

 	<h2 style="text-align: center;">FISTS DOWN UNDER</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Newsletter – April 2012</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">Editor & QSL Manager for ZL: Nigel Hardy, ZL2TX, P.O. Box 15078, Otaki 5542, New Zealand. - Tel: 06-364-6339</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter Distribution & QSL Manager for VK: Chris Thompson, VK2CTN, P O Box 65, Dickson, ACT 2602, Australia</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Membership/Awards Liaison: Ralph Sutton, ZL2AOH, 12c Herbert Gardens, 186 The Terrace, Wellington 6011, New Zealand Tel: 0-4-473-0847. Fax: 0-4-473-0848</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QSL Manager for ZL6FF: Nigel Hardy, ZL2TX at address above. QSL Manager for VK2FDU: Chris Thompson VK2CTN at address above</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Address e-mails for all persons above to: <fists-down-under@ihug.co.nz> Web site --: www.fistsdownunder.org</p>	  FISTS 25 th Anniversary
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SUGGESTED FISTS CLUB CALLING FREQUENCIES

1.808 MHz (160m) – 3.528 MHz (80m) – 7.028 MHz (40m) – 10.118 MHz (30m) –
14.058 MHz (20m) – 18.085 MHz (17m) – 21.058 MHz (15m) – 24.918 MHz (12m) – 28.058 MHz (10m)

Members are reminded that the above frequencies are suggested calling frequencies. If they are busy, it is suggested that once you establish contact with a station, it may be prudent to change frequency down the band, avoiding other calling frequencies of known clubs.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome a bumper crop of new members this month.

VK8FQRP-Brendon Tadjell #14134, told us this about himself: - I have been SWL for quite a few years and finally bit the bullet and got an F call in early 2011. I am presently doing the last bit of study for my upgrade, hope to have this completed in the next fortnight.

I got the QRP bug early as I like going QRP/P, however voice ops portable became frustrating so I have spent the past seven months learning CW, this has improved my QRP contacts significantly.

I have only recently moved to VK4 from Darwin, however I work as a helicopter pilot on offshore oil rigs in VK6 and I'm fairly active /p from Broome in VK6. I also work in 4W (Timor Leste) from time to time.

VK4TJF-James Franklin #14135 comes from Stafford Heights another suburb of Brisbane, some 8 km north of the CBD. - He has provided this interesting personal profile: I first got my ham ticket as a technician class in the United States in 1993. I was stationed in Huntsville Alabama at Redstone Arsenal, as an army medic. I remember going to the club, taking the test, and getting my first hand held radio. On the test paperwork I documented my address as my home of record in Michigan, hence my call KC8CAM. Shortly after that I got out of the hobby. My next duty assignment was Schofield barracks Hawaii. While there, I did some training in Australia where I met my wife, Angela. We got married in Hawaii, stayed for about a year, and then moved to Ft. Carson Colorado. After a couple years I decided to live in Australia and earn a degree in nursing. While in Australia I got a reciprocal licence. Soon after the Morse code requirement was abolished and I got a full call. In October 2009 I went back to Hawaii for a holiday and earned my extra class licence. I earned my certificate of code proficiency from the ARRL for 25 WPM. I have many awards including the DXCC and WAC AWARD and I'm a member of the A-1 operator club. I still to this day remember going out on fox hunts with my dad who was a great ham. His call was K8UP. He became SK on 27th of June 2011 and I have taken over his call sign. Thus instead of VK4TJF/KC8CAM I'm now VK4TJF/K8UP. I also remember my mom talking on the repeater while driving me to scout camp. She is still a ham and her call sign is N8FE. She is also my stateside QSL manager. My brother's call sign is K8KHZ and he is very active as well.

Recently I had to refurbish my ham shack due to moving from Pine Rivers Murrumba Downs to Stafford Heights. A new 9 meter high tower is now up with my mini-beam for 20-15-10 meters. Before my dad became SK he knew that I had moved house next door to my mother and father in-law who I get along with very well. I asked my dad if I should put up another tower and my mini-beam and he said yes and that I should get Fred my father in-law to help. So this is done now and on the side of the house is a memorial sign made by my brother in-law. This way I will always remember a true Elmer and great ham. Everything is now geared towards portable operations with a new rugged ICOM 7200 and a new 20 to 10 meter band vertical dipole, and battery. I have two paddles. A Begali simplex and a

K8RA paddle one of "Jerry's kids". I also own a straight key for straight key night, an old Czech army key. I usually tool around at 30 WPM and advocate using programs like RUFZ, Just Learn Morse Code, and Learn CW On Line, to learn CW. My birthday is 1 March and I'm thinking about getting a Begali Sculpture.

Upcoming events that I plan to operate in are the John Moyle Field day and the Titanic tragedy day with VK4BCM-Bevan #9053 and the Redcliffe & District Radio Club (VK4RC- FISTS Club #9066). I'm the QSL and Awards Manager for the Redcliffe club. You can usually find me on the 20 meter band calling CQ.

VK5BUG-David (Doc) Wescombe-Down #14136 joined us after receiving a copy of our newsletter from a friend. He writes about himself: - I just thought I would share with my CW colleagues that I have been operating the WIA Special Call sign VK5MGY for & on behalf of the Adelaide Hills Amateur Radio Club. The allocation runs from May 2011 (the launch of a centenary event here in Adelaide) through till April 15 2012 the centenary date.

I operated as VK5MGY for the 2011 RD contest & also in the recent 10m WWDX contest. Have worked & sent special QSL cards to several hundred stations (quite a number of VK & ZL) and am hopeful of working more before the calendar runs out.

I hang around On 3518, 7018, 14018, 21018 or 28018KHz on weekends - no set days or times as I have a life.

I operate with a Cootie key, Vibroplex bug & PMG straight keys in parallel (QLH) & swap frequently for a bit of fun.

I am ex-Marconi School of Wireless, Sydney, external student 1969-71 & served 9yrs full time in the Royal Australian Navy (Petty Officer telegraphist/cryptographer) & 5yrs active reserve, plus several stints as relief SRO on various icebreakers, north & south polar regions. I did a short "look over the fence" stint as a /KC0 from McMurdo Sound in early 70s when relieving a US op appendicitis patient.

I have made CW-only operations since 1966 as VK8, then VK3, VK4, VK5, VK7, VK4 & VK5 again, including 12,000+ QRP QSOs as VK5HP, VK4CMY, and VK7CQ.

I love the code & what you guys are up to. If you have room for another "dit", that will be me!!

ZL2BMB-Mark Walker #14137 from Island Bay Wellington. We hope to be able to publish Mark's personal profile in a later issue.

VK4CU-Colin Whale #14138 gives us this account of himself: - I am one of a considerable number of ex-seagoing and/or coastal radio brass-pounders who just haven't got it in them to let go of Morse wireless-telegraphy! Along with many others, including including those whose involvement is purely via the Amateur Service, we recognise the sheer effectiveness of the CW mode in poor radio conditions, when limited antenna facilities are available or when low powers are being used.

Many of us recall the days when a telegraphist could be recognized by his "fist", whether he was using a Post Office or straight key, semi-automatic mechanical bug or sideswiper. Some had beautiful flowing stuff like Edwardian script, others were more copper-plate. Some could be incredibly machine-like and precise. Some, not!

At sea, we'd hear a ship pushing traffic into say Sydney Radio, and say to ourselves - "Ah, so that's where they've sent Jim!" The same recognition occurred on the Amateur Bands. You knew who was there before you heard the Call Sign!

My own involvement with the art extends over 26 years at sea with Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) who, like the Marconi Company and many others, had a pool of R.O.s which was hired out to shipping companies. I regard myself as incredibly lucky to have had this experience, which ran from 1965 to 2002.

In 1985 I joined Queensland Maritime Museum and was responsible for activating the W/T office aboard QMMA's River Class frigate, HMAS DIAMANTINA. The station went to air as VK4RAN in late 1985, using the ship's equipment and we continue on-air participating in such events as the Museum ship Weekend and making rag-chew style contacts.

We also put QMMA's 1912 vintage Lighthouse on-air as VK4MM once a year for the International Lighthouse Weekend.

I've been on the Amateur Bands since 1971 as VK4CU, and it's been a very valuable learning experience which made me better at my job at sea.

I married Anne in 2002, who found that a good sleeping berth in the winter was behind the main transmitter aboard Diamantina!

MEMBERS' NEWS

ZL1MH-Mike #9038 reports from the Far North that he is gradually settling into his reduced-size QTH. - He says that he has only got a Hustler vertical now - a big difference after so many years with his 1200ft horizontal loop.

VK2BZN-Graeme #14121 has moved to Papua New Guinea. His call is now P29GM and his new contact details areas shown in the latest membership list.

Our grateful thanks for including a donation when renewing their subscriptions to **VK3OZ-Pat #9070, ZL1AYQ-Jim #9602, ZL3TE-Wes #9566 and VK2UK Ted #9620.**

OTHER MEMBERS' NEWS

N7CFA-Ed #1402 says: - I read with interest the nice article by ZL2AIM on his outside operating and setup. As I am sitting here at my desk and looking out the window where the rain is coming down hard and is mixed with small bits of snow, the temperature is about 3-degrees C, I envy his location and operating outside in a beautiful setting from a picnic table. And to make a decision about operating from the top of the hills or close to the sea, that is no option here all the time. The top of the hills are covered with snow and to be close to the sea would be very miserable, with strong winds and heavy rainfall.

Our only hope here in south-western Washington State is that we will have some semblance of summer this year. It seems that the weathermen have found a storage of rain that they unleash at us at any time of the year of late. It is too late in life to think about moving to a warmer part of the USA as I have lived here in Longview since 1926, webs have grown between my toes like those of a duck and it is a way of life.

But we do not have the extremes of tornadoes here and hardly any snow in the valley, little freezing temperatures in the Winter and mild Summers that are all punctuated by rainfall. I have travelled to other parts of this continent as well as Europe and on down to Tahiti in the Pacific. I must like it here for some reason, but operating in a setting like in the article looks most inviting at the present time.

K6DF-Dennis #3076, the FISTS Awards Manager has been experiencing problems receiving emails. So please note his correct email address is now **fistsawards@gmail.com**. He reminds us that logs for the Prefix Awards as notified in the December Supplement to FISTS Down Under should be forwarded to him at this new address.

ANNIVERSARY MERCHANDISE

As we advised earlier, both the UK and US FISTS Club Chapters have taken the initiative on making available souvenirs to celebrate the 25th anniversary of FISTS.

M0BPT Robert #5576 reports that the first batch of FISTS mugs has been manufactured and distributed. – Details for ordering are at **<http://www.m0bpt.org.uk/25th%20mug/FISTS%2025TH%20ANNIVERSARY%20MUG.pdf>**

WZ8C-Nancy #0379 advises that there are now souvenir T-shirts and polo shirts available in a range of sizes. The prices are \$US 7.00 for the T-shirts and \$15.00 for the polo shirts. Postage to ZL/VK is \$US10.00 for one shirt and \$US 7.00 for each subsequent shirt. Nancy can be contacted at **nancy@tir.com**

TRAWLING THE WEB

VK5BUG-David #141356 recommends that those with an interest in old school Maritime radio communications, check out the following website: **http://www.radiomarine.org/audio/list?panel=pab1_13#pab1_13** - After you listen to some of the great old CW, go to the links on the left of the page and visit some of the old costal Maritime stations. -Very cool stuff -- you can almost feel the warmth from the old vacuum tubes in the Collins and WRL transmitters.

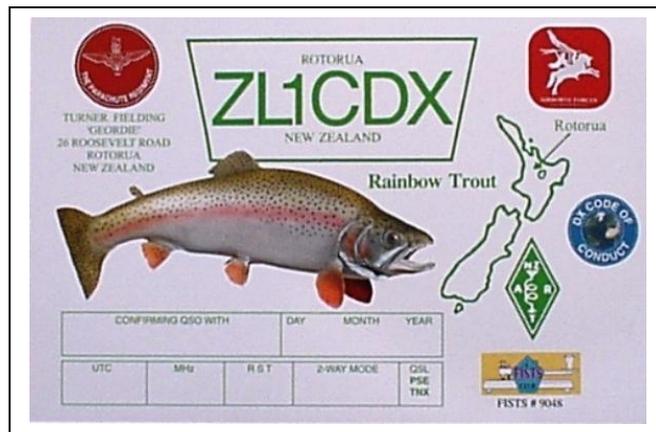
David also brought our attention an interesting Power Point display about the building and departure of the ill-fated Titanic. A copy of the presentation can be found on our web site at **<http://www.fistsdownunder.org/-%20Additions/titanic.pps>** - As it is a large file it takes some time download, so please be patient

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

These are some of the CW contest/event offerings in April 2012 most of which will be of more interest to our northern hemisphere readers. Thanks to WA7BNM Contest Calendar <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

RSGB 80m Club Championship CW	1900Z-2030Z Apr 2
ARS Spartan Sprint	0100Z-0300Z Apr 3
LZ Open 40m Sprint Contest	0400Z-0800Z Apr 7
SP DX Contest	1500Z Apr 7 to 1500Z Apr 8
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0030Z-0230Z Apr 11
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z Apr 11 and 1900Z-2000Z Apr 11 and 0300Z-0400Z Apr 12
JIDX CW Contest	0700Z Apr 14 to 1300Z Apr 15
EU Spring Sprint CW	1600Z-1959Z Apr 14
Georgia QSO Party	1800Z Apr 14 to 0359Z Apr 15 and 1400Z-2359Z Apr 15
Yuri Gagarin International DX Contest	2100Z Apr 14 to 2100Z Apr 15
Hungarian Straight Key Contest	1500Z-1700Z Apr 15
Titanic 24 Hour Sprint – see rules below	0000Z - 2359Z Apr 15
Holland DX Contest	0000Z-2359Z Apr 21
ES Open HF Championship	0500Z-0859Z Apr 21
CQ Manchester Mineira DX Contest	1200Z Apr 21 to 2359Z Apr 22
YU DX Contest	2100Z Apr 21 to 1700Z Apr 22
CW ops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z Apr 25 and 1900Z-2000Z Apr 25 and 0300Z-0400Z Apr 26
Helvetia Contest	1300Z Apr 28 to 1259Z Apr 29

ZL1CDX QSL Card



Turner Fielding, "Geordie" suggested that I feature a members QSL Card as a filler in the newsletter. I often get a gap that needs filling so here is Geordie's new QSL Card. Any other members like to submit their QSL Card for inclusion in a future newsletter?

R.M.S.TITANIC

As reported last month, a lot of effort by radio amateurs worldwide is going into commemorating the Titanic disaster. UK FISTS has organized the TITANIC 24 hour Sprint on Sunday 15 April 2012 0000-2359 UTC.

We trust that all of our members will participate in some of the day's on-air activities. Those wishing to operate using the FISTS Special Calls please contact Ralph (for ZL6FF) and Chris (for VK2FDU) respectively as soon as possible. It would be nice to have 24 hour schedules for both calls.

TITANIC 24 HOUR SPRINT 2012-RULES

Recognising the 100th anniversary of the loss of the RMS Titanic on the 15th April 1912. This event is a standard exchange between stations.

DATE

00.01 – 23.59 UTC Sunday 15th April 2012.

QRG

All licensed amateur bands except the WARC bands.

SCORING

10 points for any Titanic special event station.

5 points for a FISTS HQ station.

(GX0IPX, GX3ZQS, MX5IPX, VK2FDU, ZL6FF, JL3YMV, KN0WCW)

3 points for a FISTS Affiliated Club Station.

2 points for a FISTS Member.

1 point for a Non Member.

LOGS

To include DATE/CALL/NAME/QTH/QRG/TIME/FIST No or NM/ POINTS.

GENERAL

Titanic special event stations from around the world will be active on this day. Any increase to this list will be notified by email.

EI100T - Irish Titanic 100th Anniversary commemorations, Cork, Ireland.

GB100MGY – New Brighton, Wirral, United Kingdom.

GI100MGY - Project White Star, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

GB100GGM - Pontllanfraith, Blackwood, Gwent, South Wales.

OO100MGY – Antwerp, Belgium

OR100MGY – Knokke-Heist, Belgium

OTT100MGY – Londerzeel, Belgium

VI4MGY - Queensland Maritime Museum, Southbank, Brisbane, Australia.

VK5MGY - Special event station, Adelaide, South Australia

VO1MGY: - Admiralty House Communications Museum, Mount Pearl, NL. Canada.

SEND TO

All entries' logs can be received by post to: **R.D.Walker M0BPT. FISTS - PO Box 6743, Tipton, DY4 4AU, United Kingdom**
Or email **m0bpt(at)yahoo.co.uk** in Excel/CSV/tabbed word document format if possible please.

Picture by D. Clarke



With God on Our Ride

By Al Kirk ex-VE7RM as told to John Kirk VK4TJ

As a Navigator/Radio Operator in the Royal Canadian Air Force, one of my more enduring postings was aboard “The V.I.P. Plane”, Canada’s answer to AIRFORCE 1.

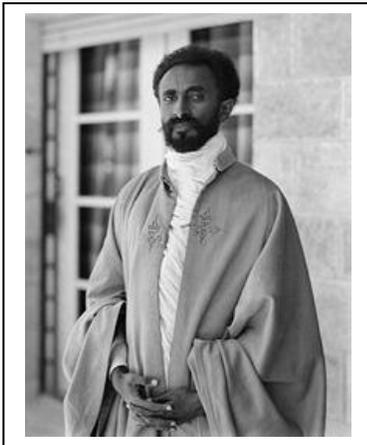
We never questioned the whys and wherefores of our passenger manifest – “Orders is orders”! The garment bag containing our uniforms was seldom far from the front door, as we could be called upon at any moment to fly literally anywhere.

For reasons never fully understood, one of our more frequent passengers was a rather diminutive Ethiopian Emperor by the name of Haile Selassie. Presumably, the indigent Ethiopians could not afford a V.I.P. plane of their own, but would lose considerable face when hobnobbing with other heads of state by arriving on commercial transport. Canada must have perceived some diplomatic advantage in indulging Ethiopia’s repeated requests, or perhaps were just too nice to say no. ☺

It was only years later, through my son’s interest in reggae music, that I learned that I may have unknowingly been carrying the ultimate V.I.P. of all time – God himself!

From Wikipedia: “Haile Selassie is revered as the returned Messiah of the Bible, God incarnate among the Rastafari movement”.

In fact, the Rastafari movement takes its name from Haile’s pre-regnal title and name: Ras Tafari, usually rendered in English as “Prince Tafari”.



Haile himself vehemently denied any divine origins: “Do not worship me. I am not God. I’m only a man”. He was, in fact, a devout Coptic Christian, worshipping Jesus Christ. That was not good enough for 100,000 idolising Jamaican fans who literally mobbed his airplane as it touched down on the tarmac of Kingston’s Norman Manley Airport in 1966. Why wouldn’t they? This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to rub shoulders with the big guy himself, provided the Rastafarians had it right...

In those days of navigation by dead reckoning and celestial sights through the cockpit Perspex, no one ever took on-time landings, or even landings period, as a given, but I do not recall a single drama on any one of Haile’s flights. Perhaps it was divine intervention? ☺