

 	<h2 style="text-align: center;">FISTS DOWN UNDER</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Newsletter – August 2012</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">Editor &amp; 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 &amp; 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: &lt;<a href="mailto:fists-down-under@ihug.co.nz">fists-down-under@ihug.co.nz</a>&gt; Web site --: <a href="http://www.fistsdownunder.org">www.fistsdownunder.org</a></p>	  FISTS 25 <sup>th</sup> 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

A welcome this month to **VK2EBN-Brian Newman #14146**. Brian resides in Kotara a suburb of Newcastle, New South Wales, located 9 kilometres (6 mi) from Newcastle's central business district.

A welcome also to **ZL3WD-Les Bagnall #14147** from Mosgiel an urban satellite of Dunedin in Otago, New Zealand, fifteen kilometres west of the city's centre.

We hope to be able to publish personal profiles of them later

#### TRAWLING THE WEB

The amateur radio CubeSat FITSAT-1 will carry an optical communications experiment that aims to write Morse Code across the night sky using high intensity LEDs. It launches to the ISS on 21 July, from where it will be deployed in September. For more information see [www.uk.amsat.org/2037](http://www.uk.amsat.org/2037).

#### HOUSEKEEPING

The processing of membership renewal notices takes up a considerable amount of volunteer time; time that could well be spent enjoying our hobby. Consequently the renewal procedure will be simplified. Members will receive a renewal notice by post in the month before their membership expires. In future, reminders will no longer be e-mailed. If the membership renewal has not been received after three months, a final notice will be sent, which will point out that, if the membership has not been renewed within one month, it will be considered as a resignation.

#### MEMBERS NEWS

Thanks to **VK3HJ-Luke #9697** for enclosing a donation when renewing his subscription.

**VK4SWE/VK4EI-Lyn #14132**, a resident of Sweers Island in the Gulf of Carpentaria (OC-227), planned to once again be active during the RSGB IOTA Contest (July 28-29th). We look forward to hearing how she fared.



Lyn sent us these pictures of a fun key she has created. – "... it is a little buzzer 'spy' (not) key I turned into a racing car hihi – no, it doesn't go any faster, but is actually is nice to send with – one of those YA1860 tiny buzzer keys from the field telephone units.

Thanks to **ZL1BSG-Keith #90** and **ZL2OWL-Phil #14122** for including a donation when renewing their subscriptions.

A message from **ZL2AIM-Ian #9683**. - I am interested in making contacts with CW on 6m using an IC703+. Having checked the ZL band plan it would appear that 52.050 is the calling frequency. So far I have heard nothing.

My antenna may not be ideal (New Carolina Windom cut to 40m) but the 703+ tunes it to 1:1

I would like to know if there is any regular CW activity on this band and if so at what time of the day is preferable? (UTC)

#### **OTHER MEMBERS'NEWS**

**M0TRN-Thomas #14893** has posted this interesting notice. – He says that this is for those of you who want to generate your own practice files for learning CW or improving your QRQ copy:

I've just released a new version of CWWAV, version 0.4, with added support for UTF-8 files and a number of accented letters, suitable for at least Scandinavian languages and German, maybe French too.

I also added Jules Verne: A Journey to the Centre of the Earth to the examples, and a conversion script to convert it to MP3 CW's in chapters. It sounds really good with new settings.

This software runs on Linux and instructions are available in the README. It's probably possible to run on Windows and maybe one day I'll release a precompiled version.

Check the web site <https://freecode.com/projects/cwwav>

*Description:* CVWAV takes one or more text files (or text read from standard input) and converts the text into a WAV audio file containing the CW (Morse code) representation of the text. It's useful for generating practice files if you are learning CW and want to practice by listening to text. It's a very simple program but it is designed to do what it does well. That is, it is designed to produce good sounding CW output files, with proper timing and comfortable envelope to avoid key clicks and to make the CW softer.

*Release Notes:* This release adds UTF-8 text file support and support for a number of European accented letters; it should be able to transcribe Danish/Norwegian/Swedish/German files, and possibly French. It also changes paragraph breaks (an empty line in the input) to produce a short pause instead of " = ". It adds "A Journey to the Interior of the Earth" by Jules Verne (from Project Gutenberg) to the examples, along with a conversion script with some nice settings

**K4UK-Stan #2934** (the US FISTS QSL manager) reports on the effect on his Virginia QTH of the massive storm that affected much of the eastern United States recently: - We had a very big wind storm last Friday which took down three of our trees. Many other trees on Long Island Drive went down taking out the power lines.

We got power restored on Tuesday which permitted us to get some air conditioning. We had temperatures in the high 90's F and it was 104 F on Monday.

We didn't get our phone line repaired until this morning about 9 AM .My E-mails come in via the phone line. When I went to <rev.net> I had 142 incoming messages.

We had no damage to our house. However, the branches blown out of the trees took out all three of my antennas. The R-7 vertical was broken right at the bottom. The centre of the 160 Meter Inverted Vee came down to the ground. One side of the All-Band Trap Dipole was ripped off.

One of our two apple trees was blown over into our vegetable garden.

One of our large trees was blown over onto our neighbour's house creating some minor damage.

Just prior to the wind I was attempting to contact RU9HM on 20 Meters. After each of my attempts he replied: "SRI signal too weak" - he never got my call sign. I had just gone to QRZ.COM to get his Email address when I heard a VERY loud bang and the power went off. That was 9:20 PM.

We didn't get hardly any rain with all that wind which was reported to be 80 MPH. We went outside when the wind died and with flash lights saw most of the mess. But it wasn't until the next morning that we saw the full impact of the storm which was identified as a "derecho" (*Derecho comes from the Spanish word for "straight" (cf. "direct") in contrast with a tornado which is a "twisted" wind. The word was first used in the American Meteorological Journal in 1888 in a paper describing the phenomenon and based on a significant derecho event that crossed Iowa on 31 July 1877. - We would call it a severe gale, Stan!*)

So now with the phone working we are back to normal. - Hi!

We had an outfit here on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday cutting up the downed trees. They will be back next week to complete the work. These show the mess.



I have got the All-Band Trap Dipole back up. But the 160 Meter Inverted Vee will require getting Riley, K4ORD to come over with his sling-shot to get the centre support back up in the top of the tree.

Don't know what I'll do about getting the R-7 vertical in operation because it does have some damage.

So now you know what happened over here in "The Colonies"

#### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

These are some of the CW contest/event offerings in August 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>

NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z~ Aug 3
European HF Championship	0000Z-2359Z~ Aug 4
North American QSO Party~ CW	1800Z~ Aug 4 to 0600Z~ Aug 5
RSGB RoPoCo CW	0700Z-0830Z~ Aug 5
ARS Spartan Sprint	0100Z-0300Z~ Aug 7
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z~ Aug 8 and 1900Z-2000Z~ Aug 8 and 0300Z-0400Z~ Aug 9

NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z~ Aug 10
WAE DX Contest~ CW	0000Z~ Aug 11 to 2359Z~ Aug 12
SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	0000Z-2359Z~ Aug 12
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0030Z-0230Z~ Aug 15
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z~ Aug 17
Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	0100Z-0300Z~ Aug 20
SKCC Sprint	0000Z-0200Z~ Aug 22
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z~ Aug 22 and 1900Z-2000Z~ Aug 22 and 0300Z-0400Z~ Aug 23
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z~ Aug 24
Hawaii QSO Party	0400Z~ Aug 25 to 2200Z~ Aug 26
YO DX HF Contest	1200Z~ Aug 25 to 1200Z~ Aug 26
Kansas QSO Party	1400Z~ Aug 25 to 0200Z~ Aug 26 and
1400Z-2000Z~ Aug 26	
SARL HF CW Contest	1400Z-1600Z~ Aug 26
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z~ Aug 31

### **FISTS MEMBER PROFILE FOR VK3HJ-Luke Steele #9697**

When I joined the FISTS Club in 2008, I was already convinced of the merits of the Morse code for furthering my interests in the hobby of Amateur Radio. Having returned to the air in 2006, after many years occupied with other interests, I found again the pleasure of communicating with others in the hobby. Soon I was starting to work DX, something I had previously never really pursued seriously. It became obvious that to enjoy the DX fully, I needed to regain proficiency in the Code. Having passed the 10 wpm Code test for my AOCIP in 1981, I worked only a few CW QSO, then let it go.



My working life started in 1980 as an Army Apprentice Electronics Technician, then in various units of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals. In 1990 I left the Army and continued in telecommunications, finishing as a Technical Writer. 2000 saw me in Abu Dhabi training Endurance Horses, and since 2004 I've been a Toe Cutter. Well, that's what I call myself! I take care of horses' hooves, with a lot of interesting rehabilitation and therapeutic work. So, the profession became a hobby, and my hobby a profession.

Well, after working my first 100 countries in 2008, all on phone, I qualified DXCC in 2009. This was a mixed mode DXCC, having started to work the DX on CW and also RTTY. Now my main mode of operation is CW, with about 75% of my 2012 log showing that mode. I will resort to phone when the DX station is only on SSB! With 300 countries worked, band DXCC on 80-15m, there's little new to work, apart from band/country slots. 12 and 10m just need some more confirmations, and on Top Band I'm 2/3 of the way there. This year, I've started on my DXCC QRP, using an FT-817 with a maximum of 5W, CW only. The 15m band has been great for QRP DX, with many stations surprisingly easy to work!

On my Morse restoration journey, I've operated the VK100WIA centenary call, VK100ARV centenary call, and in Vanuatu as an operator with the YJ0VK expeditions in 2010, 2011 and 2012. The past two years I've had a go at the CQ DX Marathon, which runs all year. Col, VK4CC pipped me at the post last year – well done OM! I don't operate contests, apart from a couple of local ones such as the NZART Memorial, Remembrance Day, and Trans-Tasman.

Having had my fill of "5nn TU" contacts, I enjoy a proper chat when I can. With, at last, a decent level of proficiency, I can converse up to around 25 wpm. It took a great deal of motivation and effort to gain the skill, but it has paid off, with a whole new world, literally, opening up to a fairly modest station. My tools include a Bencher BY-1 iambic paddle and K1EL (kit) keyer. With no towers or big beams, just wire antennae and a home-brew Hex Beam, it has been the efficiency of the Code that has allowed me to enjoy our hobby so much more. I believe that Morse code requires the highest of operating skills, and I enjoy the privilege of communicating with some of the very best Radio Operators. Anyone can pick up a microphone and yap, a reasonably knowledgeable person can set up a digital station, but then it's just pushing buttons, but Morse code is what distinguishes Amateur Radio from any other radio communications today.

I must thank John VK4BZ for his Morse Practice sessions, before he went to Afghanistan with the Army, and the encouragement of FISTS Club members Chris VK3QB and Drew VK3XU, and the FISTS Club, through the interesting and enjoyable newsletters.