

 	<h2 style="text-align: center;">FISTS DOWN UNDER</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Newsletter – May 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>	  <p style="text-align: center;">FISTS 25th Anniversary</p>
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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

This month we welcome **VK3PEU-Chris O'Brien #14139** from Essendon a suburb in *Melbourne*, Victoria, Australia, 10 km north-west from *Melbourne's* central business district. We hope to have a brief profile of Chris in a later issue of FISTS Down Under.

We also welcome **ZL3HA-Grant Rawshorn #14140** who tells us - I have been a licensed amateur radio operator since passing my restricted licence examination as a teenager while attending Christchurch Boys High School in 1971. At that time the school had a radio club, ZL3BE, under the instruction of teacher Alec Swan ZL3NB. Later, in 1973 I gained my full privileges licence by passing the CW test, and have been on and off air periodically ever since.

Over the years my radio interests have varied and have included homebrew VHF QRP, HF 20M DX, digital modes on the amateur satellites and HF, and organising the Space Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment for Middleton Grange School in Christchurch (STS-64, Space Shuttle Discovery, September 1994).

While at school my call signs were ZL3TJB and ZL3PA. I then ceased all activity in 1976 due to career and subsequently family commitments. Then in 1984 I re-licensed as ZL3JG, a call I also still hold today.

Today my primary call sign and the one you are most likely to find me using is ZL3HA. The original holder of this call was the late Harry Arnold, an old family friend from many years ago and a well known and respected amateur radio operator. It is a privilege for me to hold his call. My QTH is Wellington with time equally split between Kapiti Coast and Churton Park.

In December 2011 I established my station again after an absence from the air of over 10 years. Finishing full time employment which involved a lot of travel allows me to once again take up this most enjoyable of hobbies. I also now hope to gain a degree of proficiency in CW and to operate CW on a regular basis - something I have never achieved before now. I am practising daily using a very good iPad application called "Ham Morse" by [AA9PW](#). (You can find it in the Apple app store). When in front of the PC I use "CW Trainer" by [G4FON](#).

My other significant interest is photography, including the creation and web hosting of 360 degree virtual tours. Whenever I'm on air you can find me by checking the live details on my website www.zl3ha.com. I look forward to eventually becoming acceptably proficient at sending and receiving CW (unassisted by any computer) and making many new friends in FISTS!

MEMBERS NEWS

We appreciate the donations made by **VK1AI – Greg #9604** and **VK2KJJ / OZ6YJ – Knud #9689**.

VK5BUG-Dvid (Doc) #14136 reports on the operation of VK5MGY the special event station in Adelaide, South Australia for the centenary acknowledgement of RMS Titanic.

311 QSOs were made into 38 countries, 1 x 160m, 21 x 80m, 184 x 40m, 39 x 20m & 66 x 10m - All QSL cards were despatched by 17 April 2012, either direct or via WIA Outwards QSL Bureau.

The station configuration was: Ten Tec Omni V, Collins 30L-1, Cootie Key, 45m Inverted-L @ 10m with 60 radials (2Km buried copper wire), non-resonant GP @ 4m, 28MHz EDZ loop & Johnson Matchbox coupler.

VI4MGY was the only other special event station heard. VK5MGY was not authorised to operate on the WARC bands.

Thank you to all FISTS operators & others for the contacts.

VK4BCM-Bevan #9053 reports on Titanic commemoration activities in Brisbane, Queensland.

My thanks to all those from the Redcliffe Radio Club (VK4RC FISTS# 9066) who actually rolled up their sleeves and participated in the event. Although these guys were not "CW" ops they saw the opportunity to get involved in something that would promote the amateur radio movement, and in particular their club, providing transport, logistical and moral support and even XYL support with snacks. Without these visionaries the event would not have been the success it was. In spite of battling JA, GC, Russian contests and adverse weather we put up a formidable effort.

Our brightly coloured tent stood out among the old maritime relics in a pristine area on the banks of the Brisbane River. Let's admit it, we were not in the best position for radio communication but we persisted.

Satisfaction was gained from seeing the many families visiting the site (as a result of media advertising) and asking questions about Morse code and the role radio played in the Titanic disaster; actually seeing operators working and having an opportunity to send Morse code themselves.

We had 3 operators until about 1100Z and one from then until we closed at about 2230Z. The result was in excess of 170 contacts including one from the sub Antarctic island of Macquarie. They heard only one other special event station VK5MGY. We are pleased with the result and happy to know we made many children more familiar with Morse code.

Bevan went on to say that he participated in an interview on the Australian national radio service ABC, in which he did give FISTS a good wrap up on ABC, because they asked him to explain about the origin of FISTS, and the interviewer was fascinated. The following six photographs show some of the action!





OTHER MEMBERS' NEWS

G3ZOD-Graham #8385 reports that FISTS Down Under Awards are now tracked by his new Windows FISTS Log converter V.2.4.0. program. Details of the program can be seen at <http://fists.co.uk/members/membersflc.html>

TRAWLING THE WEB

The ARRL introduces new online procedures for DXCC - <https://p1k.arrl.org/onlinedxcc/about.php>

Bright "Sparks" The "Wireless Telegraphists" and Their Work: <http://www.titanicebook.com/radio.html>

An 11 minute video of the erection of a huge tribander mast: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cuk1Q9yaRAw>

Go to our website www.fistsdownunder.org to hear an interesting BBC Discovery podcast of a programme about the radio messages exchanged during the Titanic disaster. It can also be accessed direct at http://www.fistsdownunder.org/-%20Additions/discovery_20120409-2006a%20Titanic.mp3

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

AGCW QRP/QRP Party	1300Z-1900Z May 1
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z May 4
10-10 Int. Spring Contest	CW0001Z May 5 to 2359Z May 6
ARI International DX Contest	1200Z May 5 to 1159Z May 6
7th Call Area QSO Party	1300Z May 5 to 0700Z May 6
ARS Spartan Sprint	0100Z-0300Z May 8
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z May 9 and 1900Z-2000Z May 9 and 0300Z-0400Z May 10
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z May 11
EUCW Fraternalizing CW QSO Party	1000Z-1200Z May 12 and 1800Z-2000Z May 13
CQ-M International DX Contest	1200Z May 12 to 1159Z May 13
FISTS Spring Sprint	1700Z-2100Z May 12
Sangster Shield Contest – See note below	0800Z-1100Z May15 and 0800Z-1100Z May 16
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0030Z-0230Z May 17
His Maj. King of Spain Contest	CW1200Z May 19 to 1200Z May 20
Baltic Contest	2100Z May 19 to 0200Z May 20
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z May 23 and 1900Z-2000Z May 23 and 0300Z-0400Z May 24
RSGB 80m Club Championship	CW1900Z-2030Z May 24
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z May 25
CQ WW WPX Contest	CW0000Z May 26 to 2359Z May 27
QRP ARCI Hootowl Sprint	2000 local - 2400 local May 27
MI QRP Memorial Day CW Sprint	2300Z May 27 to 0300Z May 28

WELLINGTON RADIO ZLW

Wellington Radio ZLW closed in 1993 after operating from Tinakori Hill (now renamed "Ahumairangi"), for about eighty years. A group of former ZLW operators is planning a commemoration for all those who contributed to maritime safety all those years and the radio operators who were executed in the Gilbert Islands (Kiribati) in 1942.

The site of the radio station has been made into a lookout area with picnic tables. The commemoration is planned to provide an additional table to which is attached a memorial plaque. The unveiling ceremony is planned for 16 September 2013, the 20th anniversary of the station's closure. We will report any developments as we receive them.

Meanwhile, former ZLW and ships' operators who wish to be involved and kept informed of how the plans for the event are progressing are invited to communicate with Barry Allison <bazbarbzingizzie@xtra.co.nz>

2010 NZART Sangster Shield QRP CW Contest

When: - Saturday, 15 May 2012 and Sunday, 16 May 2012

Times: - 0800 Z until 1100 Z each evening

Band: - 80m Mode: - CW only.

The rules for this contest can be found at <http://www.nzart.org.nz/activities/contest-rules/rules-sangster-shield/> or in the 2010 - 2011 NZART Call Book, Page 5-6; the latest.

EDITOR'S PRIZES

The winners of the Editor's Prizes for 2011-2012 will be announced in our next issue.

Articles and reviews are eagerly sought and will now be eligible for consideration for the 2012-2013 year's prizes. Pictures and interesting QSL Cards are also welcome. Material can be sent as e-mail attachments or through the post. Items posted will be returned on request. Our contact details are shown at the masthead.

MY TITANIC DAY

David Dunn, VK3DBD #3756

As most of my friends will know, I'm not a contester: the idea of sitting in front of a radio, copying calls and numbers and sending out similar for hours is not my idea of fun, for me one might as well sit by a motorway and write down registration numbers of passing cars..... However, "Each unto his own".

The nearest I get to that is with a big pile up - and in VK one does get those without trying, I try and keep info brief, but not as brief as the 5nn tu I so often hear. Exchange of name qth and report and often a friendly word especially with ops I have met before.

When that situation occurs, with a queue of callers all desperate to make contact it is annoying and time wasting when one of them continues to send details of their weather, their radio, their key and antenna. In a normal leisurely QSO those details can often be interesting and lead to further discussion. After all communication is the name of the game.

I volunteered recently to man the Fists Club (VK2FDU) call for some 5 hours, for the well publicised event of the Titanic 100 years anniversary. The actual times "issued" to me were quite good for my situation as it was one of the few periods when I could be QRV and also having fairly good DX antennas it was obvious that for at least some of that time the world could be my oyster.

Being a Fists club event with a Fists Call, it seemed pretty reasonable that I used the Fists suggested frequencies and somewhat hopefully at 0700z I fired up the K3 on 21058 kcs with a CQ, my 3 el beam pointing LP toward EU. The whole band was dead, but optimistically I called CQ Fists, and also did it in such a way that others were not excluded, i.e CQ, CQ de VK2FDU Fists Down under Club call and repeated CQ CQ fists? de VK2FDU. The first taker was a French station, (not a Fists Member) who was only about 539 and sent me a similar report, and it was obvious the propagation on 15m was poor, - there was not a signal elsewhere on the band.

So I abandoned that and changed to 14057 where I was promptly answered by an OK, - still not a Fists member in sight.

After that several stations had noticed my presence (the Cluster perhaps??) G3KOJ replied with a solid 589 signal and his Fists numbers too. I have worked Ray a number of times on various bands and he is a fellow FOC member. After that qso I had to pick a call out of the not inconsiderable qrm of lots of callers. Paul. VK5GX won and I was pleased to log another Fists member.

On completion of the next few qsos more and more joined the racket, some annoyingly sending my call over and over again while I was trying to note a few calls on the pad, but the persistent callers would have done so much better if they had just dropped in their own call just once or twice at the right moment, and I would easily have copied them. Sending my call over and over is pointless I know mine, I just wanted theirs !!

So it went on and among others and operating properly in the next hour or so I had Mick G3LIK, Paul, G4LNA, Mike G4NCU in the log plus a number of non fists stations scattered across the world. Notably, one unusual prefix threw me, I had to ask for his QTH - 7X3WPL. He was in Algeria in Laghouat. A Sahara desert oasis, which I have actually visited and camped there. Not the sort of place one visualises an Amateur Radio club, but it was. The signal was amazingly strong, although certain tonal qualities were somewhat lacking!

I am certainly not the best operator at picking calls out of a pile up. There are several computer programs which generate such conditions and are interesting should one wish to practise that exercise.

Calling into a pile up is another thing and that I usually manage quite well, it is question of listening and getting the timing just right, pop in your call -nothing else- between others, that can only be done by listening. Blind calling continuously will not often succeed, it delays the ultimate QSO one hopes for and annoys everyone else.

The next day (VK day) I had the last two hours session of the Titanic Day 2200z-2359. I was unable to be QRV for the last hour but at 2200z I checked the bands and found absolutely nothing despite a few CQ calls and abandoned the radio for other things. Despite scouring the bands at other times during the 15th April, I failed to even hear any of the MGY stations that were active.

Special call events often show that bands one sometimes considers dead, do have propagation available and the more of the story is to transmit: Listening is fine, but if no one transmits then you just won't hear a thing!

Give it a go, any time any band, you never know who's listening!

From the middle of May, for a few months, David, VK3DBD will as usual be operating G3SCD from Lincolnshire, " Bomber County " as opportunities permit and will be pleased to work old and new Fists members. Email arranged - Skeds welcome.

VK2FDU – TITANIC SPRINT

Chris Thompson, VK2CTN, Australian Manager.

Many thanks to John VK4TJ, Chris VK3CGB and David VK3DBD for putting VK2FDU on the air during the Titanic Sprint. 35 contacts were recorded on 10,15,20 and 40 metres.

Some comments from the operators:

John, VK4TJ: - "I did not exactly set the world on fire. Chris and David had about the same experience, apparently. Did not hear any of the other national FISTS calls – ever! Good conditions to the U.K. on the long path when Chris and David were on so would have heard the U.K. FISTS if they were there...."

Chris, VK3CGB: - "Was a bit slow but worked about 12 stations all over EU including G4 and MW – which is good for me. I was happy with this, even though only a few FISTS members."

David, VK3DBD: - "Worked 13 stations of which 6 were FISTS. 11 QSO's on 20m, 2 on 40m. Very slow and lost several possible contacts due to some stations waffling on about rigs and weather and not understanding the club call, even though I called "CQ FISTS!"

