



KEY NOTE

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Another month comes and goes

It only seems two minutes since I was writing the last Keynote and here we are again, they say as you get older time seems to pass more quickly, well I must be getting older now. The last month seems to have slipped by un-noticed and just as I was sitting back happy that my exams are complete its time to put finger to keyboard again for Keynote.

We many of you know I have been taking my final exams at University in May and June and I'm glad to say they are all over, the only one that I had problems with was the last one, it was a 3 hour sit down and write about 15 pages on a topic that I had very little interest in but the day before I came down with a virus that the wife and son have had, I couldn't comfortable keep my eyes focused on the paper for that time and a day or so after the exam I realized how much more I could have done if I was feeling 100% when I took it, o well we will just have to wait and see the results, (should know mid July) . In the last couple of days I have been telephoned and emailed by one of the local councils I.T. Departments and asked if I would like to come and work for them, so it looks like it's the end of sitting at home living the life of a student now.

The holiday season is upon us and like many people I will be take advantage of the warmer weather (it better be warm) and going away in August, historical we have only produced 10 or 11 editions of Keynotes per year and I am sorry to say that this will still be the case, since many of the readers are off doing outdoor activities and holidays at this time the amount of articles we receive is very low and with me being away I will not be producing a issue for September (would be out at the beginning of that month.) but Please don't forget us and please send in your articles still so I have something to work with when I get back

Now an apology..... I have been very busy the last month and so have not been so focused on FISTS matters as I need to be, If you have spoken to me via mail, Telephone or email and I still have not got back to you please please please contact me again, to the best of my knowledge I have responded to all the people that have contacted me in the last month but I fear that one or two may of slipped through the net and may still be waiting for me.

Anyway on with the rest of the newsletter.

On the Air

Well I personally have not been as active as I would have liked in the past month but from the mails I have been getting it seems that we are getting a few more members getting on Air than in previous months. We seem to have members in 3 groups, first the people that are interested in CW but have very little if any experience of using it on Air. Then we have the second group (I fall into this group) people that do get on air with CW but due to lack of time or commitments never really get their speed up to much more than the old 12 wpm test speed. Then we have the final group, the speed machines, the 15-30 WPM plus group that have not touched a microphone in years.

I am getting most correspondence from the 1st group, and they seem very keen to get going with CW, which is very nice to hear, I believe that we must encourage this interest and help them all we can, I'm glad to say that many other members must also feel this way and have started doing QRS QSO sessions most nights on 80m , I have heard M0BLT, M0CDL, M5ABN, G4LHI (Got the call right this time Peter! Hi) and others calling CQ FISTS and operating nice and slow to give people with rusty Morse someone to work to get their speed up. Now I know we have a number of members that can work in the 20+ WPM ranges and I know people like Stan (G0BYA) are on the look out for faster speed contacts so that they can improve their skills too so get on air if your new or just rusty that's fine use the mode and keep it alive, if you're a old hand and can offer high speed contacts that's great too . I will be concentrating my efforts on 40m (I get a much better signal out on that band) and will be sending CQ FISTS at a max speed of 12 WPM but I'm happy to drop down to 4 or 5 WPM if needed so do listen out for me and the others that are on other bands offering QRS contacts, I will be just doing simple rubber stamp type QSO's so it will be nice and easy for folk to copy, I have received a number of emails telling me how useful these slow contacts are for people that have joined fists but have never had the nerve to use the key and just listen out for slow CW to help improve themselves. Above all I would say NEVER transmit faster than you can receive, its easy to blast out CW but a different story to receive it at the same speed. Remember *"Accuracy transcends speed and Courtesy at all times"*

The Red Rose QRP festival,

Well on the 4th June M0CDL and myself set sale for the Red Rose QRP Festival where we put on a joint table for the QRP Club and FISTS, it was a interesting day where we meet many members from both clubs, what really surprised us both was how fast a supply of Elecraft leaflets went down, people seemed very interested in their range of Kits and we did have there full range of transceivers on display there. I have built all the ones on display and took nice photos of the insides, they must have been nice as someone decided they liked them that much that they took them home with them! O-well that's another set of photos I need to take again. I Must thanks the organisers of the show as they made us very welcome and didn't charge us a penny for the table. Over all it was a great day and it was nice to meet up with a few members and hear their views on how FISTS is doing and what people feel we can do to make it even better. We gave out a number of membership forms so I hope I can report many more new members next month.



Here is John Behind the table at Red Rose

A Bit of History from Ray Bullock G0EML, Fists 3774,

Today we are moving forward at a fast but progressive pace with the technical advances within the hobby of Amateur radio, with the introduction of the state of the art equipment giving rise to greater changes not only to the modern day transceiver and antennas, but to the supporting aids of communication such as photodiode telegraphy Morse paddles and bugs.

Having first got my licence in 1985 as G1RKB I set about not only learning and understanding the skill of the telegraphy operator But to master the finer points that make a good CW operator, and we are of course all aware that in 1844 saw the birth of the key Due to Samuel Morse along with his assistant Alfred Vail who sent the first official Morse code, from Baltimore to Washington, a demonstration that saw the birth of the correspondent key, within six months vial had perfected the principle on which all keys since then have been based.

Having armed myself with books on telegraphy keys and sounders I came across the lever correspondent key, strange names like the camelback key, Bug's and side swiper's, What was I getting into? And then the well known key maker Horace G Martin, known world wide for his fine quality produced range of vibroplex keys paddles & bugs during the years 1904 to 1960 produced over 16 styles or models of semi automatic keys more than any other manufacturer, and much sort after by key collectors, and Morse enthusiasts, from all corners of the globe giving me much sort after inspiration.

I was soon to learn that Horace G Martin was to produce in 1903 his Autoplex, even as his Auroplex was being sold to telegraphers, Martin was working on a radically improved model which he called the Vibroplex Original,

The very first of what we now know as a bug, and the only difference from the modern chrome and red paddles versions of today is the straight strip of metal attached to the pendulum but by 1906 Martin had changed it to the now familiar "U" shape style of mounting, All the early Vibroplex keys were custom built by Martin to order in a small shop at his home in Brooklyn.

Then being greatly inspired by the skills of the world speed champion Theodore McElroy a native of Boston Massachusetts USA, who at the age of fifteen could type at the amazing speed of 150 w.p.m. Who as you know become the word speed champion of receiving Morse at the speed of 75.2 WPM on July 2nd 1939, One of his favourite stunts was to pause in the middle of a high-speed Morse receiving run then possibly take a drink or even take a smoke and then continue to copy without even missing a word the ability to copy in your head is not unknown today by most of the radio amateur cw operators, But just think for a moment! Ted was also typing from memory and then storing the additional text information in his head until his brain had caught up, just wonderful great skills that man must have had? I certainly have respect for the qualities he had, and recommend the book about his life and skills as a very interesting, and informative read. He was also a well know key maker and produced a number of bug models and inventor of the well known S-600 Super Stream-speed produced in 1941, it is not the scarcest Mac key, but to collectors it's the most desirable, his name was McElroy, but his keys were sold under the name of Mac key's, Not quite so well known is that his became a licensed radio amateur with the call W1JYN he said that it should have been G-1 -N as that is what I like to drink,

And in 1936 McElroy teamed up with Reginald Adams G2NO of Wolverhampton England, They had a very good business with an efficient delivery of American radio produces to a shop called Eve's radio limited, Adams was later to make his wartime contribution, he joined at the War at the governments request because of his radio expertise, Britain's Wartime sabotage organization the special operations executive, the S.O.E secretly trained and equipped agents and placed them in enemy territory to stimulate the resistance, Adams work for the SOE was important and dangerous as well, he was parachuted into Poland many times during the War, it was the kind of top secret operations that could of course not freely be discussed with his friends and family perhaps because of this Adams missions and exploits evolved in to legend one story is that precious radio communications equipment was installed by the SOE in Rosendale road West Dulwich England, where it was operated under cover of a radio shop run by the British agent Adams which was later to be bombed out by a bundle of high explosives, Adams was to be decorated by the Polish government for his efforts and he was conceded to be one of Britain's greatest Heroes in the eyes of Ted McElroy

It was not until the mid 1930's that we saw the introduction of the Semi-Automatic key, which came in kit form from the telegraph Apparatus Company of Chicago,

And then in 1939 and primarily for amateur Radio use saw the fully Automatic key of Melvin E Hanson (W6MFY) of California, it was advertised as the Meleham Valiant, it was actually two completely separate units mounted on one base, one to make the dots and the other to create a series of dashes the mainspring on the

pendulum achieve the dash time making the spring that is attached to the pendulum three times longer than the dot spring they were true classics right from the start, Approximately 500 Valliant's were personally made by Hanson or his assistant the Schultz tool and Machine Manufacturing co California

After the second world war Production was resumed but by then the electronic keys were to give into to much competition.

Vibroplex finally joined the electronic revolution by producing the Vibrokeyer a single-Lever paddle whose parts all come from the original bug base and a small Philips head screw filled the tapped hole in the left arm where the bug's lever stop screw would have gone.

It was not until 1979 that Vibroplex was introduced the iambic, as the name states, a dual lever electronic keyer paddle and the early models show that even then the original bug frame was still being used with tapped hole in the left arm intended for the bug's main lever return spring adjustment screw. There has of course been many instrument makers turned key and paddle makers over the years and far to many for me to list but im sure that you are familiar with such names of Kent, schurr, Bencher, Hi mound, Samson, and Gordon Crowhurst G4ZPY, the latter who did a 24ct gold plated twin paddle for me for the millennium described by some as looking like a stunning gattalin gun.

Early 1990 also saw a new and interesting type of contact paddle adjustment was the phenomenal Mercury magnetic paddle introduced by Steve Nurkiewicz (N2DAN) these beautiful hand made paddles used magnets instead of springs to adjust the arm tension I wrote a letter to Steve late in 1999 to order one of his hand made Mercury paddles but was saddened to receive a lovely letter from a friend of his wife informing me of his death, other magnetic paddles of interest are the Hensley paddles which look like stunning piece's of jewellery, and the Bengali magnetic paddles Today there can be few paddles/keys and bugs which generate as much excitement as the range of the GHD models, from the GHD telegraph key company made by Toshihiko Ujiie (JA7GHD) in Sendai City Japan, GHD Has made as many as 30 individual style / type of key's paddles and Bugs,

With there amazing pieces of manipulation machinery which are beautiful practical and innovative.

GHD makes a whole range from straight keys both leaf spring and seated ball-bearing type, to bugs, keys and paddles with optical or mechanical operated contacts.

Unfortunately due to shipping costs and the high standard of workmanship the price is a little expensive but well worth it.

To date I have five models of paddles from GHD both Mechanical and optical,

I first came across GHD in 1997 via Key letter by N7CFO editor of a Morse enthusiast's magazine from the USA.

The first key I was to become aware of was the GD301 model, the GD301 model is considered as a multi-key that is it can be used as a bug or keyer paddle, The paddles that I own can be converted from dual to single lever operation, the new WS series is a W lever mechanism that can be converted to single or duel operation and has replaced the earlier and discrete single or duel lever models

Duel lever bugs have been introduced as early as 1910 and should have represented a significant advance in the art of telegraphy, because a duel lever bug can be operated a much higher speed than a single lever bug along with better flow and rhythm, and in some ways it is ironic that two of the most significant advances in the technology had to wait for the end of the 20th century.

Radio amateur enthusiasts started to become more interested in the modern concept of paddles, and the computerized electronic keyer, those two innovations/applications such as the modern day optical sensors replaced the standard silver contacts of the paddle key, along with the introduction of a simple convertible dual or single lever paddle operation, This modern day application was introduced by the Japanese key maker and Radio amateur Toshihiro Ujiie the principle of GHD keys. His Key's are of outstanding quality, highly chromed, and manipulate with ease, Key's that I feel will be well sort after by collectors and will find a place in the history of the key,

There are a large group of O.Ts. Out there who have grown up with bugs and other types of older keys often using them daily in a professional manor or possible with the military and are still today keeping the art and science of morse telegraphy alive, but there is also a growing body of modern amateur radio enthusiasts who are fascinated not only by the older techniques and skills but by the modern optical photodiode keyer paddles of today, The GHD keyer or bug uses photodiodes in the optical models instead of mechanical contacts to make the dots/dashes, in order for this to be achieved a 12 v dc powers the paddle via two small wires plus a minute circuit board mounted underneath the paddle or bug for the supporting electronic components giving rise to a smooth effortless manipulation of the selected paddle model The desire love and enthusiasm for the hobby of Morse code, along with the skill and flare and of course the ability of are CW operators along with the introduction of the modern optical paddle brings history for us to enjoy and understand today.

Kens Best spent 5 Shillings (Ken Randall G3RFH FISTS 8389)

Andys Report on the Falklands Island trip prompted Ken to recall how he got his VP8 licence.

It was in 1962, I was the P.O.Tel (Petty Officer Telegraphist) in charge of communications on board HMS Protector, the Royal Naval Ice Patrol Ship, I had my G licence for maritime mobile operations but was restricted to 10 metres only and as it was at the period of sunspot minimum, QSOs were few and far between. On arrival at Port Stanley for the first time, I went ashore to the Post Office and filled in an application form for a VP8 licence. I was told that the Superintendent of Posts & Telegraphs was the only person who could issue licences and he was off the island at that moment. We sailed a few days later for places south but a few days later I received a radio telegram from Port Stanley saying 'application approved, callsign VP8HF allocated, you owe me five shillings when next in Stanley, signed Supt. Post & Telegraphs.' Needless to say I was straight onto 20 metres as VP8HF/MM and went onto be VP8HF on Candlemas Island, South Sandwich for 3 weeks in March 1964.

So the price of a licence has certainly gone up since then!

Thanks for the interesting story Ken.

Anyone help Jim (GM0NTR FISTS 264)

I Have received a letter from Jim asking if any member can help him, he is on the look out for cassette CW Tapes at 35,40, & 45 WPM in plain language, he tells me that the old tapes that he currently is using are on their last legs after many years of use. If you can help Jim please let me know by any method you like and I will pass on his details to you rather than print them here for the world.

Morse School Anyone?

Malc (M0MKC FISTS 10884) wrote to me about the "One a day" challenge and tells me that he has tried to do that before back in 2001 when he passed his 5 WPM Test, He feels that due to his commitments at home he as not had much of an improvement since then and that a weekend course in Harrogate run by the RSGB was a big help in getting him through the test, He goes on to say that He would really like to attend another such weekend refresher course and asks if we FISTS could organise such an event at various venues around the country, well i agree with Malc that such events can be a great way to get people going but fear that at present it is unlikely that we can arrange such events, BUT if any members feel that they could take on such an event please feel free to let me know, It would need a few good CW operators to man the event and im sure that people attending such events would be happy to pay for the weekend but with CW no longer being a requirement for a HF licence I'm not sure how many takers you would get for a course so make sure you can cover your expenses before you payout money for rooms etc.

Thanks for the Help

I would just like to thank the many members that have made donations to the FISTS funds when they have renewed their subscriptions, it's a great help to the club, at this time more than ever. We are slowly getting back on our feet now and all the management team are very thankful for the kind words and thoughts that have accompanied most of the donations received, we have a club that we can be proud of and we are sure we will see it grow from strength to strength in the coming years.

Club Project Update

Well we have had a few members interested in the club project, the majority seem to be interested in the Small wonder labs SW+ kit, some people want 80m some want 40m. I have now built a 80m kit and put a complete guide to building it up on our web site (WWW.FISTS.CO.UK) If you are unsure about it or even not up to speed on the project take a look. I will be contacting those that have said that they are interested in the next week to confirm details etc and then placing an order for them. If you where interested in one of these radios and have not got in touch with me do so now! m0bmn@yahoo.co.uk

FISTS Rally Dates

There will be a FISTS table at the following Rallies so if your going come and say hello and sign the Visitor Book..

8th/9th September Donington Radio Rally, Castle Donington, Leicesters. 7th Oct G-QRP Club Rally, Rochdale.

Welcome to our New Members

F2YT	Paul	FISTS No 12511
G1DQF	Peter	FISTS No 12512
M0EEP	John	FISTS No 12513
G4KKU	Andy	FISTS No 12514
GM4WZL	John	FISTS No 12515
G4ZPI	Dave	FISTS No 12516
G3RCE	Rob	FISTS No 12517
G0LXV	Mark	FISTS No 12518
2E0EED	Nick	FISTS No 12519
G4NKX	Peter	FISTS No 12520
G3RLG	Tony	FISTS No 12521

From Kevin, KI4DEF

His operating of some of the USA FISTS Club stations.

"My day operating KN0WCW was a lot of fun, as it always is. I have been doing this every few months since the beginning of last year (10 days so far). Each member is allowed up to seven days per year operating KN0WCW. When I began as a ham in Feb 2004 (my first QSO), I joined FISTS and learned of KN0WCW. I was determined to improve my CW to the point that I was comfortable enough to operate for the club. It took a year; involvement in the local FISTS club, W4FFF, FISTS Club of North Carolina, helped tremendously (I had--still have--some good elmers there). I started operating W4FFF, mostly as an operator during FISTS Sprints in mid-2004. and by Jan 2005 was ready to tackle KN0WCW. This year, as the W4FFF OMs are mostly in the central and western parts of NC and we rarely meet (actually, I have only met one other OM, one time, other than on the bands or via email), I started an eastern North Carolina FISTS club (N4ENC, the Eastern NC CW Club). Both these local clubs are very small: W4FFF has 12 members, maybe half of us are active; N4ENC has only four members, and I am really the only active member.

Unfortunately, I have never met up with any UK FISTS whilst operating KN0WCW. I do not get all that much DX (partly because it is not a high priority with me--a practicality for someone beginning HF CW in the sunspot low and operating all QRP). I have taken what comes my way, in the main, although I have learned some tricks about choice of bands and operating times to improve the likelihood of getting contacts. But my DX contacts remain few: of 1,618 total QSOs in my logs, only 118 (7.3%) are outside the US, largely Canada, and only 29 (1.8%) are EU, with a meagre 3 (0.2%) ever UK. Of those total QSOs, 293 were made with club calls (KN0WCW, W4FFF and now N4ENC), which have slightly lower DX percentages: 13 (4.4%) non-US, 1 (0.3%) EU, and no UK. For KN0WCW alone, only 2 (1.7%) of my 119 QSOs in the log are non-US (Canada and Cuba).

So, regrettably, no, none of the UK guys managed to bag KN0WCW while I was operating (at least not this time). I will post to FISTSCW my operating plans for next time, likely in July, and entertain requests for skeds and modifications to bands/operating times to accommodate possible UK contacts (and will anticipate possible "scrums," as you say in the WARC Challenge Q&A). And maybe the propagation gods will shine upon us!"

The FISTS Web Site

Well the web site is still there, I have put a copy of Aprils Keynote on there for free download in case anyone needs a typical keynote to give away to a maybe member they know. I have also put step by step guide to building the SW+ 80 Club project radio on there, In the next few months, as time allows I will be re-vamping the site to make it a little easier to find your way round, its grown at a very fast rate and is getting a little confusing for some users so now things are calming down a little I will be able to put together a "Nicer" looking site that will be easier to use (I hope !) so if you have any ideas for things that you would like to see on it let me know, its not my web site its Ours! So feel free to make comments and if I can do what you want I can build your ideas into the new

Don't forget to renew your Subscription!

Please check the date on the address label on the envelope that this copy arrived in (or if you have already lost it drop me a email) . we don't want to lose you ! If you are over due or close to the date get your cheques sent off, All cheques should be made payable to FISTS and sent to Mandy at
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However you Pay please put your Name, Callsign, FISTS No on the back or in the message box if you pay via Paypal. Full details of new costs just under the banner box and on the web site

Bobs Contest Newsletter

Many of you are aware that Bob M0BPT produces a contest news letter that gets distributed to the members that take part in the FISTS contests, Well good old Bob as now given his creation a name, "Brasspounder" , This Newsletter covers all the contests that FISTS run or take part in and is a great read, it could be possible to print this news letter and distribute it along with keynotes but im not sure of what interest level there would be, anyone want to comment on the idea?, I have a few ideas and will be talking to Bob about it. But one thing for sure is that Bob certainly does a good job of looking after the contest lads. Anyway here is some of the information taken from the current Brasspounder Newsletter for FISTS testers written by Bob M0BPT.

Bobs Corner

Ladder News

G4LHI is still maintaining his lead but G6GUN is closing the gap with M5ABN poised for an assault on both of them.

A mention must go to 2E0TEK for a great effort during May to put him on fourth place.

I've been made aware of a post on the reflector from a member regarding the difficulty of finding ladder contacts during the big contest weekends which (As we all know) brings heavy QRM on all non WARC bands.

He suggests that we extend the ladder weekend to include Fridays to avoid the QRM which we suffer during weekends.

I will look at ways to help the situation, but we must remember that we have to maintain a level playing field i.e. Those amateurs who, due to work commitments etc. can only find time for radio at weekends. It would put them at an unfair disadvantage.

On to the WARC Challenge results.

On or two comments from entrants this month worthy of mention and some information that will hopefully bring you some more contacts and new grids from FISTS members!!

BUT FIRST SOME NEWS I'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU REGARDING OUR COLLEAGUE AND GREAT SUPPORTER OF THE FISTS CONTEST SCENE, PETER, G4LHI

On the 1st of June Peter informed me that he is able to claim the "FISTS MILLIONAIRE AWARD"

For further details of the award visit

<http://www.fists.org/million.html>

I'm sure you'll agree that this is an outstanding feat by Peter and join me in congratulating him on this marvellous achievement.

I would assume that, since the award has only been available from the first of January 2006, that Peter is the 1st and only UK recipient of the award.

That is of course.....Unless you know different.

ACTIVITY LADDER.

January 06 to December 06.

To be run on the last weekend of every month.

Times 0700 UTC Sat to 1900 UTC Sun.

Frequencies All licensed amateur bands except the WARC bands. RETURNS/SCORING. Returns are to be either a maximum total 8 hour continuous or 2 x 4 hour continuous periods Only, taken from within the 36 hour operating time. Scoring; 3 points for a Fist Club Station, 2 points for a Fist member, 1 point for a non-member. A station can only count once on each monthly weekend.

LOGS; to include; CALL/NAME/QTH/QRG/RST/TIME/FIST No or NM/POINTS SCORED.

PLEASE vacate or pass on the FIST calling frequency after 5 continuous QSO's or QSY off the calling frequency. All returns are to be received by the 10th of the next month.

DATES; 28/29 Jan. 25/26 Feb. 25/26 March. 29/30 April. 27/28 May. 24/25 June. 29/30 July. 26/27 Aug. 23/24 Sept. 28/29 Oct. 25/26 Nov. 30/31 Dec.

Moved QTH?

If you have moved house recently and have only received this keynote due to it being re-directed to you then please contact the membership manager (Mandy Spence) to have your details updated. Email and address details on the banner.

A note from Angie Fists 0041 on the passing of Ron G3INA

I have just received my RadCom and was very sad to see the call of Ron G3INA in the Silent Keys. The date he passed away is not given Ron was one of the many special friends in FISTS who helped me in my early days. Ron was a member of FOC and expressed the wish, many years ago, that he looked forward to my being in FOC a goal I have sadly not achieved.

Ron was for many years PA and EUCW rep for FISTS and did a very good job and to give him a break I took the job over from him many years ago a short time after I took the GQRP EUCW job over from another FISTS/FOC friend Colin G3VTT. However I found I could not cope so my hat off to those who are club officers and work so hard!

Ron was generous to a fault. In about 1989 and never having met me in person before Ron drove all the way from Lincolnshire with his spare Ten Tec rig (forget the name but it was a QRO job) so that I could get back on the air after having no HF gear for some time. My husband John and myself very much enjoyed Ron's company Ron lost his first wife Ina many years ago and had remarried and condolences go to Ron's wife and family from John and myself. Ron I will never forget your kindness and your interest in my progress as a CW operator. Rest in Peace dear friend.

Angie G0HGA FISTS 0041

FISTS LADDER TOTALS 2006

CALL	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	TOTAL
G4LHI	42	39	42	47	46	216
G6GUN	35	41	37	45	35	193
M5ABN	43	31	35	32	0	141
2E0TEK	20	0	21	0	32	73
M0DRK	15	0	14	22	17	68
M0BHA	12	19	12	22	0	65
OH7QR	5	13	25	8	0	51
IK2RMZ	0	0	0	39	9	48
MX5HDF	6	9	9	7	13	44
G8XGQ	8	6	12	4	0	30
G0XAH	0	0	11	17	0	28
PA3AFF	0	0	10	0	0	10
M0CMQ	0	0	0	0	4	4