GREETINGS
A happy, prosperous and fulfilling year to you all and VMT for all those super Christmas cards. 1992 is set to introduce many changes in the lives of us here in Europe, some of which may be distasteful medicine and others that may well prove advantageous. One wonders if the cost of Amateur Radio gear will be affected by the EEC and if so then in which direction. Whilst the politicians are rubbing their hands and doing a soft shoe shuffle over this giant partnership, private us further down the ladder will be wondering just what effect it will have not only on our domestic lives but also in the realms of our hobby. Could it be for instance that there will ultimately be a common EEC policy towards Amateur Radio and if so, then by what degree will the aspirations of those who advocate a free for all -no code HF licence influence this policy. There is clearly a role for the EUCW here!

ODDS 'N ENDS
Last month's article on scanners brought none of the anticipated response. Instead, my knuckles were wrapped by one member who (quite correctly) pointed out that my abbreviations - MPD would be more at home on the other side of the pond. It should of course have been GMP (Greater Manchester Police) or - more correctly - GMC (Greater Manchester Constabulary). There is nothing in the least friendly about your local light-fingered brigade he pointed out as he daily has to witness the heartbreaking results of their activities. Another of our members unearthed a circular detailing the steps to take when apprehending some-one in possession of one of these. This includes forwarding the equipment to an official department who will bear witness that it was programmed to cover the sensitive frequencies. Another member pointed out that it takes but a couple of seconds to re-set the memories to their default values so a constant knicking an offender would have to be pretty sharp to ensure that this did not happen.

EAST GERMANY
A recent QSO with an E. Berlin station drew the information that by December 1992, all Y23 call will have reverted to DL. Those of us who have been keeping an index will have to start scrabbling round for conversion lists in order to put our records straight but it seems likely that all such replacements will have a common prefix of perhaps "DLS" (the suffix being retained) which will make the chore less painful.

PRO V HAM
G3ACR. Rockens the only thing the pro and Amateur have in common is Morse. Certainly as far as ex. service operators are concerned, there is a world of a difference. I well remember a serving officer doing a stag on 2m FM and rather shouting his contact with "Say again all after ........." I blushed for the guy. Hi. S1 your sub escaped me Harold guess you can put it down to old age and senility creeping in.

OH MY MEMORY!
G0PWA. Dave, as with Harold above, I am not sure if I sent your certificate. If not then please let me know. I 84U.

IS IT MY MEMORY AGAIN?
G4LQN. You should not be missing any letters Ken because NOV/DEC were in one letter. Ken has QSL'd something in the region of 140 members but thus far has received only 35. If members agree to QSL on-air then please honour your promise!

CLUB BADGES
The badges arrived before Christmas and quite a number have already been sent out. Altogether, it set me back some £1300 plus and whilst I cannot reasonably expect to recover this immediately, if all members purchase one then it will help enormously. Those I have spoken to who have received theirs have expressed their pleasure especially noting that the badge is very distinctive.

THE REGION III CONFERENCE
I note from Rad Comm that at the Region III Conference, "Contest organisers are to be encouraged to use restricted parts of the bands and to make participants aware of this through the National magazines..." also, "Organisers are to be encouraged to be mindful of the band allocations placed on the various licences and classes internationally and to note the needs of operators not taking part in the contest. Has the message finally got through that not every Amateur wishes to engage in contests? All we need now is a sensible move to restrict the rights of every Tom, Dick and Harry to declare contests. If this was limited to National Societies only on a quota system then it would do a great service to Amateur Radio in general. Before someone points a finger at me, the straight key week is NOT a contest. It is an activity period and participants are encouraged to rag chew. Further more, bearing in mind the limitations of the less experienced, QRS is encouraged.

THAT'S TELLING 'EM
Spotted in an advertisement in Rad Comm: "We wish all readers a happy new year. Even those who don't want to know c.w. (because they can't do it)" Source: G4CJR.

SWEEP STANDS FROM SOFIA
Dimiter, LZ1AF extends his thanks to those who contribute to his subs but regrets that he is still unable to transfer hard currency abroad. In order to return the favour, FISTS aims and activities have been covered in an English language DX programme from Radio Sofia. He has been thus engaged for 34 years now and Dimiter, I would be grateful if you would explain the problems with regard to Eastern EU countries. Apart from that, thank you indeed for the coverage.

LETTER TO RSGB
A letter to the RSGB earlier this month has so far brought only the reply that "As a servant of the Society, I cannot comment on most of the points you raise in your letter. It is Council policy not to have a separate category without Radcomm with the exception of Family membership at the same address as a Corporate member." The letter quoted referred to the practicality of a separate "no Radcomm" category for those who feel that Radcomm offers them little in terms of value or interest. Also queried was the Society's attitude towards c.w. since there is far more publicity given to Microwave working, Packet, RTTY and the like when it is doubtful if these modes enjoy the same support as Morse. Noting that a vociferous group in the ARRL is pushing for a no-code HF licence, I sought assurance that the RSGB will not be influenced by happenings on the other side of the pond. The above points were in response to letters received from various members over the past few months but I also added a personal query. Since I would be 65 years of age on the 20th Jan, 1993, would I be expected to pay the full subs for that year following 23 years of unbroken membership? The letter has been forwarded to the appropriate Council members for comment.

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FROM ACROSS THE POND
Nancy includes a copy of her own news sheet, with so few members, it is practical to Mimeograph these and I note with horror that a piccy of yours truly and the boss was included! Hope they don't sue you for damage to the scanning drum lass. Hi. We also received a copy of the ex-G club "Bulletin" whose members were born in the UK but are now domiciled abroad. More later. The net on 14.056 is receiving a great deal of support and will hopefully attract the interest of casual listeners.

ANYONE FOR TAMWORTH
Those stalwarts G0NX/Y (Paul and Carol) are planning to launch a display stand at Tamworth later this year, no doubt assisted by other members in the locality so those of you planning to visit, please keep an eye open for them.

C.W. PASS
I am in possession of a photocopy printout showing a pass for our SWL Tony Mansfield with only one uncorrected error in both the plain language and figures section. Well done Tony and if you felt the occasion justified it then I trust you stayed within your limits with the boose. Hi.

CENTURY AWARD
Congratulations to Dennis G0MGD who holds certificate number 024. Now that Bill is active with the club call, the opportunity is there for many more contacts so for those who are still scratching, tail-end your wanted lists with (say) G4XXX and G4YYY UP 2.

FOR SALE
Here's a rare item, Vibrexplor "original" de luxe. Chromed base and parts purchased new in Oct/91 and hardly used. Absolutely mint cond. £75.00. Buyer to collect (or pay postage) G4XPE. 0332 700610
Nice one Mike and some-one is sure gonna be delighted.

LSL/G3J9W
Jack, G3LNC will again be operating the above from 27th Jan. to 6th Feb. ostensibly for the FOC Marathon but will be QRV at other times for FISTS members. The location is twist LA and SM hence the above.

CLUB STATIONERY
Up to now, only one member has expressed interest in this so it seems like a dead duck. Noting the seeming popularity of RSGB and RSARS etc note paper I thought it would have resulted in greater interest. Still, I have not shelled out for any paper up to now so I guess nothing is lost.

QSL BUREAU
Some are still not sure how it operates but quite simply, send your FISTS QSLs to G0FRR. No need for return envelopes and we can dispatch to RNARS, RSARS etc. if you mark them clearly as such in the top right hand corner of the obverse side. Returned QSLs are included with your newsletter.

SUPERKEYER
Last month's article evoked quite a bit of response and at least three members are intent upon obtaining the works. Thus far, I have been far too QRL so would appreciate reports as would many other members. My current keyer is a CONTESTER but following the MORSE exercise, it blew a diode somewhere which leaves me with only one memory instead of the usual ten. However, it still functions fb in other respects so who am I to complain?

THE STRAWBERRY BASKET
G6VS. Ole Twinkle toes has been at it again. Both he and his Wife achieved their objective and astounded their dance examiners. Well done both of you George - wish I had your energy! ** G0LRE. Hi Larry. VMT mate and as soon as I get some free time I will make arrangements to come up for that talk. He got a letter from Helen N52G who says the news letter turns her on. Oh yes, ** G4YJB. Ron is just one of a number who include generous extras with their subs, VMT Ron. I use an el-cheapo word processor which outputs to ASCII Ron and a popular DTP package together with a scanner for illustrations etc. Paper plates are made directly from the laser printer - a world of difference from the old physical cut and paste with light box we started out with. ** G4AYP. Stuart's new letter speaks of a wide distribution of his progeny. Son Simon helped re-enact the battle of Hastings but sadly, Harold lost again! Harry (the Jack Russell terrier) rolls in unspeakable things, gets into fights with larger dogs and, like Harold, always loses. Stuart's pen however has been less active in 91 but those appreciative letters must offer some encouragement. Hi, W8YBS. Fred's passion for letter writing reached its usual heights so XYL Phyllis resorted to the pen instead. In anticipation of retirement, Fred has been gathering the necessary compliments (a new TV for instance and VCR) but what did he buy Phyllis? A garbage disposal unit. Heck, I think I will get a Rubik's Game instead!!! ** G0LY. Hi, Mike. Note the redundancy but if your paedicles are beyond redemption, send 'em back and I will fix them for you. G4XSF. Lyn is having an identity problem. One member calls her Caroline, some call her Alison (her daughter's name) and the Lady at the stationers call her Geraldine. You can call me "anytime" flower. ** G6G5W. Out there in Bodmin the sky hooks are at a premium. BT telegraph poles are highly prized but with the "Vice" garden in "vorbote" the situation is rather similar with a hand scanner. He says he is still a bunting tosser at heart (for the puzzled this is a RN signaler, flags, semaphore etc.) and his struggle with the audio version of his Aldis lamp has been stifled by the failure of his Datong Morse Tutor. Anybody offering a friendly hand?? ** G40XB. VMT for the "bit extra" Trevor who also includes a copy of the BS&W mag "JUST LISTENING" which is the product of an amateur in Long Beach who has seen a market for a new QRP - QRO radio and has his own printer. Super job Trevor. Would appreciate any advance info from your contacts mate!! ** G3WWS. Mike must hold some sort of record since after 2 years of membership he has heard not one single member. He confesses that the Sunday net clashes with his habitual 9.5 mile run but who knows, having recently acquired the RNARS 20wpn proficiency award he may well find himself available on the Sunday net. Copying behind is largely by tape and in the case of one member it is virtually impossible to jump in. Mike so don't bother yourself. ** G0LJU. Hi Geo and thanks for odds. Surprising the number of people who are similarly appalled when they play back their own sending. Hi. Use the inter character spacing to relax your wrist briefly before the next one and it should help. ** G10PCU. David displays an Edision "J" series on his QSL card. V impressive David. ** G0KWD. Keith is sorting out some activity for the affiliated Societies contest in Jan. Probably too late Keith but hope G0MGD is a starter as it will involve himself and Lindy amongst others. ** GM3HIN. Tony is finding life QRL on the Isle of Arran with numerous chores about the house but makes the odd appearance on the bands. You may well hear him P from the Cock of Arran (on the Northern tip of the island) but his appearances from here are spasmodic. ** G7WBL. Ed is struggling with the code and has committed himself by selling his setup and investing in a new rotator and looking for a Cushcraft beam. He proves to be an ally of Keith - G0KWD since he vows to shun anything other than the Kent pump he uses. As an ex iron basher, he is busy making some look alike wrought iron gates - wonder if he is also thinking of fabricating a tower? Thanks for the invite Ed. You never know. ** GM4CAX. This letter courtesy of Ian (who is getting way) and the talking newsletter and thanks for the FT101B which is NBO on 160 and skillyy weakness precludes attempts at fixing it himself. Active on 2m but lamentably few c.w. stations on that band these days. ** G3A0V Bob, pse let me know where you got those stickers!! ** PA0H2HZ. Hi Hub. Thanks for the suggestion of printing location along with Call and Name etc. Trouble is that I would have to allocate something in the order of 15 characters extra which would mean...
perhaps 3 columns instead of 6 and 4 pages instead of two for the lists. Including the number would add at least another page. If you run a computer, I can put CALL, NAME, NUMBER and CITY on a floppy for you. ** G0PMN VMT Bernard and glad the dial-a-sked list is proving useful. ** G4JMI Spent Christmas in hospital with a long standing heart problem. Sure hope loope easier for you now Brian and we wish you speedy recovery. ** VK7DQ Gerry sends an enquiry for membership and asks if anybody can supply details of an award based on Post Codes. Not sure if this is the WAB brigade but he would appreciate info. ** GUJCW Bob is restricted in a bed-sit environment and an inside G5RV so maximum power is about 15W, which is aggravated by a fault activating the auto cut-out. Our Bob is an Octo (now in his 83rd year) but is kind enough to offer any help he can give. Good on yer Bob but afraid you are far too remote.

EX-G CLUB

From Geoff (KC3QC) via Nancy, a copy of the bulletin for the week above. The club was founded in 1959 by Reg Cherrill, W3HQO and others of a similar background and the same common interests, namely, the love and respect for Great Britain and the citizens thereof. Membership is open to Radio Amateurs who were not born in the UK but whose spouse or parents were. We are approaching 300 strong with members in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Singapore, South Africa, UK and Eire. At least once a day, there is a net either international or local. The international nets always command terrific response from their world wide members and they are affiliated to the RISG.

A bulletin is distributed quarterly and a complete membership list is distributed annually. Annual sub's are $10.00 (U.S.) which are renewable in December. If you are aware of any ex-patriot UK Amateurs who may appreciate knowledge of the club then perhaps you would like to drop 'em a line and let them know all about it. Members may be interested in the Saturday e.w. net on 14065 (+/-) where you will usually find Dick (W4CXH), W8PR, G3MEA and W3CTR. They are suspicious that many would be participants are "turned off" by hearing code at a speed at which they are not comfortable. As with FISTS however, you are invited chip in at your own speed and the old WW2 Navy rule applies i.e. "The speed of the convoy is the speed of the slowest ship". By the way Geoff, thanks for the plug in this article. Hi.

HOWLERS

From the ex-G bull, I could not resist passing on to you an extract from genuine letters sent by the public in response to a free milk scheme:

Please send me a form for cheap milk as I am expecting mother. I have a baby 12 months old. Thanking you for same. 
I have posted form by mistake before my child was properly filled in. Please send me a form for supply of milk for having children at reduced rates.
I have a baby 2 months old fed on cows and other children.
Please send me a form for cheap milk. I have a baby 3 weeks old. I did not know anything about it until my friend told me.
I am forwarding my marriage certificate and two children one of which has been a mistake, as you can see.
In accordance with instructions, I have given birth to twins in the enclosed envelope.
I require milk as I am stagnant.
The source for the above was Peter, G4ZNN and if it does nothing else then it points to the traps in the English language which are strewn in the path of the unwary.

SLOW MORSE TAPES

It was encouraging to find plenty of response to this suggestion. I am still QRX for a couple of callers to put their propositions on paper (usually not sufficiently at one with the world to remember details on the phone if I am not actually on the computer) but we may well be able to organise something on a national basis if all works out as planned. One received thus far is from Geo (GM4HYP) who has been obliging his local listeners for some eight years up to now. He has collected several computer programmes which can produce Cassette tapes with different Plain Language text. The tapes are available at speeds of 5, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 14 wpm on each tape but it will be quite easy to dedicate the tapes to just one speed. For the Novice operator, Geo is in the process of compiling a number of "Mock tests" at 5 wpm which include procedural symbols etc. At present he is using the text of the RA leaflet "How to become a Radio Amateur" for speeds up to 20 wpm. No written text is provided (there is a re-wind button if you simply MUST use it) and since he and his friends already provide this service to the lucky locals out there in Rutherglen, they would be delight to extend this to FISTS members also. For the moment, a C90 cassette and a note of the speed required will bring you lots of practice but please, don't forget the return STAMPED and addressed envelope. George's address is:

Mr. G.M. Allan,
22 Tynwald Ave.,
High Burnside,
RUTHERGLEN,
G73 4RN.

In order to avoid the problems we encountered when a similar scheme was operated previously, I would prefer to restrict this facility to members only. If there is anyone who you would like to assist who are not members then please act on their behalf. Too many non-members were sending insufficient return postage (sometimes I understand, none at all) etc. on the last occasion and there were also aggravations such as wrong cassette size, insufficient detail of what was required and occasionally a brusqueness which bordered on the offensive.

Geo. Pse advise Mike G3PUA of your computer and any of the pros you mentioned.

Ultimately it is going to be necessary to catalogue the tapes from the various volunteers in order to avoid duplication of text but a simple indication of source and page should suffice. Now then, I reckon I have enough on my plate at the moment and if some-one with a computer would like to tabulate all available practice tapes, print out sorted lists, handle enquiries and generally take charge of this side of the club activities then I would be most obliged.

Incidentally, for the computer owners, I have a couple of very interesting and useful pros on MS-DOS format which are yours for a SAE and a blank (preferably formatted) 720K (2 required) or 1.2/1.4M disc. These will permit you to generate code in varying speeds and offer a choice of auto generated code or code from a file derived source. You can for instance type a passage from a book, dump it into a file and call it up at any speed. Ideal for making tape cassettes if you have a suitable interface between the computer's speaker and your tape recorder. Our prime aim of course is to further the cause of e.w. by making people more aware of it's advantages and appeal and we can hardly succeed in this unless we strive to make them Morse literate.

ANTENNAS

Can you believe this? The old base-loaded screwdriver is a concept few of us would contemplate but I recall some odd-ball ideas which have been in use with varying degrees of success. A local flat-bond Amature found his droopy wire (slung out of a 3rd. floor window) of little use so he ran a croc clip to the TV antenna lead (running by his window) which was ultimately connected to a flat-wide distribution network. Another guy formed a noose on one end of a length of wire and lasooed the top of a nearby telephone pole - understand he created havoc with this arrangement before BT finally tumbled. An old friend used a "Joystick" for years before discovering that the old chain spring bedstead in his attic was infinitely more superior. In a terrace house in Bolton, I ran one half of a W3DZJ as an end-fed. It entered the house via a ground floor window, climbed up the front wall and entered the loft where the cable was concealed in a zig-zag manner. Odd thing is that although it presented a severe challenge to my "Z-match" it was most efficacious though that at period, there was no daytime TV service. On Ann, Bill and I tried to gamma-match the 35" mast for 40m. Aluminium joints are notoriously poor - pity we never thought of running a wire parallel to the mast! The vertical "birdage" used by some merchant vessels is sufficiently efficient but when once of them collapsed in a storm, an enterprising member jury-rigged a new one by lashing together a pair of ours from a life boat. I understand its performance equalled the original. If you have come across any odd set ups then let me know and we'll print 'em.

SUBS (OVERDUE)

I am sorry to keep harping on about this but really is getting a bit of a problem. There are a number of members whose subs were due as far back as last September who have still not renewed. Cross 'em
as far back as last September who have still not renewed. Cross 'em off I hear some say. I fear I am going to have to do just that but since a reminder stamp appears on the news letters and I post three issues before giving up the ghost it is an unnecessary drain on the club funds. If your subs are overdue and you do not intend to renew then please do me the courtesy of advising me. It costs you but one postage stamp whilst it costs the club three and no small measure of extra work.

G3XON KEY
Stan sent another piccy of his key but unhappily, it was identical to the original. I have had to do a lot of messing around with it Stan as you can see but I trust we have done it some justice. Hi.
As you can see from the above piccy, Stan has taken the word "key" literally and he has called it the "magic" key because it is sheer magic to use and is capable of opening the door to the great outside world. Sorry we could not do justice to the rear contact block which is just visible between the two thumb-post connectors but it delivers a lesson in what can be done with a little imagination, a degree of dexterity and a modicum of skill. I see no external signs of a bearing Stan so am not quite sure how you managed this but for the more dextrous of you, I pointed the way to a possible variation in the run-of-the-mill keys some time ago. The old Post Office relays utilised an arm with a "v" cut into them. This lever was so arranged that it could not wander far from it's location and the result was an almost frictionless movement rather like the old fashioned plank and log see-saw. Not as expensive as the modern ball-bearing pivot but certainly approaching it as far as low friction bearings go. Right then, you folks with small workshops and metal bashing skills; think about it!

G3XOLAW
Paul, G6FUS sends me an up-date on the Amateur Radio facilities at Winchester which is briefly detailed below:
The Amateur Radio Station G3XOLAW is run by the Hampshire Police ARS comprising Police employees, uniformed and civilian, serving and retired. It was founded in 1986 as the first radio club in the history of the Hampshire Constabulary.
At that time, the membership numbered nine only which was later to rise to 32 linked by a news letter.
Space was at a premium at the HQ complex and it proved quite a struggle to secure the accommodation (a disused Portalab known affectionately as "Le Shack") requiring many official reports and requests.
Surviving initially on subscriptions received from the members only, the hunt for equipment ensued and many leads were followed up, some demanding greater investigation than others, until they were equipped with both short wave and vhf transceivers.
In 1989 it was unanimously agreed that they should seek affiliated membership with the Radio Society of Great Britain and become a Society. This was achieved and a club station formed.
Since starting transmissions from "Le Shack" in 1989 they have enjoyed the same popularity throughout the world and continue to send and receive many QSL cards. It is amusing sometimes to see how long it takes for the "penny to drop" when in QSO for the subject to realise the significance of the callsign.
Their objective as a club is to span the divide twixt Police and public to improve relations and they see the world of Amateur Radio as an excellent vehicle to carry this philosophy. To date, they are extremely pleased with the feedback received and hope to broaden their horizons to include awards, promotion of the Youth into electronics via Amateur Radio (project Y.E.A.R.) and more. They are currently active on both VHF and HF where they tend to favourite the 20m band for both c.w. and SSB. On 2m you will usually find them monitoring S20 when the station is in use. The equipment comprises FT277B with a Mosley TA331 Jr 2 ele and a FT280 for 2M using a Comet dual band co-ax. They also have facilities for 10m FM for which a converted GAP27 antenna is pressed into use. Also employed is the AEA E7001 and a Heathkit electronic keyer.

MORSE QSL CARDS
Sorry it has taken so long to get more news on the above folks. Bill has recently received a communication from David Evans hinting that it would cost about £5.00 for our share of the 22,000 cards for dispersal. We are of course not averse to doing this but we want to see what we are getting before putting any money down since it has been indicated to me that FISTS has not been acknowledged amongst the other clubs mentioned on the cards.
From all accounts, the cards are single colour and single sided which does not seem to do justice to the occasion but I s'pose that is better than nothing.
If indeed they do become available, I will run appropriate labels through the printer nominating the operator concerned with space for his signature.

SPONSORSHIP
From Eric, G0KRT a letter whilst I am still covered in ink after having some hassle from the press. He has recently rigged an antenna for 40m where you will find him QRP from his DTR7. His introduction to the band netted a gaggle of FISTS and I am sure you will be shortly dipping your toe into the HF water. Thank you for the sponsorship Eric. I mis-led you I fear. Your guest is UASEAC, his name is Andy and he has a whole string of clubs on his QSL card including the California DX Foundation. With the ever changing world map nowadays, I am sure that his quoted address of OREL, U.S.S.R. is no longer going to be valid but we will get the app form to him some how.
Like Eric, most of you are sending me far more loot than is demanded for your guest members. In the interests of simplicity, such nominations from UK members will be £5.00 only no matter where they are located. This will not punish the club funds too much and will perhaps encourage other sponsors.

MISSING MEMBERS AT OLDHAM
Alright then, where were you all? Bill and my-self turned up at Oldham over the weekend and the only member I found there was G0GSO. This whiskey pot person was as usual scanning the RNARS stand. Still, I told him a badge - I'll swear I saw motts when he opened his purse - and we were to learn that Don G3HZZ was QRL at HMS Mercury (committee meeting I understand or could it be that someone has unearnt a bottle of bobble?)

QRP?
Heard on 40m recently: ERE QRP 200KW. Cor! Sure he must have meant mW but as so often happens, I heard what you said but I know what you meant. Hi

FINALE
Just about the lot for this month people. I am already getting material for next month's news letter but I need to get this to print PDQ. Just a quick note though, G60BCM wonders if any member has a half way decent path to the Isle of Man on 2m and if so, could they please organise a sked or two to help him with his code. Since Walter is now retired, daytime skeds would be no problem if this were to be the case.
G4YFD extends greetings to G2AKK.
On this day, Monday 20th. Jan. I am 64 years old, I am covered in ink and - as of this moment - I'm off for a pint!

Cheers for now folks. Will be looking for you on the bands when time permits but in the mean time, 73/s8 and stay sober.

Geo.