

BRASSPOUNDER

January/February 2009



For those within FISTS who enjoy a challenge

Welcome to a combined January/February edition of BP.

It's been an eventful few weeks at M0BPT. Firstly I must inform you all of a change of Address. The new AD is 87A Whitehall Road. West Bromwich. B70 0HG. As of this moment, the email AD's. m0bpt(at)yahoo.co.uk and m0bpt(at)hotmail.com are correct. Should there be any change in the future, I'll keep you all informed.

Many of you will have seen my post on the NG requesting for logs to be resent..I thank all of the people who did so....loss of data prompted me to request the information yet again.

As you're all aware; I'm always pleased to receive band reports-information on what you've been doing, where you've been active etc. Both inside and outside of the amateur hobby of ours. This information gives an insight to other members just who the person is who they might meet on air in the future, or may have met already. Some of the newer members of the society and CW in general I know read these items with great interest, they learn from the experienced members who, through their writings in BP pass on their knowledge and experience! Even the member who makes an error and is happy to share this with others through this medium, to give the others a smile, and of course make the less experienced CW op hopefully more relaxed about taking the plunge on air! Keep these items coming! you're helping fellow members!

I've received an article from G3JFS.

Robert.

Here is a report of recent activities that may be of interest to you.

Although conditions remain in the doldrums there are interesting stations to be worked if you are patient and dig deep. In the last 4 weeks I have worked 42 countries on cw, 17 of which were on 10/18 Mhz. 10 MHz has been good for dx but none of my CQ's on the calling frequency have been answered by members due to poor inter-G propagation.

As you know I do not take part in the ladder because I am rarely active at the right time on a Sunday. I was here last weekend and came on to give out a few points. Conditions were very poor for the afternoon session and I didn't hear any members but I was pleased to work OH7QR, 2E0TEK and G4CMZ in the second period.

The K5D dxpedition to Déséchéo was the focus of activity from the 12-26th Feb. One of their stated aims was to give a new country to smaller stations i.e. those with 100w and simple antennas but I wonder how many in this category actually got in the log. The pile ups were horrendous throughout the operation and it must have been very frustrating for less experienced operators. And, of course, the 'policemen' and 'IQ zero jammers' were on parade to add to the chaos.

For anyone wanting to improve their morse I found a useful on-line cw speed training program called CW Freak by J10VWL. See: http://www.ji0vwl.com/cw_freak_e.html

It just sends call signs to you and is excellent preparation for contest operating. Love 'em or hate 'em contests are a great way to improve your operating skills. 73 Peter, G3JFS.

Thanks as ever Peter for a very informative account and overview. I know from feedback received that many look forward to reading your thoughts...

Graham. G3ZOD writes in with these comments;

Rob, I'm so sorry - please delete the two previous emails and spreadsheet for my WARC Challenge January 2009.

I just noticed that the spreadsheet included an entry where I apparently worked myself for 2 points!!! Argh!!! No, this is not the first sign of madness working myself; I generate the spreadsheet automatically from my electronic log. Unfortunately I was doing some testing and had included a test entry in my log with my own call sign but forgot that it would get put in my WARC entry. Computers, eh?

73 de Graham

Hi Rob. Here's my WARC Submission (QRP: 5 watts)

I had more luck with 17m this month (January) than in December. However, both it and 30m seem to have been suffering from particularly vicious QSB. At one point I started leaving "QTH" out of the first over and save it for later in the hope that I'd still be in contact with the other station.

Much of the month propagation on 30m seemed to be favouring East Europe, but towards the end of the month I was hearing strong signals again from Central Europe.

Just when I thought I had all the information handy that I need on the air (Locator, WAB reference etc.), along came someone who threw me into chaos mid QSO by asking what the serial number on my Elecraft K3 rig was. (Elecraft provide awards for collecting serial numbers.) I couldn't get to the back of the rig without moving it, and although it can be displayed on the rig, in the panic of the moment I couldn't remember how to do it. I did manage to get it in the end before my QSO partner disappeared in the QSB, and needless to say I've now added it to my list on the wall!

There seem to be an ever increasing number of long special event callsigns. (In fact one operator I heard was actually abbreviating the "2009" in his callsign to "2TT9" which I thought was a bit naughty.)

At ten characters long I think that HA130HALLO may be the longest ever callsign (certainly the longest I've ever worked). I've seen two suggestions as to what HA130HALLO is celebrating; one is the 130th anniversary of the arrival of the telephone in Hungary and the other (which I suspect is the correct one) is that it's celebrating Telefon Hirmondo, which was a "telephone newspaper" where readers read out the news and it was available over a private telephone network. It ceased as a result of damage done to the wires during World War II.

Although this practice normally seems to be confined to the higher speeds, one day I was calling CQ at a leisurely rate and had someone reply "de <callsign>" only and during the whole contact, he never actually sent my callsign. I'm still wondering if he had it correct! Hmm.

- Mostly "QRU?" is the end of a contact and I have to say I've been slipping into "rubber stamp" contacts (RST/name/QTH/rig/antenna/WX), but not with Max IW3ILM/QRP - he was having none of it and what followed was a fun chat - nice one Max!

Quite a few highlights this month: 73. G3ZOD

Normally I wouldn't publish the opening comments from Graham with his report for the month, but, he emailed to say "Feel free to publish my comments at the beginning should anyone want a bit of humour and laugh at my expense!" Graham, and Fred G3VVP are men

attuned to my sense of humour....They don't mind poking fun at themselves, and sharing the lapse of "Concentration" (Shall we say) Whilst enjoying our hobby and its associated machinery that is a part of it nowadays!.....Thanks Gra and Fred for sharing these moments with us!

Pictured below is G3ZOD With his QRP Certificate for the 2008 WARC Activity.

Hi Rob, photo attached as promised ... I take no responsibility for subsequent damage to computers and / or the effects of allowing anyone of a nervous disposition to see it HI. Take care and 73 de Graham G3ZOD



Gra's comments on the abbreviated 2009 to "2TT9" had me thinking that quite a few of the OT's and OOT's (Old timers and old old timers) Used to use this amongst themselves and still do so today to a huge extent! (Would we consider the term to be syncopated morse?) I'd be interested to hear about the origin of this, as would many others no doubt! If anyone knows, compose an article for inclusion in either KEYNOTE or BP. I used to listen to the amateurs using this in my HF receiving station days whilst trying to brush up on my CW, wondering "What the hell are they sending?"

And from Graham with his January ladder report

Hi Rob. 11th January: It had to happen - for the first time, no contacts despite an hour and a half of trying! This was the day of the 80m RSGB Affiliated Societies Team CW Contest. I only heard Peter G4LHI but couldn't make myself heard to him.

25th January: I always start off on 14.058 to see if Erkki OH7QR is audible. Unfortunately I've not heard him since 26th October but this time I did and managed a contact, which was very pleasing.

80m started off promising with Peter G4LHI putting in an S9+ signal. However, in practice it was a tough one - Peter could only hear me at 229. I managed two other contacts both to the South of England with reports of only 229 and 339! Since neither the power nor the antenna has changed here, I have to put this down to "one way propagation" and hope that it is a "one off"!

73 de Graham (Gra) G3ZOD FISTS #8385 IO83WJ

Images from G3ZOD. Always welcomed! thanks Gra...

DK5RY /p /m
WILLI SCHERRER
BAHNHOFSTR. 24
88284 WOLPERTSWENDE
GERMANY

#11976
TO RADIO
G3ZOD

VIA MANAGER:

CONFIRMING OUR QSO YOUR SWL REPORT

DD	MM	YY	UTC	TWO WAY	MHz	RST
31	12	08	10:48	CW	10.1	549

LOC JN47TV · DOK T09 · CQ 14 · ITU 28 · GQRPC 0143

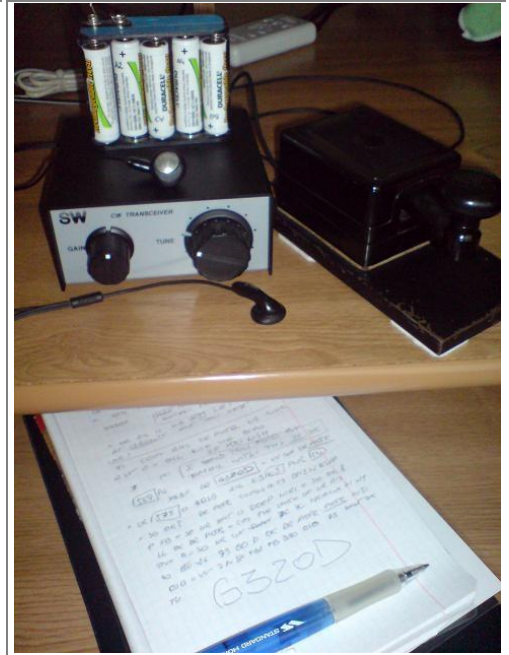
TRX: FT817-5W-
ANT: 34m LW, 428m
OP 73 yrs. *This has been my last QSO 2008!*

TWO-WAY QRP QSO!

QSLSHOP.COM
PSE QSL DIRECT OR VIA DARC QSL BUREAU
LINDENALLEE 4 · 34226 BAUNATAL · GERMANY

TXN FR CONTACT, VY 73
 PSE QSL TXN QSL

Willi



This month I received an envelope containing two QSL cards from different German stations posted in the UK and clearly not from FISTS or RSGB. I was baffled for a while until I realised they had come through the G-QRP bureau (I hadn't realised there was one!). On one of them, Willi DK5RY added a "TWO-WAY QRP QSO!" endorsement sticker with shiny gilt lettering; I thought this was a very nice touch. Also, he added a comment that I was his last QSO of 2008; you don't have to be a rare DX station to be made to feel special!

After a contact with Piotr SP6QKP on 30m, I was really pleased to receive via email a personalised photo showing his QRP station (kit-built Small Wonder Labs SW30+ running 1 watt off batteries and with a Russian Army morse key) along with the piece of paper he had been using to record the contact.

And from our great supporter of activities within FISTS. Peter G4LHI

Hello Robert,

I attach my claim for January, the first Ladder Activity for 2009.

I thought we were going to have problems again on the second session as there was also a contest on, I think it was a French contest, I heard CQ REF test quite a lot during the weekend, but it certainly did not cause the problems the RSGB AFS contest did the previous Sunday. I saw my comments on the RG brought a lot of discussions hi!!

However, I did manage 6 QSO's the first week and 10 the second for a total of 29 points, not a very good score, but hope as the year progresses and the bands improve a little, things may look up.

I worked some new stations and also some very dear old friends who are always there to support the activities. I was also very pleased to work, on both Sundays, a very dear old

mate, Pete M5ABN, who has at last managed to get on the air from his new QTH in Brixton, Devon , many thanks Pete and look forward to hearing you many times during the year.

That's all for now folks, see you all again on the 8th Feb if not before.

73/88 de Peter, G4LHI, & Jean.

Always a pleasure to hear from you Peter

And from G3ZOD

Hi Rob. Here's my WARC Submission (QRP: 5 watts)

Not so many contacts per month this year compared to last; due to other commitments I'm not able to spend so much time on the air this year as I did last year and of course it's not so easy finding "fresh meat" having worked all the regular 30m European stations by now!

Towards the end of February, it was good to hear lots of strong central European signals once more on 30m. A few 17m contacts, but 12m contacts still elude me.

Highlights include:

"Fun Friday" 20th February, where by one of those unexpected quirks of fate, I had contacts with some interesting and unusual stations:

HE8ICE, Swissair Radio Amateur Club at Zurich airport

OE3SGA/AAW, taking part in the Antarctic Activity Week

SK6RM based at the Gothenburg Radio Museum. Have a look at the brochure on <http://www.radiomuseet.se/radiome.htm> - I'd love to visit there!

From G4LHI

Hello Robert.

I attach my report & claim for the February 2009 Ladder Activity. Once again I am afraid we were also in competition with a WW CW Contest on the session on Sunday 22nd. 20M was

wall to wall "CQ Test" right across the band. I tried my usual call to OH7QR, Erkki, but without any hope of working him (very sorry Erkki). This was during the afternoon session so I tried 80M but unfortunately during this period this band was dead flat, it seemed to open up just on 1600 hrs ??? & I'm told was fairly good on the evening session, I must stop watching TV Sunday evenings hi!

Anyway, with the two sessions during February I managed to have 22 QSO's for a total score of 40 points, four of these were non-Fists members who seem to be more regular on the Ladder than some members hi!, but I cannot persuade them to join (yet!!)

I would like to thank all members & non-members for persevering under such poor conditions to keep our Fists Club Activities alive, and can only hope that conditions will soon improve and we can all enjoy our CW as it should be (even the high speed testers!!) That's all for now folks, see you next time & "Keep Pounding the Brass"

73/88 de Peter G4LHI & Jean

Broadcast which saved 1,500 lives

FRID 30 JANU 09 / 14.23^h

By MARIE BAKER
marie.baker@peterboroughtoday.co.uk

A GROUP of radio enthusiasts joined together in Stanground to celebrate the centenary of an epic event which gained a Peterborough man worldwide fame.

The Peterborough and District Amateur Radio Club was set up at Southfields Community Centre to transmit Morse code and voice messages across the airwaves.

The three-day event, which began on Friday, was organised to celebrate the 100th anniversary of a historic day in which Peterborough man Jack Binns saved the lives of 1,500 people.

With more than 200 contacts made with radio stations across the world, club secretary David Howlett branded the event a major success.

Howlett said: "In just four hours on Friday night we made 32 contacts, the first one to Ukraine."

"We also made contact with Massachusetts that night, which is, of course, not far from where it all happened 100 years ago."

On January 23, 1909, two ships collided in the icy waters off the eastern coast of America, near Nantucket, and it was Jack's quick thinking which saved the lives of the people on board.

As the wireless operator - or "Marconi man" - of the RMS Republic, he sent out the first-ever distress call and stood at his post for 18 hours, with no sleep, food or warmth, to guide rescue vessels to the two stricken ships.

Jack was hailed a hero across the world, and such was his fame that he became the subject of a song, and of a film.

Mr Howlett said: "It's the 100th year since it happened, which is something quite special and the reason we wanted to mark the occasion."

"It met my expectations and we had a really good weekend."

HISTORIC MEETING: Peterborough Radio Society meeting marking the anniversary of Jack Binns' heroics. Pictured front is Sidney Harbour. (PASC123023) Picture: ALAN STORER

See your Neighbourhood News online at www.peterboroughtoday.co.uk

An excerpt from a local newspaper sent by G4LHI. G4LHI is pictured seated 2nd left in the image.

As I close BP ready for upload. The new activity, namely EYAW (Exchange Your Age Week) has finished, and received a warm welcome by members. Results to follow on this site.

Here are the results tables for January and February 2009.

Firstly the ladder.

CALL	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DECE	TOTALS
G4LHI	29	40											69
M5ABN	27	40											67
2E0TEK	18	20											38
M0DRK	10	22											32
G4CMZ	0	21											21
G3ZOD	8	12											20
OH7QR	15	4											19
IK2RMZ	7	12											19
G0BAK	6	8											14
G8XGQ	2	10											12

A warm welcome to Kevin. G4CMZ. Who runs just two watts to a dipole. Also Bill. G0BAK. Who've joined the ladder activity. And a warm welcome back to Peter. M5ABN. Peter as you may remember "Emigrated" from Cambridgeshire to Devon last year. Peter has been able to rejoin the ladder this year after a period of inactivity due to his move. But pleased to have him back in the fold once more! Welcome to you all!

CALL	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DECE	TOTALS	MULTI	MASTER	PWR
K4UK	41	160											201	46	9246	QRO
IK2RMZ	37	50											87	12	1044	QRO
G3ZOD	100	59											159	5	795	QRP
W4YE	41	0											41	7	287	QRO
OH7QR	31	25											56	4	224	QRO
G8XGQ	15	10											25	4	100	QRO
W4FCR(C)	4	13											17	4	68	QRO

The 2009 WARC activity has got of to a fine start, with K4UK taking an early lead with a healthy 46 multipliers. IK2RMZ takes 2nd place, and QRP Station G2ZOD in a very creditable 3rd place. Lets hope more members join in as the year progresses....

Thats all from me for now. Thanks to all who re-submitted their logs, either by snail mail or electronic means...Till next time....

Keep "Pounding the Brass"

MOBPT

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