement between Wards and ES, or perhaps the key resulted from parts obtained when ES went out of business. No matter what the explanation for this key, it remains an interesting and rare device that very few collectors are aware of.

## BROWN BROTHERS MODEL ES SINGLE LEVER

BBMC manufactured keys from 1964 through 1979. The BBMC product line consisted almost entirely of ten well-known models. Various experimental and prototype models were presented and discussed in an earlier K9YA Telegraph newsletter (March 2016), but unfortunately no new information was made available after the article's publication.

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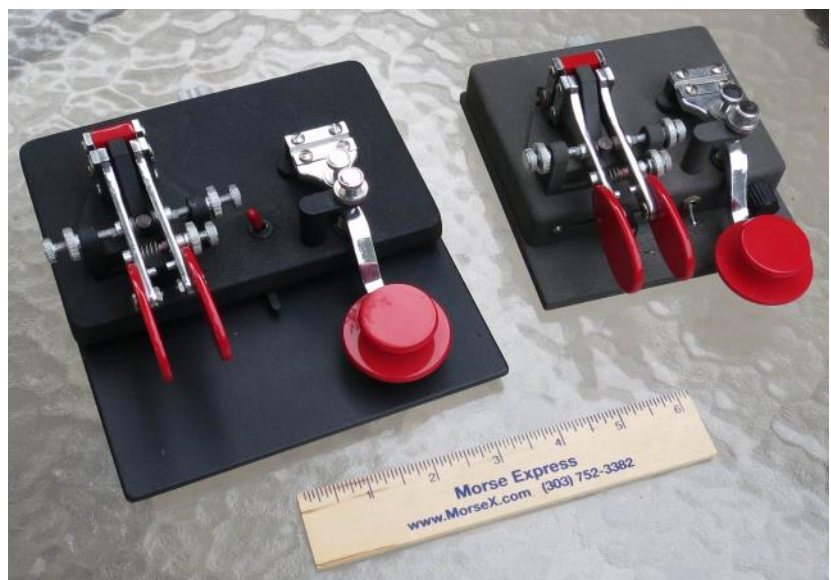


The Brown Brothers were Edward C. (Ed) Brown, and William F. (Bill) Brown. Bill Brown taught mechanical studies and basic electronics courses in the St. Louis school system. Bill was never a licensed ham; however, Ed was licensed and held the call W0BMM, and enjoyed contesting and working DX. Ed was an engineer who worked for the McDonnell Aircraft Company. The brothers made their keys in Bill's basement shop, located on Southwest Avenue in St. Louis, MO. Bill made the casting equipment and dies, and all of the zinc casting, small part plating, and painting were done in-house. Brown Brothers Machine Company kept very little documentation and whatever paperwork that may have been left when the shop was sold is most likely long gone. According to friend and neighbor Jim Glasscock, W0FF, the Brown Brothers were known to build experimental devices, and to accommodate special requests for friends.

Unlike other BB devices, the Model ES does appear to record a serial number. The number "011" can be faintly seen on the label in the above photo, and another single-lever previously owned by the author clearly showed a "014" serial number. These serial numbers would seem to support some claims that at least a dozen of the single-lever devices were made by BB. Also of interest is the bearing frame on the Model ES, which appears to be the same design used on the Model CSA for the bug suspension. Why weren't more of these single-lever keys made, and why were only these models serialized?

### **BROWN BROTHERS ELECTRONIC KEYSER PROTOTYPES**

As seen at right, the only two BBMC keyer prototypes known to exist differ in size and arrangement of controls. Both devices were obtained from different sources over a period of time. These keyers exhibit many construction commonalities, including use of similar controls for speed and sidetone volume, choice of control knobs, use of epoxy for internal parts mounting, similar component

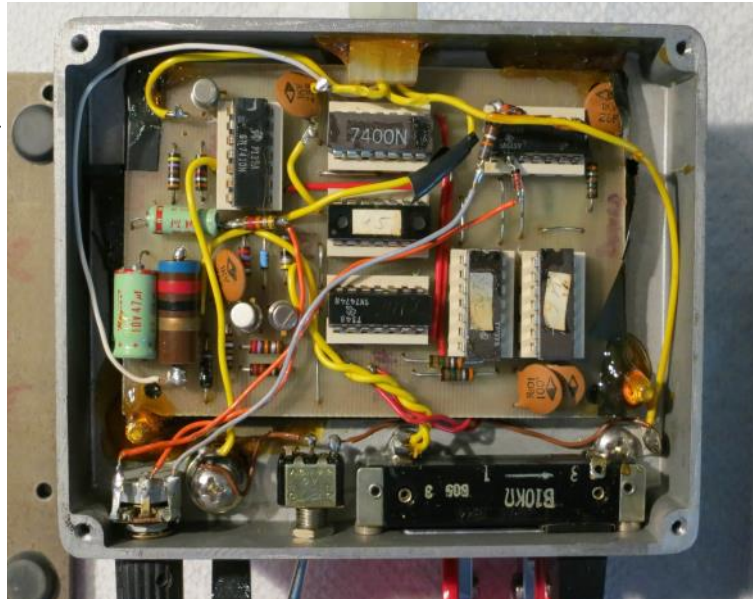


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wiring techniques, and the choice of the WB4VVF Accu-keyer and board for the keyer. It appears that an external speaker was intended to be utilized by using two of the rear panel connector pins. The bases appear to be aluminum, with the cases cast zinc. The devices appear original, with no evidence of any refurbishment or repainting over time. The keys' mechanical supports, such as the hand key spring pedestals and the BTL-A frames, are identical to those found on standard BB keys. It is estimated that these keyer prototypes were fabricated somewhere between 1974 and 1976. The existence of a keyer prototype can be easily imagined to have resulted from Ed Brown's interest in CW.

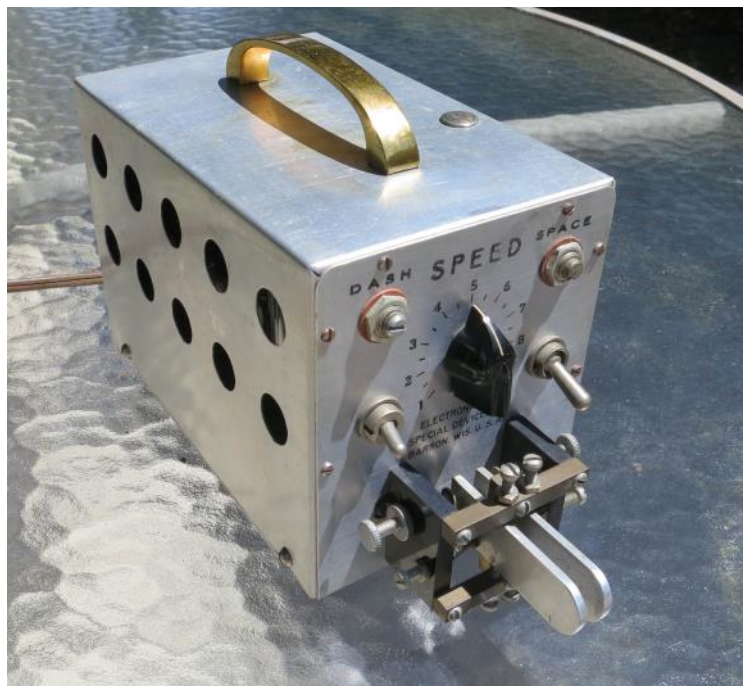


The photo above, right shows the inside of the smaller of the two keyer prototypes, with sliding control under the dual-lever paddles and the component side of the Accu-keyer circuit board visible. Why did these keyers remain relatively unknown and never see production? Do any other BB keyer prototypes exist?

### **SPECIAL DEVICES MODEL 100A KEYSER**

The Special Devices Model 100A was first described by the author in the [May 2016 CW Ops newsletter](#). For a more technical discussion of this keyer and additional photos refer to that first article. This Model 100A was essentially a total unknown when that May 2016 article appeared. However, a bit of additional background on the keyer and its maker were provided from several newsletter readers, although aspects of the mysterious nature of this keyer's existence remain.

By way of review, several things were immediately intriguing when first examining this keyer. The unit's serial number of 43, the compact size of the keyer, the construction techniques used, and the sophistication of the dual-lever paddle design offered evidence that the Model 100A was not just a quick homebrew project. The keyer has similarities to some early 1950s W6OWP compact designs, as well as the 1957 Eldico EE-3. Stampings



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on the keyer indicate that it was made by Special Devices Co., of 7 E Franklin Avenue in Barron, WI. Attempts to find any archived historical records for Special Devices yielded no matches.

The Model 100A is a tube-based keyer, using a 6AL5 dual diode, a 6J6 dual triode, and an OB2 regulator. Output keying is via a relay. The dual-lever paddle design, when other integrated keyer mechanisms of the time period were single-lever or converted bugs, makes the Model 100A stand out. The paddle mechanism features elongated aluminum fingerpieces, which eliminate the need for separate paddle arms. There are two embedded pivot bearings in each fingerpiece; the top and bottom adjustment screws are hollow at the ends to allow the operator to set bearing feel. Two pairs of contacts are used, with contact points provided on fingerpiece standoffs and on the ends of the contact adjustment screws. Locking nuts are included for all adjustments. Paddle return to center is via spring tension, which is also adjustable. Despite the age of this integrated paddle, it is velvety-smooth and consistent in operation. The low moving mass of the mechanism (remember, there are no arms) is far ahead of its time. This is a paddle which is an anachronism, and is as pleasant to use as many of today's paddles.

Keyer fabrication includes use of cable lacing and red paint to mark solder joints and supports the fact that the maker was an experienced assembler. A terminal board is used for resistor, capacitor, and fuse mounting. The mechanical design is well thought-out, as seen by the orientation of components and the holes for ventilation and cooling. There is a hole plug on top of the keyer – not to cover up a drilling mistake, but to provide access to the relay arm tension adjustment inside. The extra effort to mount a recessed toggle switch on the bottom of the keyer is meant to keep a seldom-used switch out of the operator's way; this switch appears to change the polarity of the paddles. The "remote" jack on the rear panel allows an external paddle to be connected. There is a front panel toggle switch to the left of the speed knob; this switch provides a "hold" function for transmitter tune-up. The rear panel jack marked "bk.in" is most likely meant to mute the receiver while transmitting – it is wired to the normally closed contacts of the keying relay.

Using the limited information available, it is estimated that the Model 100A may have been produced at some point during the years 1958 through 1961. The estimate is based on introduction of the OB2 tube (1957), beginning widespread usage of commercial dual-lever paddles (approximately 1961), and increasing availability of transistorized keying devices (beginning approximately 1960).

As of 2021, it is known that this keyer was manufactured by Archie Smith, W9DND, and that he was first listed in the 1927 Callbook. John J. Holman (the current holder of W9DND), is a nephew by marriage to Archie Smith. John writes to me that the Special Devices keyer business was started by the original W9DND in the early 1950s. John also provided some biographical information on the original W9DND:

"Archie Smith was born on December 13, 1902 and died on November 24, 1995. Archie was known on the radio as Art, and was first licensed as 9DXB in 1924. The call W9DND was issued sometime before Jan. 1, 1933. Art operated KDXL, WME, WAM, WLK, and WVT all using CW. He worked on the Great Lakes as a shipboard Radio Operator. Also in the early 40's he worked for the Army in a message center in Chicago. The message center was CW and later RTTY as the war progressed. I re-

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member visiting his house in Barron, Wisconsin. The lower level was filled with things of many wonders for a young boy to get into.

"Art owned and operated a business called Special Devices Co. in the early 1950s. He made an electronic key that is now called a keyer. With tube technology he developed it to the point of self completing dash. It was a 4" w x 4.5" h x 6.5" long metal box with key paddles built onto the front. There was always one of these keyers someplace in his station. Art did most of his operating in the 1970's. He earned an ARRL 60 WPM CW certificate on June 18, 1970. He retired from Dairyland Power Co-operative in 1968. Probably what was most impressive was him talking with you while operating CW on the nets at the same time. I have witnessed this and also heard it from others. Art encouraged people to get interested in electronics and electrical fields. He and I had many conversations on technology. He built solid state devices for himself, both transistor and IC. "

John was also able to review Special Devices paperwork in his possession, and told me that Model 100A serial number 43 shipped on April 3, 1950 to A. C. Krones, W9UIT. However, the OB2 tube used in this keyer was not developed until 1957, and so the mystery continues. Is the paperwork wrong, or a number unclear? Fred, W2AAB suggests the paperwork's date could have been mis-read, and possibly could be 1959 or 1960. Why wasn't a keyer exhibiting this level of advanced design not advertised or reviewed by major publications? How many Model 100As were produced and how were they sold? Were any Model 100As made before 1957 and the introduction of the OB2 tube?

## HEATH GREEN VIBRO-KEYER

An interesting variation of the early 1960 Vibroplex Vibro-Keyer (it was renamed the Vibrokeyer in 1981) paddle is shown here and features a green base. Sometimes called the Heath or Heathkit Vibro-Keyer, the author has seen three different green paddles over time, all with a base of the same green shade and serial numbers that date the paddle to 1960. All three examples examined appear to be



factory original and not individually painted. No Vibroplex records or advertising has been found to indicate how this paddle variation became available, and few collectors are aware of it. How

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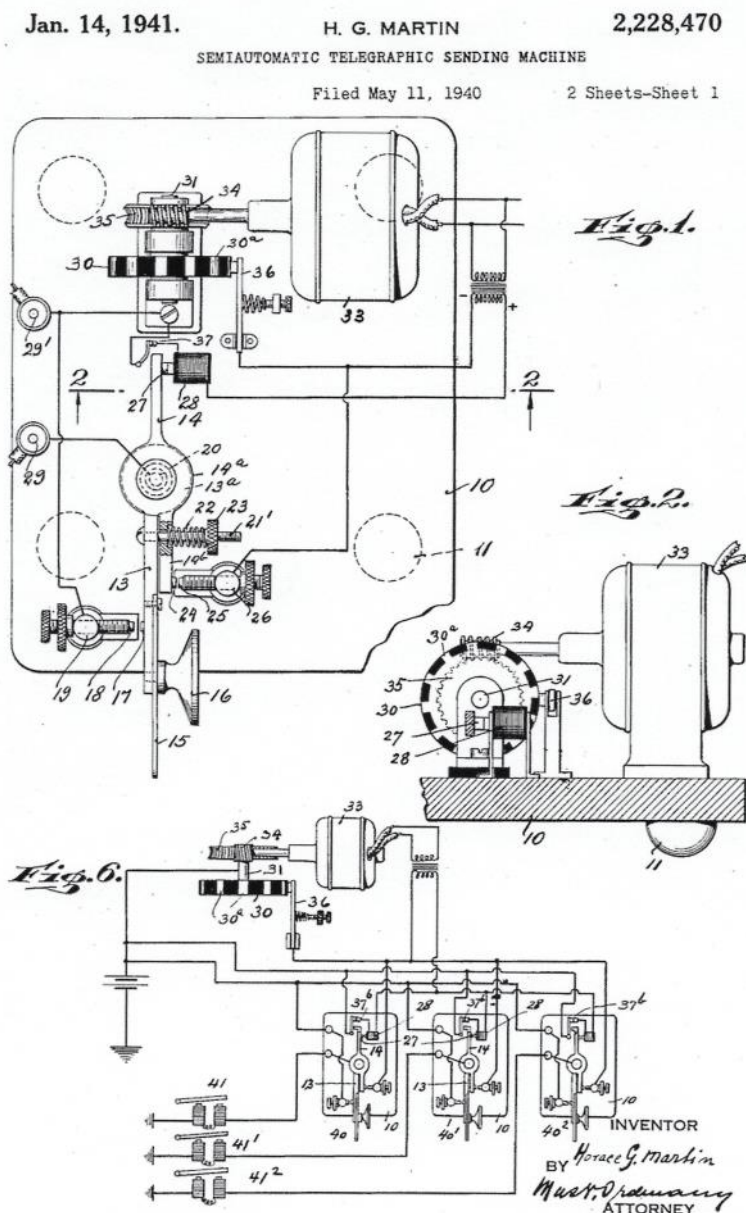
many were built? Are these green-based variations actually related to Heathkit or is there another reason for their existence?

## H. G. MARTIN 1941 SENDING MACHINE PATENT 2228470

Keyer design during the period of 1939 through 1942 was focused on motorized automatic keyers. Examples include Howard Mason's Moto-Key (reviewed in April 1939 QST) and the Starkens "Equable" motorized bug. (described in a March 1942 QST article). In a May 11, 1940 patent application for a "semiautomatic telegraphic sending machine" Horace G. Martin described a motorized semi-automatic key with similarities to both the Mason Moto-Key and the Starkens Equable motorized bug. Martin's patent issued on January 14, 1941 (patent #2228470), and seems to have been overlooked by many historians.

The Rotoplex (patent #2228469) is frequently described as the last production key Martin designed. However, it is the author's opinion that the 1941 sending machine as described in patent 2228470 is actually the last key Martin designed, at least based on patent filing dates. It is easy to speculate on why this key was apparently never developed, with emerging fully-electronic keyer designs that were being concurrently developed being a possible reason.

Did Martin ever build this key or even fabricate a prototype? The key is described as semi-automatic, but text in the patent describes the key as usable for transmitting dots, or dashes, or both. Patent drawings appear to show the device being capable of fully automatic operation. Why was there never more attention given this fully-automatic key design that should have had a more prominent place in key history?



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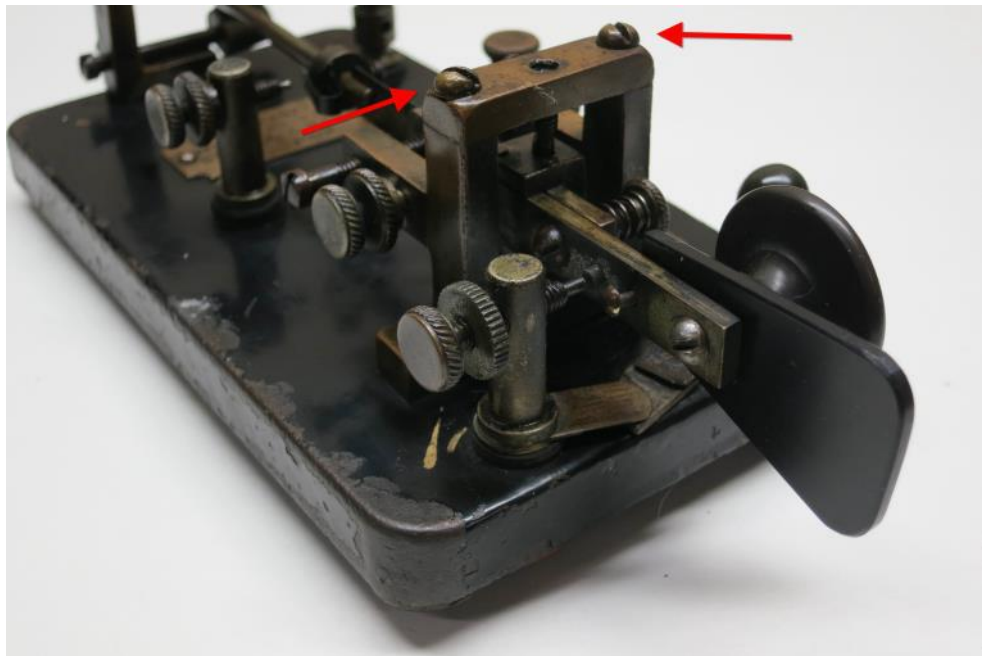
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## **VIBROPLEX ORIGINAL WITH TWO-PIECE FRAME**

A 1905 Vibroplex Original is a very rare and special key. The Original, seen at right, which is serial number 867, is even more special. Serial 867 uses a two-piece mainframe, which knowledgeable collectors have never seen on this early key. Two screws hold the top piece to the bottom part of the mainframe (see the red arrows). No other 1905 Originals known exhibit this two-piece mainframe, and that is the essence of this mystery.

Was it designed that way as an experiment? Could we be looking at a repaired device? Perhaps this key is a Vibroplex prototype? Because of the way the top piece is beveled, the fact that the metal "grain" marks line up between the two pieces, and the overall coloring of the metal pieces, it is felt that this key represents a modification or repair done at Vibroplex.. According to Fred Maas KT5X, Vibroplex (before 1925) had a very liberal buy-back policy, where

they offered a \$6 trade-in allowance for repairable keys. Vibroplex also offered refurbished keys for sale. If serial number 867 is indeed a repaired model, adding to the complexity of a frame repair was the need for a shorter trunnion pin. Could it be that the designer wanted to see how the shorter trunnion pin affected the overall feel of the bug during use? Why wasn't the key repaired by simply replacing what might have been a damaged frame with a new stock frame? We may never know with certainty why this bug uses the two-piece mainframe, but it is fun to speculate.



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## **WESTERN ELECTRIC PROTOTYPE**

Lack of any identifying marks or name on the unique key shown at right (with a standard hand key for comparison) has led me to call it the "Western Electric Prototype." The key appears to be some sort of modified hand key, and belongs to Jack Reichert, N4RV. Jack states the small bug may be a Western Electric or Bell Labs prototype. Many years ago, Jack's father, who worked for AT&T in their Telegraph Department, obtained this key from one of his older employees, an original old time telegrapher. Was this key someone's basement project, or does it represent a unique prototype by a company intending to produce keys? Do any collectors have another one like it?



To summarize, here are eight unusual Morse-related devices with lots of unknown history still to be learned. Can any readers add some knowledge that will help clear up these key mysteries? Perhaps the best benefit to understanding the stories behind our CW ancestors' inventions is that we can come to appreciate the love they had for the CW mode and how that love has been passed down to us through their creations.

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## **CW Academy**

**[Kate Hutton, K6HTN](#) **[Joe Fischer, AA8TA](#)**  
**[Bob Carter, WR7Q](#) **[Roland Smith, K7OJL](#)******

The September-October 2021 CW Academy semester has come to an end. A quick summary: there were 537 students enrolled in 93 classes with 72 advisors. This is another class with outstanding numbers of students. Here is a summary of this semester's classes.

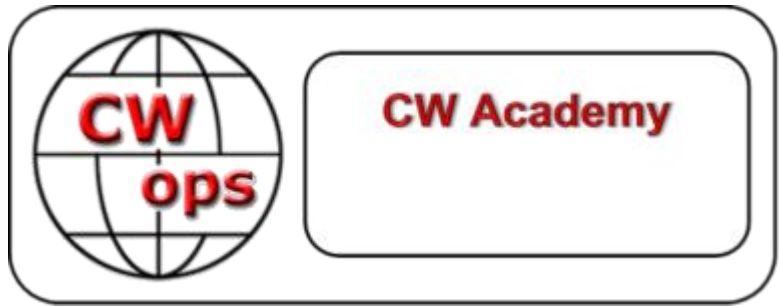
We greatly appreciate the dedication and efforts of these advisors who led groups of students:

AA0YY, AA5CF, AA8TA, AC5EZ, AC6AC, AD6E, AD7KG, AG4EA, AJ1DM, AK7O, G0HKC, G3WZD, IK1H-

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GE, K0AD, K0ES, K1DJ, K1LHO, K5GQ, K6HP, K6HTN, K6RB, K7MOZ, K7OJL, K9CPO, K9NUD, K9OZ, KA7MDM, KD2KW, KE6JAC, KG5IEE, KI7OMH, KK5NA, KK6M, KN4CQB, KT5V, KV8Q, MI0WWB, N0DNF, N3EE, N5KB, N5WNG, N9EP, NM5M, NN0G, NN4K, NU7Y, VE3BXG, VE3FXX, VE3RDE, W0EJ, W0FN, W0GAS, W0OJ, W0UO, W3PNM, W3TB, W4IF, W7EEE, W7VQ, W8EWH, W8OV, WA1VAB, WA3AER, WA9CW, WB0JRH, WB7DKZ, WG3J, WR7Q, WU6P, WX5CW and YL3JD.



The following students successfully completed an advanced class (69):

AA6PM, AC0VM, AF7MM, AI3A, K4EES, K6AUR, K6GRH, K6NF, K6ZGW, K7PKA, KB9LLD, KC9MJA, KE8BWA, KL7IXW, KN7A, N4HOE, N7NR, NE5ET, Maria Polyanska,

W5EAL, W7EEE, W7GFW, WB6POT, N1SP, W4MUB, ZL2GVA, KF7WX, KJ5T, W3ZF, HB9DHG, KA1NP, VE3WH, W4MSL, W9ZSJ, WT9Q, K0HD, K1PJS, KB4DSF, KC1EJD, KN4QPA, W5ROX, K7VM, KW0J, N5SJ, WA9ZZ, ZL3TK, K4CBW, WB9YLZ, WD0END, G4RTJ, NF1U, K4EMF, K4RLC, K7UD, ND4K, AB1KT, K8CKC, KB1NO, KB9ML, KT5C, 9A6ZE, CT7AUP, OM5MI, PA2G, S55AC, SV1DAY, K5KXJ, KC1V and WJ0C.

The following students successfully completed an intermediate class (85):

K0LAR, KN4UDT, KO4ALY, W0JCB, W9JRM, KG5CQO, OH2BVT, W1SAV, W2GZ, W2KU, WB3LJQ, AG6NS, K6WIL, KD8RGW, KF4HAW, PA1BBO, SO6XL, SP5GDX, SQ5TK, SQ6JNX, KJ4WNA, N0TO, N3HXZ, W4YGT, M0WDD, SQ5LNO, VE7BSM, W9WLX, AI6VM, K7MNF, KD8VCB, KT9N, N5EP, VK5PL, W1AGE, HB9HDV, KC9MZ, KE0AHD, KE3GK, KI5IIL, N0OLD, WA7WAL, 2I0WLZ, CS7AUS, M5OTA, MMOWXE, N1YIV, VA3IJK, K0BRE, KN6IZE, VK2PP, W7JET, NE5A, NM3A, NM4N, WA2ZDM, WJ0R, K3UQ, MI0HOZ, N3VO, NJ7V, NK3H, K5LB, K9DSD, K9STM, KE0LUA, KO4AEE, VE3BTX, KK9U, KQ3S, VE1GWE, PY2BBQ, DL2NEW, KN9V, LB4MI, KB3EYY, KC3OIV, W6OLI, W8YT, K6KMH, KE7M-PO, NB7O, DM5TU, M0XCV and WA7RV.

The following students successfully completed a basic class (88):

AF5XB, KC5ONZ, KD9OBP, XE1HG, KD2TUD, KF0ARE, AK1MD, K5KUQ, KD4BTH, KM6BJK, KJ7NYZ, KO4LAO, N3BQ, SP6MI, VU3NXI, W7KLK, K0BE, KC9YJP, N2UD, K3ES, W0QL, KC1KUF, KN6EJG, N6ZUE, WB7SEK, WM3M, K9XE, M0YZX, PA2SQ, K3YO, KB7BTO, KC3O, KF5UCO, W5CYN, AA1XQ, KJ7NOZ, PY1RCH, 2E0WPM, M0TDP, R2AZR, VA3PAF, W4IRA, 9J2REK, IZ5CNC, KX4UI, ON3RLI, VE1GMP, K0EHR, KD9KHA, KE0BAP, N6DYL, N7KOM, VA6BGE, WH6GCD, KB0BJ, KS0T, N7HTO, VA3RXB, W7PFY, KD9RXU, KE7WJW, KG6PTT, KK7XO, W1SEN, VK8MC, K5BDH, KD7GOM, KK6MVT, KB2PIZ/JJ5GVY, W4RJH, AE2TT, N5ILQ, N6NFB, NM5D, W1OY, AG5R, N4FH, W1BJB, K9ETC, K7CLA, KF0DQU, KJ7UOS, WA8DBP, NA0F, W7HLO, WD8PKF, WG4V and KD0HBU.

The following students successfully completed a beginner class (109):

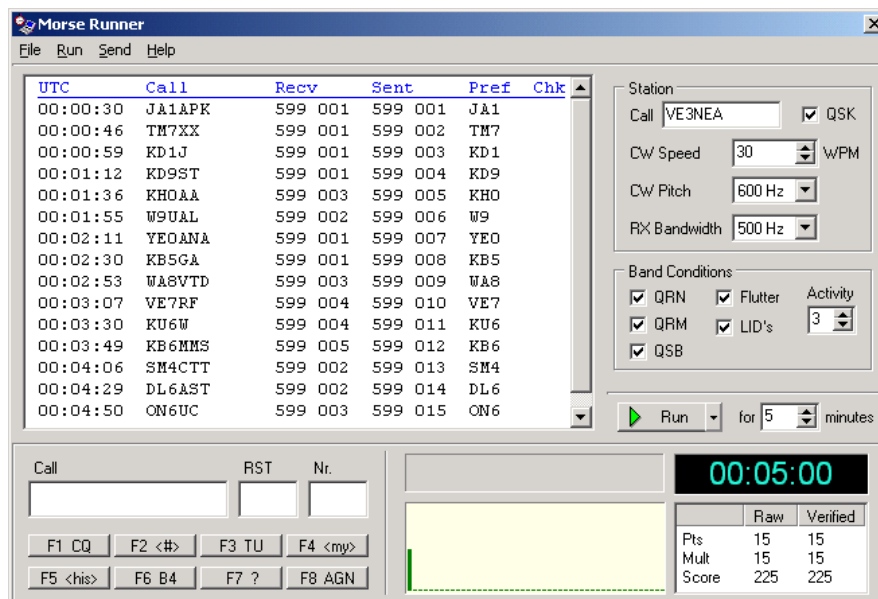
K7MSO, KI7MWA, KI7QAAQ, VE7PE, G5ROB, K0FBS, M0WDK, AG6ZE, KD3CR, KH6YO, KN6LMR,

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KC1KOO, KI6HQT, Sthitadhi Maiti, VK2JOE, K5SLO, KI5HKW, WV8EDU, AC0WR, K5VZ, KC9UPH, W6VIP, N9AGK, N0GQ, N6HDN, K8CTR, KD2SPF, KE8RFR, KN6GWT, W4LLY, K5NJM, KD6NOF, KB1RGR, KB7IP, KD9PQS, VK3TCP, K0ORD, K1NEM, VU2EH, W2RBS, Alan Barnes, Wendy Ellis, K4ZH, K5XBP, N3ALS, KB9NBL, KB1ND, KN6HSR, M0IRU, W4NQX, KC3PUK, KF0AUK, KF0BGL, N8FN, N3CGA, W5SOT, K7WWA, KE0DWI, KO4HNB, Kim Oatway, VK2VIZ, KJ7WXN, KN6FNY, KI6RRD, N0BAK, W4IL, WN0O, AI7DK, KE5KFP, VA2ZIO, VE2BPE, VE2IES, VE2IPT, VE2KZW, VE3JCT, Yash Chowdhury, KI4V, K9LDB, KG5DNF, KN6JEK, KD9KHZ, KF0AMA, KK6JON, VK2DLP, EI4GEB, K3KML, KA7UCX, KC3PBY, AD5WB, K5EPD, W1ANT, KD2HCU, KD2WAI, N1PRR, K4RLE, KB1O, KD9EFN, KI5NVM, KN6BAZ, AD8EK, KB2BYU, KC3GFO, W1JJM, K0AWG, N3BD, VE4YH, W5LNA, K5KXJ, WJ0C, WB0QOA and N8JOE.



It is great to see students from outside our traditional North American and European areas starting and advancing through the CW Academy. We hope that trend continues.

The following students listed above have become CWops members since the semester began:

AA6PM, AC0VM, AF7MM, AI3A, K6GRH, KE8BWA, KN7A, N4HOE, NE5ET, W5EAL, W7GFW, N1SP, W4MUB, ZL2GVA, KF7WX, KJ5T, KA1NP, VE3WH, K1PJS, WA9ZZ, W7JET, NE5A, NM4N, WD0END, NJ7V, K4EMF, K4RLC, K7UD, AB1KT, K8CKC, KB1NO, KB9ML and KT5C.

There could well be additional students who have been nominated, so if you are a CWops member, please check if you can sponsor them.

We are now on our holiday break and a few of us are preparing for the January semester when we will do all this again. As an advisor, it is a truly wonderful feeling to see students do something that many of them doubted they could do. Despite the challenges, many students get a lot out of our classes and enjoy the learning experience. As always, we are interested in discussing advising with a person who has a passion for CW and would like to pass on that passion. You do not need to be a CWops member to be an advisor.

73,

**Kate K6HTN, Joe AA8TA, Bob WR7Q, Roland K7OJL**  
CW Academy Managers

# CWops Member Awards

[Bill Gilliland, WØTG](#)

## Monthly Update

As always, there was a lot of movement in the ACA rankings this month, but **AA3B** remains atop the rankings where he has been all year, with **KR2Q** moving into second place this month. **K3WW** is very close behind at number three. **K7QA** moved up one position to number eight and **N7US** moved into the top ten at tenth position. Forty members have contacted 100 DXCC entities, up from 34 last month, and 95 members have now completed CWops WAS by contacting members in all 50 states. At this time, we have active CWops members in all 50 states, so each passing month should bring new CWops WAS awards.

## About the CWops Member Awards Program

Several operating awards are available for contacting CWops members. These include Annual Competition Award (ACA) recognizing the total number of CWops members contacted in a single year, Cumulative Membership Award (CMA) recognizing the total number of members contacted on each amateur band since January 3, 2010, CWops WAS Award for contacting members in all 50 states, CWops DXCC Award for contacting members in countries on the ARRL DXCC list, CWops WAE Award for contacting members in Europe, and CWops WAZ Award for contacting members in each of the 40 CQ zones. All contacts must be via CW and with current CWops members. To qualify for these awards, you must submit your logs via the tool at the CWops Award Tools website <https://cwops.telegraphy.de/>. You can also print out your awards certificates at that same website.

A set of tools for managing your awards status is provided on the CWops Award Tools website and if you regularly upload your logs your awards will be automatically tracked for you. **To view complete data for all currently active participants and see where you and others rank among active participants in the awards program, use the tools at <https://cwops.telegraphy.de/scores-by-call>.** For more details on the tools provided, see the August 2021 Solid Copy article.

## Please Join Us!

Fabian, DJ1YFK, who created the website and the tools, made it extremely easy to participate in the awards program. If you are not among the 235 CWops members who are currently participating, please join us! It adds a lot of friendly competition and fun to your operating.

## More Information

For more information on the CWops Awards Program, please go to <https://cwops.org/contact-us/awards/>, and address any questions or comments to [cwopscam@w0tg.com](mailto:cwopscam@w0tg.com).

## Current ACA Top 100

Here are the rankings for the top 100 ACA scores as of the first week of November 2021:

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CWops Member Awards Standings							
RANK	CALL	ACA	CMA	DXCC	WAS	WAE	WAZ
1	AA3B	1662	11248	126	50	47	38
2	KR2Q	1569	4410	129	50	52	36
3	K3WW	1564	8692	128	50	47	37
4	N5RZ	1479	7071	116	50	43	36
5	K3WJV	1363	6304	109	50	47	30
6	N5AW	1326	4229	83	50	39	31
=	NA8V	1326	6752	107	50	44	34
7	K3JT	1256	4730	92	50	43	29
8	K7QA	1246	4413	79	50	36	28
9	W1RM	1231	7594	211	50	61	38
10	N7US	1224	5206	107	50	37	33
11	K4WW	1222	4166	81	50	35	29
12	KG9X	1198	4750	75	50	34	24
13	K1VUT	1193	4346	71	50	37	22
14	WT3K	1167	3436	73	50	41	24
15	W4WF	1160	3883	78	50	37	29
16	WT9U	1135	4882	100	50	39	30
17	W0UO	1131	2898	53	50	30	20
18	K3PP	1126	4538	100	50	44	27
19	N8BJQ	1121	7088	130	50	46	38
20	AC6ZM	1114	3506	59	50	33	21
21	K6NR	1086	3533	60	50	28	28
22	VE3KI	1084	6547	136	50	51	37
23	F6HKA	1083	6906	199	50	58	38
24	W9ILY	1079	5498	130	50	45	36
25	K9WX	1069	4257	86	50	33	26
26	NA4J	1046	3172	69	49	32	24
27	K8AJS	1039	3940	100	50	42	30
28	W8FN	1032	3369	55	49	29	18
29	N1DC	1030	4227	84	50	38	24
30	AA5JF	1028	2463	67	50	34	26
31	WN7S	1011	3385	64	49	30	22
32	DL6KVA	1004	5102	170	50	60	36
33	NJ3K	978	2706	58	49	36	19
34	VE3TM	964	2498	72	50	39	23
35	K1DJ	945	3764	92	50	40	26
36	K3ZA	928	1784	37	50	26	14
37	WS1L	926	2272	57	49	34	19

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CWops Member Awards Standings							
RANK	CALL	ACA	CMA	DXCC	WAS	WAE	WAZ
38	N2UU	922	4920	108	50	44	31
39	KG5U	910	3902	75	50	24	28
40	DJ4MX	901	1889	69	49	39	25
=	KC7V	901	4501	87	50	34	32
41	W2CDO	894	2052	55	50	35	20
42	K8PK	888	3177	80	50	38	30
43	I2WIJ	880	3045	79	48	41	29
44	K1ESE	873	4930	124	50	45	35
45	K4TZ	867	2412	36	50	16	15
46	9A1AA	857	3719	121	49	50	38
=	DF7TV	857	1848	83	48	45	32
47	AF4T	853	2085	56	50	33	23
=	W0VX	853	5002	123	49	42	36
48	K2TW	851	2988	56	49	30	20
49	NK4O	840	1735	60	47	29	23
50	KE8G	834	3013	77	49	35	25
51	K8JQ	828	4321	62	50	28	23
52	KV8Q	827	2377	54	50	25	20
53	KM4FO	819	2237	41	50	15	16
54	NE2V	817	1473	46	49	26	16
=	NR3Z	817	2130	63	48	32	22
55	W3WHK	811	2718	71	49	32	21
56	LB6GG	806	2342	86	44	48	28
57	KT5V	800	2873	73	50	26	29
58	EA4OR	798	1815	71	49	42	26
59	CO8NMN	789	2893	66	47	33	22
60	W6LAX	788	1805	34	49	13	18
61	WA4JUK	779	3184	80	50	38	26
62	K1SM	776	3542	129	49	44	36
=	OZ3SM	776	2202	90	47	44	33
63	AF5J	768	1569	39	50	18	17
64	W1UU	767	3835	108	50	38	32
65	KC4WQ	761	2325	43	50	23	18
66	N4ZR	758	3857	93	50	40	29
67	N4FP	748	2047	50	49	28	18
=	W2NRA	748	2484	72	50	35	22
68	K4GM	747	3400	78	50	32	27
69	NF8M	734	1903	39	49	20	17
70	VE3MV	718	2792	73	49	36	20

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CWops Member Awards Standings							
RANK	CALL	ACA	CMA	DXCC	WAS	WAE	WAZ
71	K0TC	706	2613	56	50	24	19
72	N5XE	694	2198	65	50	32	24
73	W1AJT	675	1302	48	49	32	19
74	GW0ETF	670	3447	109	50	47	35
75	N4DW	664	5316	117	50	42	35
76	KT4XN	649	1879	54	49	24	18
77	WW3S	648	1236	54	48	30	23
78	KA1YQC	645	1226	48	48	30	16
79	AG4EA	626	1461	42	47	25	16
80	W0TG	625	2365	58	50	23	25
81	K2YR	617	1571	39	47	25	16
82	N5IR	616	4182	119	50	44	33
83	G3WZD	615	1325	78	46	39	27
=	SM0HEV	615	1779	96	47	46	32
84	F5SGI	604	1186	73	44	45	24
85	DK3WW	603	1556	71	49	41	25
86	G3XTT	598	1975	78	46	41	27
87	G4LPP	597	1249	62	44	39	20
88	AA8R	596	1537	67	49	33	23
89	WA2USA	591	1583	39	50	24	16
90	K5YZW	589	1320	36	46	19	17
91	F6JOE	583	3997	110	50	48	33
92	K1EBY	579	3168	78	50	34	26
93	K6KM	575	1694	41	50	16	22
94	W2VM	571	2048	56	49	28	17
95	W8OV	565	1926	47	48	21	18
96	M0RYB	558	1651	71	44	43	22
97	WA5LXS	556	1720	44	49	17	16
98	K4EES	545	1237	37	50	18	16
99	KE4S	539	2772	102	50	43	28
100	KB4DE	537	1403	44	49	24	16





# CWops Tests

[Rich Ferch, VE3KI](#)

As of November 1 we were over 80% of the way through this year's CWTs (129 out of 156 CWT sessions completed). Now that we have passed the 120-session mark, there are a significant number of members who have already reached the gold medal level, whether that is 120 CWTs as in North America, 90 CWTs in Europe, or 60 CWTs in the rest of the world. There are many more who are well on the way and are likely to reach the gold level by the end of the year. All told, I am expecting the number of members who reach gold to be around 150, and slightly larger numbers for the silver and bronze levels.



That's a lot of medals to mail out, and so there will be a change in policy this year. Instead of mailing out a medal to every member who qualifies (except for those who choose to opt out), we will be switching to an "opt-in" approach. There will be downloadable pdf certificates available to everyone, and in addition to the certificate you will be able to ask for a medal if you want one.

The certificate design is not quite completed yet, but I think you'll like them – the draft looks pretty good to me. There will even be a certificate for members who participate in fewer CWT sessions than the bronze medal level, although the certificate for those who didn't make one of the medal levels may not be quite as nice as the gold, silver and bronze certificates.

The web site where you can download the certificates has not been set up yet, but it should be ready by the time we need it. It will be announced in this column and in the groups.io group.

Next year, instead of 156 CWT sessions there will be 208, but the medal criteria won't change in North America, as the new 0700Z session is not primarily aimed at our North American members. It is intended more for members in Europe and elsewhere, and so the medal levels for European members will be changed to match those in North America. The criteria in the rest of the world will be unchanged.

The attendance in the unofficial 0700Z session so far has been low. It started out with 47 entries in the second (July 8) session, but participation has been declining since then, down to 19 entries posted in the November 4 session. In the new year, we hope that the fact that it will count towards the awards will have a positive impact. This session is at about the same local time in Europe as the 1300Z session is in North America, and that one is very popular (averaging in the vicinity of 400 entries each time). About one-third of the callsigns in the CWops membership roster are outside North America, so I don't think it would be unreasonable to expect (or at least hope for) a turnout above 100 once the new session gets really going. Anyway, we'll see how that goes in the new year.

Enjoy the CWTs!

**73, Rich VE3KI** CW Ops Tests Manager

# New Members

## Trung Nguyen W6TN

With great pleasure we welcome the following new members to CWops:

CWops	Call	Name	CWops	Call	Name	CWops	Call	Name
3025	W4MUB*	Mark	3039	VA7KH*	Steve	3053	AI3A*	Alan
3026	N1SP*	Randy	3040	KF7WX*	Chris	3054	AC0VM*	Debbie
3027	N4IU*	Pat	3041	K4EMF*	Jay	3055	K7PKA*	Paula
3028	ZL2GVA*	Gerard	3042	K4RLC*	Bob	3056	KE8BWA*	Andrew
3029	SM0HRP*	Cary	3043	KA1NP*	Walt	3057	K5KXJ*	Charles
3030	NM4N*	John	3044	K4BSK*	Earl	3058	K6GRH*	Gwen
3031	W2IY*	Michael	3045	K1MZM*	Alan	3059	VE3OMV*	Maria
3032	K1PJS	Pete	3046	VE3WH*	Sam	3060	N4HOE*	Hal
3033	NE5A*	Twolane (George)	3047	NE5ET*	Perry	3061	NJ7V*	Red
3034	WA9ZZ	Ann	3048	G3LHJ*	Derrick	3062	AA6PM*	Peter
3035	K7UD*	Dee	3049	AF7MM*	Emma	3063	KN7A*	Terry
3036	N5ER	John	3050	N1AOK*	Charlie	3064	NM3A*	Dan
3037	KJ5T*	Steve	3051	W5EAL*	Brian	3065	OZ1OXQ*	Vagn
3038	W6BRY*	Brian	3052	W7GFW*	Greg			

\*Life Member

## Current Nominees

As of November 8: **Need Sponsors:** W3ZF  
**Invitations Extended:** KW0J

For more details about nominees and up-to-date status, check the "Membership" then "Members only" page on the website: <http://www.cwops.org>. For information about joining CWops, check the "Membership" page on the website: <http://www.cwops.org>

**Notes:** If you have updated your personal info, e.g., new QTH, new callsign, or additional callsign, please send it to [membership@cwops.org](mailto:membership@cwops.org) so I can add it to the roster. Vice versa, if your callsign becomes inactive I can remove it, too. Then the roster will be accurate and current for our usage.

73,

**Trung W6TN**, Membership Manager



# QTX Report

## Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

[Bruce Murdock, K8UDH](#)

When I stepped into the role of QTX Manager a couple years ago I began to realize the dedication of our CWops ragchewers. We appreciate what they do. They're enjoying CW ragchewing today more than ever and the results for last month confirm it. The totals for both the QTX scores and the Mini QTX scores for the month of October were the highest of any month in 2021. Many of our ragchewers have said they're anticipating more time to be on the air for Conversational CW QSOs as the days grow shorter and the nights get colder.

Now let's take a look at the variety of comments from our QTX operators.

### Comments from QTX Submission

**K6DGW:** One of the QTX was a 3-way for about 50 mins on 10 [old friends] so I claimed 2 QTX for that one. Please adjust if that's outside the rules.

Had some extra time and got more mini's in for Oct. Nov is looking promising

**K9OZ:** I had a couple QSOs that lasted over an hour this month, but most memorable was KN6KJK who answered by 23 wpm CQ at 13 wpm. It turns out he was a CWA student and he kept up with the conversation for 25 minutes. He said it was his longest QSO so far.

**AA0IZ:** Great fun this month! I chatted with new friends and old friends. During one rag chew the batteries in my 9A5N solid state paddles started giving out. I had to scramble for my Bengali. I'm glad that the QSO was with someone I knew. hi hi

**W9EBE:** One of my most enjoyable QSOs this month was with our own KR2Q/Doug who's been recently bitten by the SKCC bug (no pun intended). Kudos, Doug, for putting up with my cootie fist for 47 minutes!

**W0OJ:** Fun month and met some interesting new folks. Would have had a couple more but neither John nor I can seem to get our new day and times for the weekly sked correct. Cu nxt Saturday N6HCN!! Oh might have had something to do with John giving birth to a new pug named Ollie?

**N8AI:** NEW MAZZONI BABY LOOP AND BLA350 AMP RESULTED IN MANY NEW CALLSIGNS IN MY QTX AND MQTX LOGBOOK FROM DIFFERING PATTERNS AND BANDS. 20M AND 17M GAINED PROMINENCE.

**K5YQF:** Much more operating time this month with several QSO's over an hour. An enjoyable month.

**AA5AD:** not much time to operate this month but as nights get longer and winter sets in hope to log more rag chews.

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**W0GAS:** First time trying to operate for the QTX. Hoping for a great year of QTX in 2022.

**AJ1DM:** Rag-chewing continues to be a wonderful part of this hobby for me. Thanks to my regular skeds: WA3JJT, N2DA, W4TG, K2KRG, W0HY, and K1CHM. Plus I seem to be having more unscheduled rag-chews with a constantly changing cast of characters. Fun! 73 de John AJ1DM

**N6HCN:** Exciting month of QTX discussing the great 15m and 10m openings. Probably bored everyone bragging about my new puppy. I'll try to QRU on that topic next month.

**VA3DKL:** Only a couple of good ragchews this month, but some good ones as usual! Always happy to get on the air and have a good chat. Conditions were good and W0HY and I had a good chat on 80m. Looking forward to November!

**N2DA:** Nice ragchews on skeds with some of the usual suspects: AJ1DM, WA3JJT, W4TG. Though not ragchews, I enjoyed the Zombie Shuffle CW QRP contest on 10/29. Fun exchanges with other 'Zombies'.

**W0HY:** I had some great contacts in October enjoyed several skeds with John AJ1DM and Bruce K8UDH. I also caught up with Tony KB9LLD and Dave VA3DKL.

**AA0YY:** I worked a former student during the Zombie Shuffle event and we both paused for a ragchew.

**G3WZD:** Very quiet month due to work intervening but now happily retired for the second time so hoping November is better!

**K1PJS:** First QSO as a CWops member with K8DUH

**KB6NU:** Well, I almost hit one per day in October. I was helped by WS1L and K4EWG, with whom I had multiple rag chews.

**K8UDH:** We had some fun QSOs with old friends (KG5IEE, W0HY, N8AI, and KB3SAR) and some new ones. Also, I had a nice ragchew QSO with one of our newest CWops members, Pete K1PJS.

## **Awards and Medals for 2021**

Medals for 2021 are awarded for three different levels in QTX.

- Gold – 400 QTX QSOs
- Silver Medal – 300 QTX QSOs
- Bronze – 200 QTX QSOs

Chuck WS1L is in the lead with 658 QTX QSOs followed by John K1ESE with 592 QTX QSOs, Chris N8AI with 439, Bruce K9OZ with 433, and Bill N5IR with 429 QTX QSOs. . All of them have earned a gold medal. Joe KC0VKN with 368 QTX QSOs and Phil F5IYJ with 306 QTX QSOs have

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qualified for a silver medal. Dan KB6NU with 251, Dennis WA2USA with 250, and Chip W9EBE with 247 QTX QSOs have qualified for a bronze medal. Congratulations to all of you.

### QTX for October 2021

Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX
WS1L	98	W9EBE	31	K4AHO	12	AC8RG	2
K5YQF	72	KB6NU	30	AJ1DM	11	SV2BBK	2
K1ESE	54	F5IYJ	27	N2DA	11	VA3DKL	2
N5IR	51	WA2USA	22	KG5IEE	10	AA5AD	1
N8AI	51	W0OJ	17	K6DGW	6	AB7MP	1
K9OZ	49	K8UDH	14	W0HY	5	K1PJS	1
PU5DGS	40	N6HCN	14	AA0YY	4	W0GAS	1
KC0VKN	37	AA0IZ	12	W3WHK	3		

### MQTX for October 2021

Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX
N8AI	54	K5YQF	16	N6HCN	6	AC8RG	2
K1ESE	51	W9EBE	14	AJ1DM	5	G3WZD	2
WS1L	28	AA0YY	12	GW0ETF	5	K8UDH	2
SV2BBK	22	K6DGW	12	AB7MP	3	W0HY	2
KG5IEE	20	K4AHO	9	VA3DKL	3	K1PJS	1
AA0IZ	16	AA5AD	6	W0OJ	3	W3WHK	1

### 2021 Totals for QTX

Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX
WS1L	658	KG5IEE	121	SV2BBK	21	WT9Q	7
K1ESE	592	N2DA	111	W3WHK	20	KK5NA	5
N8AI	439	K8UDH	110	GW4VXE	17	N3FZ	4
K9OZ	433	AJ1DM	108	N5LB	17	N5PHT	4
N5IR	429	AA0YY	78	N0BM	14	W1AJT	3
KC0VKN	368	W0OJ	59	VA3DKL	12	AB7MP	2
F5IYJ	306	AA5AD	59	G3WZD	11	K1BZ	2
KB6NU	251	AC8RG	53	W0HY	10	MI0WWB	2
WA2USA	250	PU5DGS	40	EA2AJB	10	W3PNM	2
W9EBE	247	NN0TE	40	W8UA	8	K1PJS	1
K5YQF	184	AA0IZ	38	GW0ETF	7	W0GAS	1
N6HCN	177	K7TRT	32	KF9VV	7		
K4AHO	134	K6DGW	27	M0MUI	7		

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## 2021 Totals for MQTX

Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX
N8AI	497	G3WZD	60	AJ1DM	23	W0OJ	7
SV2BBK	235	GW0ETF	59	K8UDH	20	NN0TE	5
WS1L	228	AC8RG	58	W3WHK	20	N3FZ	4
K1ESE	227	W2USA	55	N0BM	13	N5PHT	2
W9EBE	171	N6HCN	45	VA3DKL	13	W0HY	2
KG5IEE	119	K7TRT	38	AB7MP	9	W8UA	2
AA0YY	99	K5YQF	37	KF9VV	8	K1PJS	1
K6DGW	90	GW4VXE	36	M0MUI	8	WT9Q	1
AA5AD	85	AA0IZ	33	W1AJT	8		
K4AHO	83	MI0WWB	32	K1BZ	7		

We have a variety of ways to enjoy CW. For many of us ragchewing is our favorite way.

**73,**

**Bruce K8UDH**, QTX Manager

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## My Story: New Member Biographies

### Randy Horn, N1SP

Being stuck to a pencil and an 18 wpm plateau for many years, I am very happy that I checked into the CWA Advanced course! I am very grateful to my advisors, G0HKC and G0JPS for dealing with such a motley group! I also thank my classmates, W4MUB and ZL2GVA, as well as all those who nominated and sponsored me.

I became interested in amateur radio while attending a Boy Scout Jamboree in the late 1960's. My father picked up an Army surplus receiver that we both enjoyed for years. It wasn't until 1982 that my wife, Mary, and I stumbled upon a ham club operating Field Day at a local park in Missouri. We both accepted the club's invitation to enroll in their



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Novice class, and later both passed our exams at the same VE session.

My first transceiver was a HW-99 that I built well but needed help with alignment and that first white knuckle QSO that we've all had. I will never forget all the folks who helped Elmer us along during that time.

In 1986 I passed my extra class exam in Kansas City and was given the call WT0A. After my career took us east to Bennington, Vermont, I opted to change my call to a "1" area call sign.

I enjoy operating mostly CW, chatting with folks, experimenting with wire antennas, some QRP and portable operating, light contesting, and most of all helping new and older hams as needed.

My professional career was in the printing industry, along with a sideline cabinet making business for many years. Besides enjoying my family, other hobbies are fly fishing and fly tying, RC model airplane building and flying, early American history, and furniture making.

### **Gerard van Antwerpen, ZL2GVA**

Always having had an interest in electronics led me to the local amateur club around 1992 and after some study I passed the exam to get my first radio license in 1992, it came with the call sign PE1ONB. As this was a technical license VHF and up only, I started to learn Morse code to be able to get my general license and get on HF. With help from Richard PA3GCU I managed to fulfil that requirement and got issued the call PA3GMJ in 1994. I made a few CW contacts after that, but never got to a level where I was comfortable to make many QSOs. Things got busy otherwise and while I maintained an interest in CW, I never progressed much from that.

Then a move to New Zealand in 1997 got me my current call ZL2GVA, and I did not do much radio apart from some local VHF things. As the kids got older, a bit more time became available and I tried to lift my CW proficiency by doing the odd stint of computer based training (the internet had grown to a useful tool by then). This allowed helping out a bit during HF Field day on some easy CW contacts, but still feeling overwhelmed by general contacts. While I did not make many CW contacts, each one of them was very satisfying and kept the desire to get better going.

I saw the CWops Academy program about 4 to 5 years ago, but didn't really think about applying for a spot at the time. Early 2020 I decided that the plodding along



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had to stop and I thought I'd better do something about it now rather than regret it later on. So I put my name forward for the Academy. However being in an awkward time zone (UTC +12 or 13) made it hard to fit in a class. So I started to do a few of the exercises from the freely available syllabus to at least progress while waiting for a suitable class option. This didn't happen, however I did get lucky with Joe AA8TA offering e-mail support while I followed the Intermediate syllabus on my own. We had a nice Zoom meeting at the end and I was very pleasantly surprised with a certificate from Joe.

So after that the Advanced class was the way to go, but again times didn't work out. Then in August a message arrived to say I was placed in a class. Timing wasn't perfect (0600 local time start), but I was in no position to refuse, and I'm very happy that I didn't. Keith G0HKC and Kit G0JPS have proven to be excellent advisors, even putting me forward for membership, which was something I hadn't considered at all possible when starting the course.

Since last year I've been checking into the NZ CW Traffic Net to allow consistent CW operation in a friendly environment. In the mean time I've even become one of the net controllers, a challenge early on, but getting better at it all the time.

My main hobby is road-cycling, to keep fit and I enjoy doing the local races. At times I play delivery boy if any telegrams from the traffic net need delivering! My radio equipment is fairly simple with my best radio an FT-897 and at the moment a horizontal loop as an all band antenna. I do have an interest in simple QRP equipment and building gear including some CW paddles and keys. I'm not a big contester but do enjoy the smaller local ones here in ZL/VK.

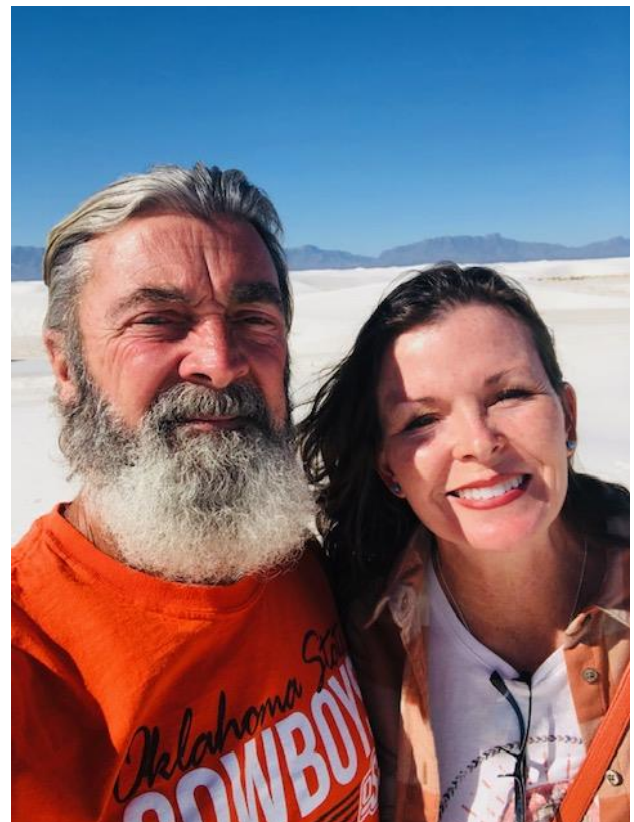
Many thanks to Keith G0HKC for my nomination, and Kit G0JPS, Joe AA8TA and Randy N1SP for sponsoring my membership.

### **George Randolph, NE5A**

I am from the great State of Oklahoma. After I graduated High School in 1972, I joined the U.S. Navy. I did that because I was really interested in carpentry due to my participation in V.I.C.A. in High School. Well, the Navy didn't care about my desire to be a Seabee and sent me to Boiler Technician school instead.

I was sent to the Pacific Fleet and stationed on the USS Reasoner, DE-1063. From 1972 to 1975 I spent 17 months overseas, which included several months of cruising up and down the coast of Vietnam, most notably during the evacuation of Saigon.

After leaving the Navy I tried college but didn't fit in



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anymore, so I joined the Stillwater, Oklahoma, Police Department. I enjoyed that but when I met my first State Trooper, I realized they had more freedom to roam than I did so I decided I wanted to try that!

The Highway Patrol sent me to Hollis, Oklahoma, in 1979. Hollis is in the southwest corner of the state and there's not much there. I worked mostly nights and was on call when I wasn't working so I really needed a hobby!

My interest in amateur radio began in 1981. I met my Elmer, Gene Robertson, at a Masonic lodge meeting. Gene was a retired postal worker and lived right around the corner from me. I started learning code and Gene and I would have conversations using light bulbs for an antenna (Gene said his fist was too poor to get on the air).

I received my Novice call, KA5NQU, kept studying, and upgraded to General. That call was N5ESV. For some reason (I really don't remember why) I didn't keep that long. I was issued N5EST.

I worked and worked on my code at nights after getting off from work. One night I decided I was ready. I left late at night and drove to Dallas, took the Advanced and Extra tests, and passed. I was so nervous during the code test that when they sent three test "Vs" I couldn't move my hand! However, I passed! My new call was NE5A! Also, during this time, I decided to join the US Army National Guard, and started learning about Howitzers! When you carry a gun for a living, a bigger gun is even better and an 8" M110 is awesome! In the early 90's life got in the way, and I moved to Central Oklahoma and the radios were all sold.

Fast forward to 2021. I have retired from the Oklahoma Highway Patrol as a First Lieutenant. I have retired from the Army as the CSM of the 1/171Fa MLRS. My wonderful wife, Catherine (Betsy) has also retired from the Oklahoma Highway Patrol as a Lieutenant. She is also a disabled veteran (she was a Drill Sergeant with the 95th Division). Due to the pandemic, we were watching too much television and watched a show called "Jericho." At the beginning of each episode, they had the word "Jericho" on the screen and had Morse code going in the background. I had been away from Morse code so long I couldn't understand it, but I knew they weren't sending the word "Jericho." The bug bit me again and here I am now, allowed to join a group of people who send and receive Morse code so fast it practically sets my ears on fire!

I have multiple hobbies, most notably, motorcycles. If you look at my QRZ page you will see I have a real problem with them. Betsy and I have two children and four grandchildren. Life is fantastic and God is good, always.

Most of all, I must thank Rob, K6RB. I happened upon him one night and he told me about the Academy. I signed up for the Intermediate class and have had a blast! Thank you to Mike, N5KB, for being my instructor and for nominating me for membership. Thank you also to Bud, AA3B, Hank, W6SX, and of course Rob, K6RB, for sponsoring me.

### **Brian Mathews, W6BRY**

My grandfather sparked my interest in Radio and CW. I remember visiting my grandparents for a few weeks each year during the summer, listening to him rag chew with his friends. When I got old enough to play with a soldering iron, I built a Code Oscillator and used it with a J-38 key to

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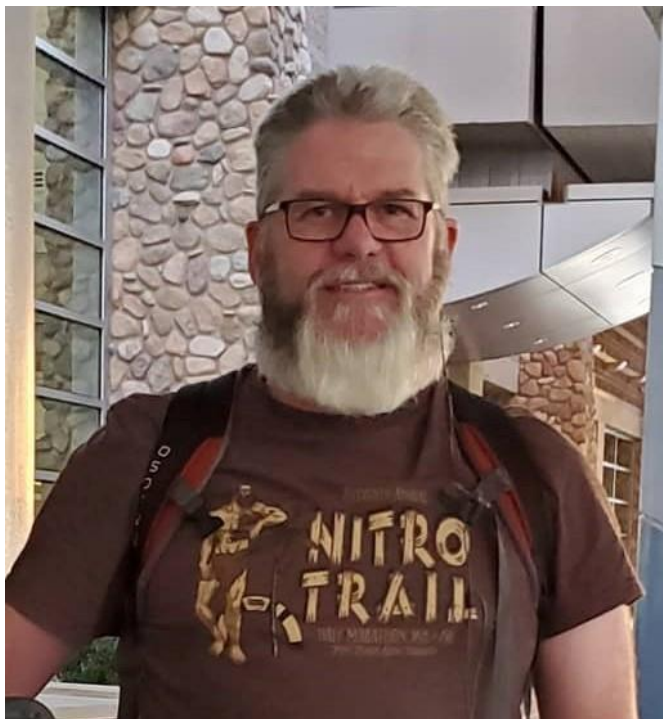




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practice. I wore out a set of those "Learn the Code" cassette tapes before finally passing my 5 wpm Novice test in 1990. I spent a year on 40 m CW with my straight key plugged into a Yaesu FT -7 and a mobile vertical whip clamped to the railing of a second floor apartment, having fun getting QSL cards from all over the West Coast.

Continuing on, I got my General, and got a QRO boat anchor station going, but still kept my key plugged in and was comfortable copying at 13 wpm. Like a lot of us do, I lost interest in radio and was off the air many years until, around 2018, I happened to plug in the old Kenwood hybrid and tuned around the bands. I have plenty of room for wire antennas at my QTH, so this past 4 years has been an amazing journey that has led to a huge collection of old radios that I have restored, and building a decent station and antenna system. I upgraded to Extra



and bought my first paddle & keyer, and realized I was going to need some help getting back to where I used to be at 13 wpm. I could never have imagined I would be going above that.

I took the intermediate CW Academy course in 2020 and enjoyed it very much, but I have not made time for the next course and hope to do that next year. I am very thankful for having heard about CWT as I thought I was stuck at 13 wpm and unable to copy anything without a pencil in my hand.

My main station is a Flex 6600 and I finally got a 55' tower up last year. I am in a constant state of change here, so the radio, amp, keys, antennas could be any of a dozen that get moved around all the time. My QTH is Valley Springs, CA, where I live with my wife and our 2 dogs.

This summer our young granddaughters were visiting and the oldest has expressed an interest in my radios, so I bought a code oscillator kit and she did all the soldering on it. It worked the first time we tried it! Hopefully one or more will become a CWop in the future.

### **Bob Conder, K4RLC**

I am honored and humbled to be accepted as a member of CWops. I want to sincerely thank my Advanced advisor Phil W0OJ for nominating me, and sponsors Father Dave ND4K, Bill AG4EA and Tom KE4KY. I also thank previous advisors Jerry AC4BT, Mark K5GQ and Joe N3HEE. Finally, I was extremely fortunate to live near Jack W0UCE (SK), one of the best, who mentored and encouraged me.

CW has always been a passion but has not come easy. So it is with a sense of accomplishment greater than some academic achievements and awards to be in CW Academy. An early interest in

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ham radio and electronics helped with a career in neuroscience and neuropsychology. I can remember how easy it was in grad school to coach my classmates on calculating voltage drops across cellular membranes after neuronal firing. To me, the human brain is really just a transceiver, but needs fine tuning and better filters.

At 71, I still practice, with evaluation and rehab of neurocognitive disorders, primarily with concussed athletes and commercial pilots. There is no question that CW is good for the brain, increasing neuroplasticity and neural network communications.

I'm fortunate to have two stations, one in Raleigh North Carolina and the other at Windy Hill Beach, South Carolina, near the ocean. Saltwater is definitely an amplifier, but hurricanes and King Tides are not the best for buried coax and radials for the verticals. Still, any day at the beach is a better day for radio.

In addition to contesting and DXing, I enjoy operating outdoors and feel most comfortable with a KX2 on an exposed rock face. My YL Alanna K4AAC, a pediatric neuropsychologist, is improving her CW. Both "kids" have their licenses but are inactive. With the American Red Cross and Emergency Management, I have been involved with disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.

In addition to work and radio, I still participate in regular cardiovascular exercise to keep the brain in good shape for CW. A dream on my bucket list is CW ops from the Base Camp Hospital on Mt. Everest. Finally, as President-Elect of the [Medical Amateur Radio Council](#), I hope to see all at our booth in Dayton next year.



## **Walt Harris, KA1NP**

Ham radio began for me in 1959 at the age of 15. I had been a shortwave listener since age 13 and was introduced to Morse code as a Boy Scout activity. My first ham license was KN1JIQ in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. I was on the air at 5 wpm with an Ameco Ac-1t transmitter kit, a Hallicrafters S38e receiver and a long wire antenna across my back yard from house to shed.

We were a Navy family and moved a number of times over the next decade resulting in call signs KN4FRR, K4FRR, K1TUC and WB1HGK. During that



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decade ham radio took a back seat in my life. I attended college, married my high school sweetheart, became a father to a daughter and son, attained my PhD and enjoyed a 38 year career as a Professor of Special Education, Associate Dean, and Director of Research at the University of Maine. At retirement in 2011 I upgraded my current license to Extra as KA1NP.

My wife and I now spend spring, summer and fall in Belfast, Maine where we cruise on Penobscot Bay, one of the most beautiful cruising areas in the world. In Belfast my home station is an Icom-7300 with an end fed dipole. I belong to the Waldo County Amateur Radio Association which is closely aligned with the county Emergency Management Agency. This year I had great fun as one of two CW operators for the club's Field Day.

Winters are now spent in Tampa, Florida where we enjoy the warmth along with family and friends. My Icom 7300 and end fed dipole transport easily and this antenna is, so far, almost undetectable in a restricted community. In Tampa I belong to the Tampa Amateur Radio Club and enjoy the camaraderie of this group and the diversity of ham radio interests and resources including remote HF operation and satellite communication.

CW has been a constant interest since my Novice days. For many years I wanted very much to improve my speed and skills. In retirement I found the CW Academy and began with the Intermediate course. This was followed by the Advanced course which I repeated once. Thanks to Joe, KK5NA, Bruce, K8UDH and the mutual support of classmates my sending speed and head copy improved immensely. I look forward to continued improvement with more time spent on the air. I am also committed to assisting others who express interest in learning cw and developing their skills.

## **Jay Jacobs, K4EMF**

First, I'd like to thank my advanced CWA advisor Phil, W0OJ for nominating me and the sponsors who graciously took the time to check their logs for my call sign. I was originally licensed around 1973 as WN4VOO. One of the few memories I have of my dad, WB4VOP (SK), and I spending time together is preparing for the exams, code tests and later operating. My preferred mode back

then was CW. I recall trying someone's plastic electronic paddle once, but very much preferred our straight key at the time. College, career, marriage and children led to a waning interest and my general class license, WB4VOO, expired in the 90's. I was licensed again early in 2019 as KN4TZJ but almost immediately



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acquired my vanity call sign. I often think I'd like a 1x2 call but I don't see any calls I really like becoming available and I get the occasional compliment on the call I have now so, who knows. I did a lot of FT8 at first but always knew I just wouldn't feel like a real ham unless I had at least a working knowledge of CW. After flailing around on my own for a while I took the CWA intermediate class in the fall of 2020.

I'm OK with the quickie RST, QTH, Rig, WX QSO's but in most cases I would really prefer at least a short rag chew, CW or SSB. Though most of my SSB ops are chasing POTA stations. On rare occasions I do some PSK31, AM or even SSTV. I'm a very noncompetitive contester preferring mostly CW events, including weekly CWTs and SSTs.

I've been a professional pilot since the mid 80's flying mostly corporate jets. I'm very happily married and a devoted granddad many times over. Other interests include all manner of history, science and nature programming, firearms, the US Constitution and experimental homebuilt aircraft.

I'm looking forward to being an active CWops member.

### **Greg Wright, W7GFW**

I am honored to be a new lifetime member of CWops, #3052. First, I would like to thank all of my CWops CW instructors for getting me all the way from zero to membership. Tom Kravec (W8TK), Mike Brown (N7ID), Ken Bell (K4EES), and Buz Tarlow (AC6AC). They all exemplify what is great about CWops and the CW community in general. Also, a big thanks to my sponsors.

I got my Technician license in 2010. At that time all I had was a HT. I ended up not doing much with the license as I didn't have any real connections to the ham radio community. That all changed, years later, when I joined my local ham radio club, W7AW -- West Seattle Amateur Radio Club <https://w7aw.org/> Because of this club I attended my first Field Day, made my first HF contact, and was hooked. I studied up, got my General license, and got my first HF rig. The W7AW club is full of knowledgeable and helpful Elmers who have helped and encouraged me in all aspects of ham radio. I won't call out individuals here because there are several and I don't want to miss anyone. I will just say, it is an amazing club to belong to.

I currently enjoy contesting and doing portable operations like POTA/WWFF. My home rig is an



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IC-7300 into an end-fed half-wave that runs around my yard. I also am lucky enough to own a KX3 which I use for my portable operating. I feed the KX3 into home-made EFHW antennas. As I continue to work on my CW, my next steps will be to get my Extra license, get started on DXCC, and get my two missing states for WAS CW (RI and ND).

I was born in Orange, CA, grew up in Southern Oregon (Grants Pass), and moved to Seattle after college (Math/computer science) where I live now with my wife Dianna. I worked at Boeing, doing Flight Manuals, low-speed aerodynamics, and eventually flight test software for the 777. I also wrote medical software for anesthesiologists, streaming multimedia software, and now work at Amazon building large scale systems for AWS.

Work does not leave me much time for hobbies outside of Ham Radio, but I am trying to teach myself woodworking. I have also recently built Lego models of the Saturn V and the Lunar Lander which was a lot of fun. 73 es CUL on CWT!

### **Charlie Wilber, N1AOK**

My attraction to ham radio was first sparked during the summers I spent in Cape Cod as a child. Among my favorite pastimes there were fishing, swimming, boating and many evening hours spent reading. Some of my favorite books were the Hardy Boys adventure series. I probably read every book in the series at least three times and was particularly interested in any of their many escapades that included excursions into ham radio. I spent one summer delivering newspapers to make enough money to purchase my first radio, a second-hand Hallicrafters SX-99 receiver. It cost me \$99 which, at that time, was a lot of money for a 12-year-old kid. However, it was well worth it to me given the thousands of hours of fun it provided me.



Soon after buying the SX-99 I also purchased a (brand new!) Ameco code practice oscillator that included a very basic straight Morse code key. I immersed myself in code practice and the ARRL study manual for the Novice Amateur Radio License. As fate would have it, though, it would be another 35 years before I finally earned my Novice license. Upgrading to Tech a few months later and then to General in 2001 I was thrilled and honored to make my first HF QSO with a great gentleman who had taken the time to show me all around his mobile station one summer at Dayton Hamvention. Unfortunately, James Miller K8EIO became a silent key in 2004.

Once I became a General class ham I really got the bit in my teeth with the hobby. I joined New

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Hampshire/Vermont ARES, become a member of U.S. Army MARS in New Hampshire and later in Colorado, was president of the local New Hampshire ham radio club for a while and was active as a VEC. I enjoyed public service activities, the occasional emergency activation and many hours of training and practice for various events and emergencies.

Despite my deep immersion into ham radio, one thing that had initially enamored me of ham radio was Morse code and the ability to converse with strangers all around the world in a special code that only a few people could understand. Despite this romantic infatuation with CW I struggled for decades to improve my Morse code skills to the point that they were actually useful. I tried every conceivable book, tape, MP3, on-the-air and peer-to-peer method I could find but never progressed beyond about 5 wpm. It was a constant frustration for me and I had reconciled myself to becoming a very low-level practitioner of the skill. In 2019 I happened to read a reference to the CW Academy and searched for some reviews of this new resource. It sounded very promising and had many glowing accolades so I decided to give it a try. During the next two years I completed the Beginner, Basic, Intermediate and Advanced CWA courses and was awarded my CWops number (#3050) on November 2, 2021. It was a truly rewarding conclusion to an achievement it had taken me 60 years to realize! I finally feel like I have actually earned the title of "ham radio operator."

Today I have become something of a "CW snob." Although I have microphones for most of my rigs, none of them have been used in two years. I don't expect to be using them much in the future either except in special cases or for special occasions. Many people have helped me to realize my goal since I joined the ranks of CWA students including instructors, assistant instructors and fellow CWA students. I am more grateful to all of you than I can say. Without you I would still be struggling with my fruitless endeavor to master the skill of Morse code. I appreciate all of you more than I can say. I would like to especially thank Buzz Turlow (AC6AC), my instructor in the Advanced class, for his patience, insight, wisdom, good nature and commitment to myself and all of his CWA students. Buzz was the constant encouragement I needed to press on when I felt overwhelmed, inadequate or simply fatigued. His constant support and unflinching faith in my ability to improve my skills pulled me through those times when I was tempted to admit defeat. He did not let that happen and I am truly grateful for his refusal to let me fail.

I am honored to be accepted into a group of hams who are truly exceptional people. I am proud of my accomplishment and will also be grateful to those who have helped me along the way. I look forward to chatting with many of you on the air . . . in Morse code, of course!

### **Chris Herter, KF7WX**

First, thanks to Rob K6RB for nominating me, and to N4AF, NØTA and K7QA for sponsoring me. Rob was my instructor in the Advanced CWA class.

Ham radio had always been on my mind, but it wasn't until I was a first-year medical student in Duluth Minnesota that it became a reality for me. I met a seasoned phone operator named Gabe, NØANY, who inducted me into the Arrowhead Amateur radio club. Members of that group taught me about radio and radio operation. I think I became their pet project. I was able to test through Novice to Technician and couldn't wait to get my hands on a microphone. Those HF

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phone bands seemed tantalizingly within reach. I worked like crazy to get my code speed up, and along the way, discovered that I loved CW.

I am a rag chewer. That's it. Never participated in a contest. Ever. Why would I get mixed up with something like that? Chasing numbers and countries and counties seemed like a recipe for clinical anxiety. Then I signed up for CWA. Mind you, my intent here was to sharpen my fist; I had no intention of blossoming into a tester.

But I did.

So I'm off and running (and pouncing), but I am a novice's novice, so I may reach out to you for help and advice. Thank you for welcoming me into CWT, and to this wonderful organization.

I live in Edmonds, WA, just north of Seattle. I run a G5RV at my home QTH. Rigs: The trusty TS-520S (my first rig, and several sets of final tubes later, still works!), an IC-7300, and a few VHF/UHF mobile and HT radios. Covenants prevent me from installing a gain antenna, but I can add an amp to the station, which is already in the works.

My second station is in the Methow Valley, North Cascades, where I have a cabin. I run an IC-756pro at that location with another G5RV oriented North/South, and a Windom Off Center Dipole oriented East/West. The cabin is off-grid, but has a large solar power system. The RFI from those inverters is a real problem; I'm putting together a phasing network to help attenuate the noise. The cabin property is ideal for a tower, which is my project for the Spring. I recently acquired a two Yagi antennas with rotors, given to me by the owner of a property once owned by a ham. Those are destined for Methow.

Besides radio, I am a serious rockhound, and own a crystal mine in the North Cascades. We produce museum quality specimens of quartz and pyrite. I'm active in the Puget Sound cycle community, hike, climb and ski in the Cascades with my family, and play guitar to calm down. My dear XYL is studying for her Technician License...with an eye on the phone bands.

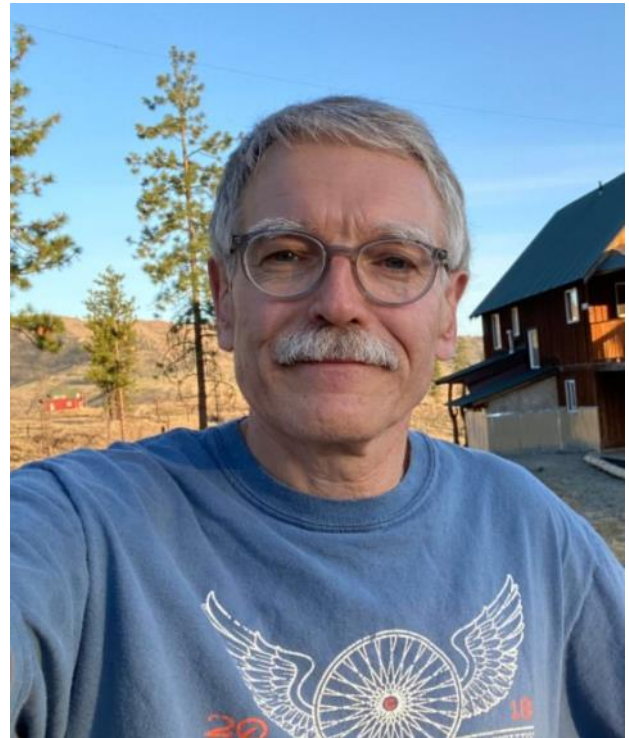
But then, that's how it started with me.

### **Perry C. Abernethy, NE5ET**

I dedicate this Morse code journey to SFC (U.S. Army Special Forces, Retired) Donald Edward Kehoe, who passed in 2006. He was my Special Forces Radioman; my inspiration to make this journey, and showed me that with a piece of wire, a cootie and CW genius you could literally talk to the world from the middle of nowhere.

Been a ham since 2004 and live in Corinth, TX near DFW airport. My age is 77 years. A retired wa-

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ter and environmental lawyer from the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer, I have been married 46 years with 3 children and five grandchildren. Spent many years in the law as a JAG, an Assistant US Attorney and in private practice. A Vietnam veteran, I served 5 years in Europe and Southeast Asia. Served with 10th Army Special Forces as Captain and ODA-1 Team Commander in Europe and the Middle East. Our communications were all in Morse code through an AN/GRC-109 army radio. My radioman did the CW. Served with 1st Special Forces Group as an Assistant S-3 and S-3 with classified projects, out of 46th Special Forces, Lop Buri, Thailand. Graduated from Brown University; went to language school and university in Cologne, Germany; Defense Language Institute, Russian Interpreter/Translator Course, Presidio of Monterey, with fluency in German and Russian. Other hobbies are woodworking, genealogy and sailing. I own a sailboat. It is a West Wight Potter 19.



My interest in radio began when I was 12 years old in 1956. My father purchased me a Heathkit AR-3 receiver which we built. I learned about Ham Radio in Explorer Post 186 in Carlsbad, New Mexico, but never could pass the CW test. With Sputnik, my interest turned to astronomy, telescopes and photography. Spent many nights in Carlsbad looking at planets and stars in the clear, pristine atmosphere of New Mexico in the Guadalupe Mountains. During high school, I developed an interest in spelunking many of the over 400 caves in the Carlsbad, NM area and in genetics. In 1962 I was the finalist in Biology at the International Science Fair in Seattle, WA. My science project was "The Effect of Ultrasonic Sound on E. Coli."

I renewed my interest in amateur radio in late June 2004. I visited the Albuquerque Amateur Radio Field Day at a local city park. Among the multitude of Yagi, verticals and wire antennas, large transceivers, big generators, I noticed a lonely man with a backpack strolling, through the bustling, electronic maze and multitude of persons calling CQ, to a large park light pole located more than 25 yards from the rest of the pack. His name was Howard Peavey, K9PV. Soon Richard St. John, K5RSJ, joined him. Together they set up a small camp table and chair next to a large light pole. They pulled a small, original IC-706 out of the backpack. They loaded the light pole as an antenna and hooked up to the chain link fence around the park as a counterpoise. Both of them taking shifts, they sent Morse code all day and night. They contacted Russia, Europe, Asia....to my mind they were talking to the world. They brought back vivid memories of my radioman and my Special Forces missions. The rest of the pack made very few contacts, but with Morse code those two piled up most of the points. I was sold. That's what I wanted to do.

Well, I did it. Under the mentorship of K9PV and K5RSJ I passed the 5-wpm code test and got my technicians license on July 15, 2004 as KE5BZI. My first station was that Field Day station of K9PV, which he sold me at a very reduced price. Later I got my General and Extra. I had two vanity call

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signs, K5PCA and then my current call sign NE5ET.

That began my long and difficult journey with CW, in particular head copy. I could get on the air with my straight key, but I counted and wrote down my QSOs. Both Howard and Richard urged me to learn head copy; urged me to switch to an iambic key. But I was too comfortable with my straight key; too comfortable counting, and too scared of doing it different.

Soon, very soon, I was envious of those persons communicating, rag chewing, and contesting with high-speed CW. I joined the Albuquerque DX Club and watched in awe as Bruce Draper, AA5B, Bill Mader, K8TE and Scott Davis, K5TA were all contesting at high speed. Howard Peavey and the bunch at SARA, the Socorro Amateur Radio Club, were doing QRP from mountain tops before SOTA became a common word. I discovered a new CW class online by CW Operators Club called CW Academy in 2012. I had been using Dale Finley's, N1IRZ, of SARA, course with the Koch method, but wasn't having much success. Four of us signed up for the CW Academy Beginners Class. The instructor was Rob Brownstein, K6RB in October-November, 2012. Two of us graduated, but two of us did not, myself included. My internet and computer were not up to the task of OOVOO online, but I did learn a lot going to class, even though it was difficult sending and receiving over OOVOO. Rob was extremely encouraging and would work with me individually online because my OOVOO didn't work. But I missed several classes, which back then was fatal, and didn't graduate. Rob encouraged me to take it again, but there were long waiting lists. I was very busy at work, and slowly drifted away...again.

After retiring, we moved to Texas near Dallas, to be nearer to my children and grandchildren. When I arrived, I joined several clubs including the Denton County Amateur Radio Club, DCARA, the Lewisville Amateur Radio Club, LARA, the Lake Area Amateur Radio Klub, LAARK, and the DX Contest Club. In 2019 I met Eric Silverthorn, NM5M, and Steve Kline, W5JK. Steve and Eric were already excellent in Morse code and were CWops members. They assured me Morse code is a lifelong practice thing, not genes, and encouraged me to take the CW Academy's CW Beginners Course being given by Eric Silverthorne and his associate Ken, AC5EZ, in December of 2019. Eric is a wonderful instructor, encouraging me to practice every day, at least an hour, no writing allowed, and taught me how to use a paddle, not a straight key. After graduating, I took the Basic Course with Mike Brown, N7ID, and his associate Ken, K4EES, and a second time with Eric, NM5MM. I took an unofficial Intermediate summer course with Buzz, AC6AC and an official Intermediate course with Tom, WA9CW and his associate Steve WD4CFN. My first Advanced course was with Joe, KK5NA and associate Bruce, K8UDH, and the second Advanced course was with Buzz, AC6AC and his associates Rich, K4DPM, and Tony, KB9LLD.

I am grateful for all of my instructors and associate instructors; for their patience, guidance, encouragement, and mentoring. I am still a humble work in progress. I also have made many CW friends during this journey and remain in constant touch with a number of them. I would like to particularly thank Dick (K7ULM) for pushing me hard, Steve (W5JK) for encouraging me to practice and continue our CW QSO's every week, and the rest of the "iron fisters:" Greg (K4KO), Chuck (K9PLX) and Dave (AG7TX) for encouragement, camaraderie and the POTA, SOTA, ZOMBIE fun times. I have made many CW friends including Randall, KG5IEE, Craig, N2DA and Mark, AA0YY, and so many more.

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- FISTS # 11102
- SKCC # 11312
- NAQCC # 6916
- LICW # 1141

And now, finally, CWops #3047.

### **Steve Anness, KJ5T**

First licensed as a teenager in 2001 thanks to my dad, KB5RXA/WZ5M (SK) for introducing me to amateur radio. I caught the contesting bug in 2004 and over the years have had the pleasure of operating from a number of great stations, including The old AB5K (SK) Station, K5NA, NR5M, both of NX5M's stations, K8IA/ N7RQ, and the old DL1A station.

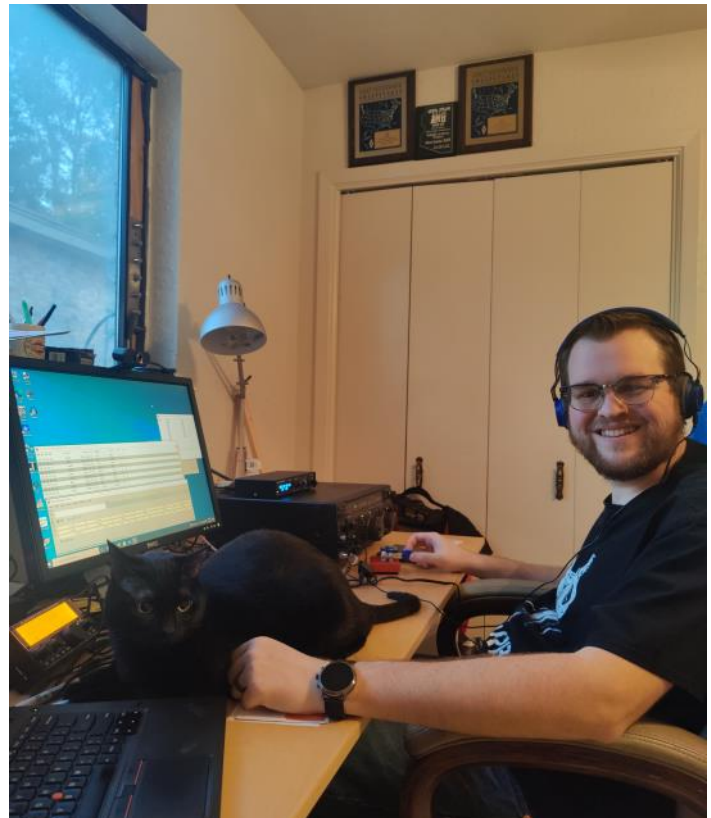
These days I operate from my modest station on a city lot in the suburbs Northeast of Austin, Texas. Outside of amateur radio, I am a technical project manager for a software company based in Austin, my other hobbies include collecting vinyl records, photography, reading and travel. I am an avid baseball fan and soon to be girl dad.

For 20 years in the hobby I did not operate CW. I had made a handful of contacts using a straight key in 2004 and 2005 after learning Morse code at 5 wpm for the General exam but focused on phone and digital contesting. During the pandemic and nearing 20 years on the air, I decided last summer to add CW into the mix.

CW Academy was a great help in my journey and it has been a pleasure participating in CW contests. It is a great honor to have been nominated to join CWops and I am looking forward to continuing participation in CWops contests after having participated in a number of CWTs over the last year and participating in my first CW Open in September.

### **Earl Brinson, K4BSK**

I grew up in Birmingham, Alabama and was first licensed at the age of 9. My dad and older brother went to a class in the spring of 1960. They obtained their Novice tickets in May. I picked up the code from them as they practiced together at home. With help from Dad, I learned enough to pass the written test and received KN4BSK in August.



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There are many great memories of growing up with ham radio in the 60s. Dad (K4WOQ), older brother Jim (K4WOP) and I enjoyed many radio projects, local club activities, Field Days, and hamfests together. Of course, Dad is now SK. But my oldest son Eric took his granddad's call after getting his Technician license a number of years ago. Brother Jim and I have maintained a weekly schedule, usually on 40 meter CW, all our adult lives.

I graduated from Georgia Tech in 1973 with an EE degree. Upon graduation, I moved to the Charlotte NC area, where I have lived since. I retired in 2019 after working 46 years with Duke Energy in power plant design and operational support.

I live in a town called Matthews, North Carolina, a suburb of Charlotte. I work mostly CW on the HF bands. I enjoy my modern rigs: an IC 7610 and an OMNI VII. I also enjoy giving air time, especially during classic radio events, to my other set ups: Kenwood TS440S, Drake TR-3, Collins 32S3 and 75S3B, and a Heathkit Apache transmitter paired with an HQ-120 receiver. The TR-3 and HQ-120 were in our family in the 1960's. I only have wire antennas: dipoles and a G5RV.

My wife Renda and I have a "get away" QTH near Lexington, Virginia. When there, I usually use a small Yaesu FT-897D. That house is on a nice hilltop, enabling me to learn more about the VHF and UHF bands – something that is not practical at home due to local geography challenges.

### **Sam Cross, VE3WH**

Thanks to KK5NA/Joe for nominating me and KTUV/Mike, N7US/Jim, and K1EBY for sponsoring me.

My first callsign was VE3LRP in 1979 with a Ten Tec PM2 QRP rig. At that time CW was still a requirement to get an amateur radio license. CW has always been my first choice mode and I have enjoyed many QSOs with other CW enthusiasts over the years.



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My present callsign belonged to my Elmer Wally Hobbs VE3WH. Uncle Wally had been a Ham since 1936 and was instrumental in me becoming one also. Wally helped me many times with projects related to our shared hobby and I could not have had a better example of what a ham radio operator should be. Though Wally was an accomplished engineer he was also a gentleman OM on the air.

I will recommend CW Academy to anyone who wants to improve their CW skills. I look forward to the friendship, focus on CW conservation and high standards that CW Ops membership offers.

### **Debbie Orvin, AC0VM**

I was first licensed in 2002. I got my extra ticket in 2011. My husband has been licensed since 1976. I'm honored to learn CW through CW Academy and become a member of CWops.

I live half the year in Colorado (Denver area) and the other half the year in Arizona (Phoenix area). I've been married 48 years. We raised 6 children, and currently have 15 grandkids and 2 great grandkids.

I'm a Volunteer Examiner and currently pursuing getting involved in ARES.

Other interests:

I'm a judge for Rifle and Pistol Olympic style shooting. I have traveled to many countries, judging different shooting events.

I'm a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. I volunteer as customer support for the genealogy program at FamilySearch.org.

I love to crochet, quilt, and sew.

### **John Farrish, NM4N**

I am from WV originally and in 1963 Buzz Collins, K8CFT, now a SK, gave me the Novice test. Buzz loaned me a crystal homebrew transmitter and a military surplus 40 meter receiver and I was on the air.

I joined the US Army in 1963 and was inactive for a few years. A while after being discharged I again tested and received the call WD4BMY in Louisville, KY. Later I passed the Advanced license, KC4TQ and on May 15, 1981 I passed the Extra 20 wpm code test and theory and received the new call NM4N. Back then CW was my favorite mode. Work was keeping me busy and my main hamming was 2 meter FM.

My wife Lois, KE4WMM, passed the Technician license in Orange Park, FL. My daughter Lisa,

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KF4TYJ and her husband Ken, KF4TYK are hams as well. I'm thinking my daughter Katy may one day get a license and my 2 grandkids, Mac and Maggie as well.

My CW speed drastically dropped to around 12 or 13 WPM. I didn't forget the code, just was too slow!

We now live in Franklin, TN, I'm active in the WCARES group, participating in weekly nets, voice and WINLINK. I also belong to A.R.T.S. club in Louisville, KY with many friends there. I have ICOM and Yaesu equipment, the latest addition being an IC 705, My antenna is an OCF dipole located in the attic due to our HOA.

I heard of the CW Academy a while back and decided to give it a try. I was amazed at one of the first things I heard, head copy. Our advisor, Mike, N5KB, said we would improve if we did 3 things, practice, practice, practice. Our commitment was an hour a day 6 days a week and meeting twice a week on Zoom. I started with a small amount of on the air CW time but a lot of Morse Runner and RufzXP also listened to 100 most common words. I often practiced 2 hours a day plus. Many thanks to Mike N5KB and sponsors, Shelby, K4WW, Curtis, WX4W and Glenn, "Tom" KE4KY. I hope to take the next level in January.



## **Vagn Jensen, OZ1OXQ**

T U for membership of Cwops. I am grateful.

My thanks to Stuart GD0OUD, Antoine 3D2AG, Barry VK2BJ and Moz VK3CWB. I know those CW hams from many good CW QSOs from 80 to 15 metres.

I was licensed in Autumn 1963, 16 years of age. Years ago you needed a technical and a CW test to be licensed, the CW test speed was 15 wpm. I asked for and I got OZ400.



Few years later I was educated as radio officer, I got the first class civilian certificate.. It was in the Royal Danish Navy. I was radio officer on Naval Radio Thorshavn (OVL) in the Faroes, I have been radio officer on board a Seaward Defense Craft in the Baltic, later on the West coast of Greenland. My last years as radio officer was on a WX station. Danmarkshavn(OXQ) in North East Greenland, 7646N 1846W.

On the Faroes I was OY400, from North East Greenland I was OX300.

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I was not QRV from August 1986 to November 2009. When QRV again I changed my callsign to OZ1OXQ, OXQ was the callsign for the WX station. In North East Greenland.

From November 2009 to September 2017 I used the more than 35 years old Drake TR7, external Drake VFO VR7 and Drake match box. Power was and still is 100 watt out. My antenna was and still is inverted W3DZZ. From September 2017 I use Elecraft K3 and Elecraft Pan Adapter P3. I use Vibroplex or a vintage hand key made in 1901, look on the pictures.



I look forward to have many good CW QSOs with other membes of CWops, as well as many others.

For me CW is made by a key and recieved by ears.

### **Charles Murrell, K5KXJ**

The new wave hit in 2019 as I was going through some old pics. There was B&W photo of my 5-year old sister sitting at the desk with a Viking II and a Hallicrafters S53-A. While writing a blog post about that scene, the fire lit off as it had done twice before - in 1957 and again in 1972.

KN5KXJ got on the air in June 1957 and it was a blast. K5KXJ was on the new license in 1958.

A school buddy and I had built crystal sets and a two-way telegraph system prior to jumping into amateur radio. Those were exciting days of learning Morse on our own and studying license manuals. I recall the thrill of that first contact, KN5KNA, in Austin, Texas, running WRL Globe Chief at 75 watts to a dipole. With the general license came the pull to get on AM and graduation to a Viking Ranger and then a Viking II with VFO (but same old poorly built dipole).



College, marriage and startup of career put ham radio on hold until the early 1970s. I was in

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again with new license and call sign WB5IEE. A homebrew project finally put a crystal controlled CW transmitter on the air at home along with a Hallicrafters SX-117 receiver purchased from a fellow employee. It was fun putting QSL cards on the wall again.

Bigger job demands and a relocation closed WB5IEE by the mid-80s. Thankfully I kept the station gear and the license though inactive. When I learned vanity call signs were available I checked status of K5KXJ and found it idle on the FCC call list. I jumped on the old call sign not that there is anything special about the call except its origins.

At a local hamfest in 2019 I met Ron, AA5NI, and bought a Kenwood TS830S from him. He helped me get back on the air. Thank goodness for generous Elmers. The excitement and shaky knees of my first contact (straight key CW) in 2019 was probably as intense as that of 1957.

In all that I have always been drawn to CW, though in this "new world" of digital and gadgets, there are so many targets, so little time.

Discovering CWops was a major breakthrough for me. Not only has it helped me see the "barriers" to CW proficiency and methods to hurdle them, it has provided new friendships around the country I value highly.

It is great to be a member of this impressive organization.

### **Peter Melhus, AA6PM**

Hello! I'm proud to be here with my esteemed colleagues. But my journey here was unplanned. Unlike many of you, I was not interested in ham radio as a child, nor as a young adult, nor as a middle-aged adult .... I did not have a dad (or mom) who got me interested in electronics or in ham radio. I'm part of this group today because I took a CERT class in 2017.

It was an article in a VERY local newspaper that got me started (stay with me here). There was a little blurb looking for volunteers to take CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training that was sponsored by the County fire Department. I had recently retired and saw this as an opportunity to give something back to the community. I signed up for the classes and noted that, throughout the classes, the instructors stressed the need for people to get their ham licenses to support the CERT teams. I thought to myself, "I've been talking most of my life; I can probably do that!" And, frankly it sounded better than a lot of the CERT Team assignments.

Long story short, I had my ticket punched in June 2018, and due to friendly competitive pressure, completed my Amateur Extra by the end of that year. But, I was focused on EmComm only. When I was encouraged to look into HF, my response was, "Why would I want to talk to people far away whom I don't know, when I often don't want to talk to lo-



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cal folks whom I do know?"

I tried Field Day for the first time in 2019, and I was hooked. But I wanted more of a challenge. And, frankly, I listened to a bunch of folks on HF who, shall we say, were rather long winded. So, friends told me that CW might be a solution. And, they said, if you want to learn CW, go through the CW Academy. They were right; BOY, were they ever right.

I started my CW journey in September 2020 in the CWops Basic class under the guidance of "Roy" Godden (KK6M). In the winter 2021 Beginners class I was lucky enough to be assigned to Buzz Tarlow's (AC6AC) class, and I have been fortunate enough to go through the intermediate and advanced classes with him too. I would not be here today, were it not for the tutelage of Buzz and his assistants.

My heartfelt thanks to Buzz (AC6AC), who nominated me for membership, Paul (K2HZO), Karen (AG4CC/SK), Rich (N4DPM), and Tony KB9LLD), all of whom supported me in my classes. Your guidance has been exceptional. And my thanks to Tom (K0SN), Greg (W0GAS) and Rich (N4DPM) for sponsoring my membership.

Professionally, I spent 25 years in various management positions with my local energy utility in northern California, before I decided to go back to school for my PhD. I completed my "working" life in 2016 as a professor in the College of Business at San Francisco State University.

Two weeks ago I introduced my 8-year-old grandson to CW. Within an hour, and as he was trying to avoid going to bed, he said, "Grandpa, listen to this." In CW (with the help of a "cheat sheet") he sent, "good night!" I hope that in a decade or two, he'll write in his CWops bio that he was introduced to CW by his grandpa!

### **Maria Polyanska, VE3OMV**

I am very proud to be a new member of the CWops club.

I'd like to thank Buzz AC6AC for nominating me as well as Rich N4DPM, Bruce K1BG, Tamara VA7ETR and Jim WT8P for sponsoring me. I would also like to thank my beginner instructor Bruce K1BG and my Basic and Advanced instructor Buzz AC6AC for helping me in my CW journey.

I started out without a license. I signed up for CW Academy beginners class for an introduction to CW and Ham Radio. I remember not being able to distinguish "A" from "N" at 10 wpm. Now my instructors have helped me so much that I can easily operate at 25+ wpm. I went through Bruce K1BG's



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beginners class putting in much effort. Bruce taught me the fundamentals and was incredibly patient and supportive. Not only did he help me to copy and receive CW at 20 wpm, but Bruce encouraged me to get on the air for the first time using CW (operating under my father's callsign and my father being the control operator). I participated in many SST contests and went on to my first CWT.

Going into the Basic class, I had another amazing instructor - Buzz AC6AC. He helped me further increase my CW proficiency and most importantly boosted my confidence in class and on air. Making this much progress, I was able to skip the intermediate and go directly to advanced class with Buzz again.

In September 2021, I passed the Canadian Basic exam with honours, becoming VE3OMV.

Currently, I am a grade 6 student. I enjoy studying history, technology and especially mathematics. I am also a member of my local speed skating club.

By joining CWops, I expect to meet new people and improve my CW skills.

Hope to see you on air.

### **Paula Cole, K7PKA**

I am delighted to be a member of CWops. This organization is so important to the teaching and preservation of CW. Thank you so much to all those who are dedicated to this effort. Special thanks go to Buzz, AC6AC, my CW Academy Intermediate and Advanced Advisor who nominated me and to my sponsors, Tamara VA7ETR, Alex K6AUR, Jim WT8P, Barry K6ZGW, and Doug KR2Q. Thanks also go to Jack AK7O who started me out in CWA as my Beginner Advisor and Jed AD7KG my Basic Advisor who continued the CW adventure for me.

I was licensed in 2017. My husband Michael K7OYZ(SK) and I set up our ham shack. The fun keeps going. Improving CW. sending and copying skills for use in contests and in the future, nets, are my main CW goals. Ham radio activities that interest me besides CW are focused on traffic nets, learning software options, and friendships gained through the ham radio community.

Other current interests that I have are making greeting cards, sewing, quilting, genealogy, pyrography, and most important - family. My life is full.

I hope we will make contact on the air.



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## **Charlie Brown, NJ7V**

That first time I called CQ in Morse code? It was a thrill! It was from the top of Mingus Mountain, near Jerome, AZ on August 14th, 2015. My first contact was with Jim K7JFD on a warm summer morning. After fumbling through 9 more QSOs, I thought to myself, "I'll be happy if I can comfortably send and receive 15 wpm someday."

Fast-forward 6 years, and I was nominated by Brian W7JET to become a member of CWops. I wish to thank him and my sponsors: N1RBD, K7ULM, W6SX, KK7RR, K5UV, AA6XA, and KR7RK.

I am from a small town in western Wyoming, and grew up on a small farm with the Rocky Mountains as the backdrop. I worked hard and played hard, spending the long summers along the streams of Wyoming fishing for trout, the falls hunting big game, and the winters freezing my butt off. I finally landed in Arizona for graduate school, and after graduating I decided to stay for a while. I've now lived in Arizona 25 years, but we're laying the groundwork for a return to Wyoming in a few years.



When I was first licensed in 2005, I figured an HT and a weekly net would be all I needed. But after 7 years as a Technician, I finally upgraded to General and then to Extra shortly thereafter. I initially became interested in ham radio for emergency preparedness, and was hooked after joining Gary AC7R for Field Day in 2005.

In the hobby, I am currently focused on sharing my portable radio experiences with others through YouTube. I have an average sized YouTube channel where I share videos about my Summits on the Air and Parks on the Air excursions. Most of my videos contain a lot of CW in them

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and many people use the videos to improve their CW skills. I also have a Bi-weekly livestream on the channel where my co-hosts, Brian W7JET and Dan KC7MSU, and I interview interesting people about the hobby (Search "Red Summit RF").

Outside of ham radio, I like to serve in youth programs. I have experience in many, many youth organizations. Most recently, I spent 10 years in the Boy Scouts of America serving in various rolls from a Scout Master all the way up to Council positions. I hosted multiple large Jamboree-On-The-Air events to help the scouts gain interest in ham radio. Before leaving the Boy Scouts to serve elsewhere I received the Silver Beaver award.

I also love going on backpacking trips with my wife Sandy, W7NRS, and just being in the outdoors with her.

I have a passion for CW and hope to continually improve my abilities. Thank you for welcoming me into such a prestigious organization. I'm honored.

### **Dan Walter, NM3A**

I am honored to be nominated for CWops membership by Mike, N5KB and thanks to those who sponsored me. My interest in ham radio and CW goes back to 1966 when I joined the high school ham radio club and took a novice class under Mr. Kulp. I learned CW and passed my Novice tests, but never submitted my results to the FCC because I had no money to buy anything and knew I couldn't improve my CW skills to 13 WPM within the required year without operating. In 1973 I had the time and a little money, so I got my Novice and moved to Advanced a week after I received my Novice in the mail. School and work often got in the way for the next fifteen years. CW skills were low by then, but I managed to pass the Extra as the test was then multiple guess instead of one minute solid copy.



Most of my operating was on ham satellites for the next 15 years and mostly on SSB. Again work interfered often for another ten years. I got more active again a few years ago and I mostly enjoyed building radios and associated equipment and antennas. Operating CW was not a premium. That all changed when the QCX from QRP-Labs came out. I built an early one for 40 meters and I was hooked. I've since built four more and a number of other QRP-Labs pieces.

My early interest in ham radio made me want to become an EE, but various deviations along the

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line led me to my MD. As with many professions and with family requirements, hobbies took a back seat intermittently. However, my recent retirement has now given me the time to increase my ham activities.

The other pieces of the puzzle for me were an introduction to SOTA and more recently, to POTA. I only operate QRP CW for SOTA and while I can make contacts, I really wanted to improve my CW skills to get comfortable above 15 WPM. A number in my Skyview RS club have used CW Academy and so I signed up as well. Lots of practice and encouragement from my intermediate class with Advisor Mike this fall has really helped with increased comfort at higher speeds.

I still enjoy building radios and other equipment, but CW operating is getting a larger amount of my time in the hobby. I have a long way to go in advancing my CW skills, but CWops is giving me the tools to do it. Thanks to this great organization for all you do. I'm looking forward to the next level course this winter.

I enjoy hiking and camping with my XYL of 40 years, Janice and that gives an opportunity to get out to parks and summits to operate as well. Other interests are biking and of course, spending time with the grandkids. Maybe I'll even get them interested in radio!

## **Gwendolyn Hayden, K6GRH**

I'm indeed honored and delighted to be a member of CWops. It was a long and fun journey. I want to thank my Intermediate and Advance Instructor, Buz, AC6AC, who nominated me for membership. I also want to thank the other CWops members who sponsored me as well.

A little about myself: I'm a Air Force Vietnam Veteran. I was stationed at March Air Force Base in Riverside California.

March was a S.A.C. Base which stood for, "Strategic Air Command". I was a aircraft technician working on B-52 Bombers and KC-135 Tankers. I drove home on the weekends to my parents' house in my 1965 Volkswagen Beetle. That bug and I had a lot road trips together. I now work at Galpin Motors Inc. in North Hills CA. I was on the line until I upgraded to program the vehicle's SYNC system. It was like GM's On Star system. I've been with Galpin for 30 years and I'm still currently working there.

I have three children and four grandchildren. My son has his ham license but my daughters, well not so much, I still have my grandkids to work on, Hi Hi.

I received my first ham ticket in 1987, my callsign then was, "KB6NDC." I later changed it to

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"K6GRH." I wanted my initials as my callsign and it looks pretty good on my car's license plate.

How I got into ham radio is the funny part. It was in the late 1960's, my grandmother had a next door neighbor who was a ham radio operator. His name was Levi T. Tell, W6IRE. He had a 30 foot tower with a three element Yagi antenna mounted on a rotator. The tower was mounted in his backyard near the house. Every now and then, that big Yagi would rotate east and west looking for DX or other local stations. My sister and I would spend some weekends at our grandmother's house. This particular evening, we were all watching "Gunsmoke" on TV when an uninvited voice entered the set, "Yeah, your about a 579 over here in Compton CA". My grandmother looked up and said, "That damn Levi is in my TV again!" I looked at her with raise eyebrows and said to myself, "What magic is this that would upset the TV and my grandmother at the same time, I have to check this out." I finally had the chance to meet Levi and he explain to me the wonderful world of ham radio. When he showed me his radio room, it look like the bridge of the Starship Enterprise in my eyes. I learn a great deal of knowledge from him. He also gave me an Ameco tube type code practice oscillator. This is how I got started on my journey of CW and ham radio.

On Saturdays, I worked part time at Ham Radio Outlet in Burbank. The coffee was hot and the donuts were fresh. I had many enjoyed hours showing and telling eager customers about ham radio and CW. If you wanted to take the test for your ham license, we had enough VEs with myself included to get the job done. It was in this store where I met

Buz Tarlow - AC6AC. We got on the subject of CW and how I wanted to improve my CW skills. Buz, with a smile on his face, told me about the CW Academy and he was one of the instructors. He also explain how the Academy teaches you CW, the right way and how it promotes the communication to a higher plane. That advice got me started down the road and now I'm a proud CWops member. Will the student become the master? Well not yet, but through the CW Academy, I'll helps others to reach their CW goals.

### **Derrick Webber, G3LHJ: 82 Years of knowing CW**

My start into CW was when I was 8 years old, my pal from across the road and I were in the Air Scouts, there was a Comms Badge which we needed for us to send & receive Morse at 5 WPM, to practice we set up a wire between our houses with a key, buzzer & headphones; sending Morse messages to each other was great fun, we soon got our Badges, that was during 1939 to the end of WWII. In 1946 my dad and I got interested in listening to amateur radio stations on



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an ex-government receiver, a R107. The transmit bug bit and in 1949 Dad took the RAE and passed, becoming G3GDW. We set about building our transmitter, an 807 in the PA. We had to use CW only for the first year; at the end of that year I was doing 18 wpm and really enjoying being a Junior op to dad, hi.

1953 saw me doing my 2 years National Service. Luck was with me as I went into the Royal Signals, after doing my Square Bashing I was sent to Loughborough as an "Op Special" on a 19 week course receiving CW! The pass out speed was 21 wpm, I was reading 20 wpm but had to learn all the Bard letters which didn't take too long. So my 19 weeks turned out to be 8 weeks, and it was off to Famagusta, Cyprus, and 2 Wireless Reg, attached to a "Listening Station." After settling in, I did a bit of scrounging at REME stores; I



**ZC4LW**

I came away with a AR77 receiver which I set up in my bed side locker in our 4 man tent. I managed to get a 20 m dipole from the top of the tent to the NAFFI Flag pole, the guys help me build a small CW TX, 807 in the PA, again help from the guys and a trip to Nicosia to the Communication Department of Cyprus, a few strings pulled and I was issued ZC4LW. I had a lot of fun, I spent 19 months in Cyprus out of my 2 years of service, so I was sure glad to get home.

After settling back to civilian life again, in May 1956 I took the RAE and passed. In July I married Sylvia and we set up home in a flat. September I received G3LHJ. There was not much room for a station, but a cupboard sufficed for my SWL R109 + Converter RX, a homebrew TX for 40 & 20 M + a top band rig to talk to locals, and a 20 m dipole in the roof space + some wire.

1957 we moved across town to a Maisonette which had a 300 ft long garden & a spare room for the radio shack. 24 years were spent there. During that time saw home brew RX's and TX's constructed, a 270 ft long wire, home brew 3 band cubical quad. In 1965 I joined FOC NR 841, in the 70's I purchased my first "Black Box" a TRIO TS 510, had a lot of FB Q's with that rig, much better for contesting, also started home brewing QRP rigs, joined G-QRP Club. I had a lot of success with them in CQ WW Contests, mainly single band 20 m QRP. In the late 70s I up graded the station to a Kenwood TS 530S. In 1979 Dad became a Silent Key and not long after Mum passed away, so 1981 we move and took over my Homestead. In 1990 I was made President of FOC which Sylvia & I very much enjoyed especially our trip to the States and the attending of the USA FOC Annual Dinner, it was great to put a face to so many Guys & Gals that had met on CW, in particular Jim N3JT, also the Visits to Fred K3ZO & Frank W3LPL's superb Antenna farm & multi multi Station

I've been a member of our local Torbay Amateur Radio Society since it was formed in 1946, was their chairman for many years & for the last 12 years their president. It's 2021 now and the shack has grown quite a bit, it sports - 2 X PC's, Elecraft K2 (for my QRP operating) Yaesu FT dx 3000, Yaesu FT 990, Ameritron AL-811 Linear, Kenwood ATU, Icom 7300, home brew QRP rigs & Yaesu 818. Antennas are Moseley TA33Jr/WARC Yagi, 80/40 loaded dipole, R2000 50/144 & 70cm Colin-

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ear. In Contesting I use My Contest Call "G3L" now.

My occupation from 1945 – 1988 was in the gas industry – the domestic appliance side, cooking, central heating etc, ended up as a technician/supervisor of my local British gas depot.

Well, that's some of what I have been doing all these 82 years out of 90 and I have enjoyed every minute, and now some more enjoyment in being a member of CWops and meeting & making more like minded friends.

### **Marilyn (Emma) Melhorn, AF7MM**

My OM and I started in Amateur Radio in 2007. My father in law has been a ham since he was young and we wanted to contact him on the radio from WA to MO. After getting licensed I went to a General class and upgraded 2 months later. We are involved in Clark Co ARC in Vancouver WA. They have great Elmer group and a tower team so I was able to get a good education on what I didn't know. I am also involved with YLRL and MINOWs a PNW YL group. I upgraded to my Extra in 2012, I think.

We ended up with a 65 ft tower with a beam on top, we also have a dipole crossing our property. My radios are a Yaesu FT1000MP and a Yaesu 7900, plus some handhelds and an old Drake that we started with that I just cannot part with.

A couple of my goals early on were to learn code and build an antenna. I'm learning code now through CWops (thank you!). I still have to build the antenna but I did build a radio. Another thing, I want to do POTA. I am also into contesting.

My OM is W7JCO and he keeps the radios, antennas and computers working so I can get on the air.

I am hoping to contact many of you on CWT.