

# FISTS DOWN UNDER

Newsletter of the Australian / New Zealand chapter of the International Morse Preservation Society

December 2015

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			10.118	14.058	18.085
			21.058	24.908	28.058

## This month:

- Top band
- News from other chapters
- The Royal Australian Naval Bridging Train
- Australian CW activities
- CW Bash



## FDU Tuesday net

Now that summer is here, the net has moved back to 40m. Everyone is welcome to join in. The net begins at 0900UTC (8pm AEDT) on 7.028MHz.

## FDU email address

Please note we now have a new FDU email address:

[fdu.fists@gmail.com](mailto:fdu.fists@gmail.com)

The former email address [fists-down-under@ihug.co.nz](mailto:fists-down-under@ihug.co.nz) is no longer in use.

## Top band



I have been playing about on 160m of late and revived an old enthusiasm for that band. The limited space here precludes a 260ft dipole of course, but I can actually load up several other dipoles (on the same coax) by shorting together the inner and outer (of the coax), and tuning against ground as a top loaded Marconi. Plenty of noise of course, which is the norm these days, but it works.

I recently stuck one of my mobile whips (with 160m coil) on a 5ft pole in the lawn and laid out three 50ft radials (because that was the length of each of three rolls of army telephone wire I got for £1 at a junk sale). This worked as well as the one just described, but seemingly with less noise.

I have since moved it to the gutter level and laid out the radials on the roof and/ or along gutters. which is better for tidiness and not tripping over radials... It works just the same and so far easy QSOs with a number of EU countries at good strength, SM, LA, SV, EA, D, F, I, as well as G, GM and GW stations. All CW of course.

David VK3DBD / G3SCD #3756

## News from other chapters

### FISTS Americas

Keynote newsletters are now available online to all members in good-standing. You can get copies of them at 'My Keynotes' using your callsign and password. More details at <http://fistsna.org/> our main website run by Interim President Dennis, K6DF.

The FISTS Americas Chapter will have a weekly Activity Day each Tuesday from 0001 until 2359 UTC. No problem if you start a little early or run over. Not a contest, no need to submit your log, just get on the air and make some contacts! One, two, several or a hundred QSOs it doesn't matter, just get on the air and make some QSOs.

We have invited the International FISTS Community to participate also, so you may be able to work some new FISTS and new FISTS countries. So dust off the key and get on the air and have some fun! <http://fistsna.org/operating.html#cwtuesday>

### FISTS Europe

Please join us in FISTS CW Club Europe's Ladder sessions.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of every month, 1400-1600 and 1800-2000 UTC.

Activity is typically around 14.058, 7.028, and 3.558 MHz.

Exchange a minimum of: name, RST, QTH, and member number (if applicable).

QSOs are friendly and conversational. Submitting logs is not essential but very much appreciated. Members from all FISTS Chapters are encouraged to join in. QSOs do not have to be with members of FISTS Europe.

73 de Graham G3ZOD FISTS #8385

FISTS Membership Secretary (Europe) <http://www.fists.co.uk>



# The Royal Australian Naval Bridging Train

There were in fact other Australians serving on Gallipoli which could have been mistaken for Infantry or Light Horsemen. They were the Royal Australian Naval Bridging Train, serving at Kangaroo Beach, Suvla Bay. Sadly today, they are mostly forgotten by history in the Gallipoli narrative. But history does tell us that during their time at Kangaroo Beach, one of the duties of RANBT Sailors was that of 'Wireless Operator'. Thus through the medium of Amateur Radio 'We' fortunate few can indeed emulate these men as Wireless Operators from 100 years ago through VI4ANZAC.



The Royal Australian Naval Bridging Train was formed in Melbourne on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 1915. They were drawn from the Royal Australian Naval Reserve, as they did not have ships to serve on in the regular Royal Australian Navy. Some 300 Naval Reservists, including 50 men who had previously served in German New Guinea, were selected to sign up to the 1<sup>st</sup> RANBT. On 4<sup>th</sup> June 1915, the RANBT embarked aboard the troopship Port Macquarie for active service. Halfway across the Indian Ocean their orders were changed, and they were diverted to Egypt. They arrived at Port Said on July 17<sup>th</sup> 1915. Three weeks later on August 7<sup>th</sup> the RANBT landed under fire at Suvla Bay. They came ashore with the British Army, in an effort to open a new front on the Gallipoli Peninsula. This would be their new home till December 20<sup>th</sup> 1915.

Our goal in commemorating these men of the RANBT through the special event call sign VI4ANZAC, is to see that their legend is restored through knowledge and understanding. It is hoped enlightenment for all will follow, especially for those who take the time to visit and read about these brave 'Sailors in Khaki'. Their achievements during five months on the Gallipoli Peninsula should not be forgotten.

Link: RANBT Webpage, by John Perryman and Greg Swindon RAN.  
<http://www.navy.gov.au/history/feature-histories/1st-royal-australian-naval-bridging-train>

## VI4ANZAC

I will be activating 160m AM (1843kHz) and Cootie Key CW (1818kHz) plus 472.5kHz Cootie Key CW during the times specified above, plus any other spare time I get during the scheduled event operation 12 - 20 December 2015.

Having already done the world first on 472.5kHz Cootie Key CW for the earlier (25 - 30 April) HMAS AE2 submarine commemoration as VI4AE2/5, this will close the Anzac centenary chapter.

I won't be around for the next one!

## VI4ANZAC 'RANBT' Special Event Operators

12 - 20 December 2015

Mike Charteris, VK4QS, Ex Royal Australian Navy

80m SSB nightly on 3.585MHz nightly from 0930UTC

Doc Wescombe-Down, VK5BUG, Ex Royal Australian Navy

630m Band: 472.5 KHz CW, 1550 - 1650 UTC and 0630 - 0830 UTC

160m Band: 1818 KHz CW, 1550 - 1650 UTC and 0630 - 0830 UTC

160m Band: 1843 KHz AM

Peter Hewitson, VK4QC, Ex Commercial OTC Ship Shore Operator

630m Band: 472.5 KHz CW Grey Line

160m Band: 1.825 KHz CW Grey Line

20m Band: 14.010 MHz CW, SSB 14.250MHz (0500 ~ 0900 UTC)

Alan Shannon, VK4SN, Ex Royal Australian Air Force

20m Band: SSB

20m Band: CW

Glenn McNeil, VK4BG, Ex Commercial Pilot and Radio Technician

6m Band: 51.150MHz SSB

Mike Patterson, VK4MIK, Ex Royal Australian Navy

15m Band: SSB/CW

40m Band SSB/CW

Jim (Rosco) Anderson, VK4AQ, Ex Royal Australian Navy

80m, 40m, 20m Bands: CW (Early Mornings)

Alex McDonald, VK4TE, Ex Royal Australian Air Force

17m/30m (0100-0200 UTC), 20m (0400-0500) all SSB

Ewan McLeod, VK4ERM, Ex Officer 'RAEME' Australian Army

40m Band, SSB



## Doc VK5BUG #14136

As an ex-Navy telegraphist/ cryptographer and NATO spook, these two gigs plus the RMS Titanic operation 2011 - 12 have been the operating highlights of my long career with Morse keys and headphones. I feel very privileged.



Hope you get to work one or some of us in the team and we are certainly pumped to go!

Best 73 de Doc VK5BUG

## Australian CW activities

Here is a list of all the known scheduled daily or weekly CW activity events including nets and broadcasts. Check [www.vkcw.net/skeds](http://www.vkcw.net/skeds) for the latest updates. In winter and summer many times will change.

Note: The days listed below are given as local Australian days, therefore UTC times will not match the day. E.g. 2200UTC in an entry on Sunday is actually Saturday 2200UTC, but as locally the time falls on a Sunday so the entry is listed under Sunday for practical simplicity in planning CW activities.

### Monday

1900UTC 3599kHz Daily Early Morning Gnarly Net  
0830UTC 7051.2kHz All Zones Secondary CW Net (Normal Speed)  
0900UTC 3550kHz CW Bash Hour  
1000UTC 3522.5/7022.5/14022.5kHz (14WPM) Monday evening  
17WPM CW News Bulletin Broadcast QST 2nd repeat

### Tuesday

1900UTC 3599kHz Daily Early Morning Gnarly Net  
0830UTC 7051.2kHz All Zones CW Net (Slow Speed/Straight Keys)  
0900UTC 7050kHz (QSY upon establishing contact) CW Bash Hour  
0900UTC 7028kHz FISTS Down Under CW Net  
1000UTC 10119kHz National Traffic System (NTS) Net

### Wednesday

1900UTC 3599kHz Daily Early Morning Gnarly Net  
0830UTC 7051.2kHz All Zones Secondary CW Net (Normal Speed)  
0900UTC 3550kHz CW Bash Hour  
1000UTC 10119kHz National Traffic System (NTS) Net

### Thursday

1900UTC 3599kHz Daily Early Morning Gnarly Net  
0830UTC 7051.2kHz All Zones CW Net (Slow Speed/Straight Keys)  
0900UTC 7050kHz (QSY upon establishing contact) CW Bash Hour

0930UTC 7045kHz (3540kHz at 1030UTC in winter) Thursday evening SOTA Slow CW Practice Net

1000UTC 10119kHz National Traffic System (NTS) Net

### Friday

1900UTC 3599kHz Daily Early Morning Gnarly Net  
0830UTC 7051.2kHz All Zones Secondary CW Net (Normal Speed)  
0900UTC 3550kHz CW Bash Hour or CW Practice  
1000UTC 10119kHz National Traffic System (NTS) Net

### Saturday

1900UTC 3599kHz Daily Early Morning Gnarly Net  
0400UTC 7022.5/14022.5 (20WPM)/21022.5kHz (23WPM) Saturday Afternoon CW News Bulletin Broadcast QST  
0415UTC 7115kHz Saturday afternoon Col's CW Net  
0830UTC 7051.2kHz All Zones Primary CW Traffic Net  
0900UTC 7050kHz (QSY upon establishing contact) CW Bash Hour  
1000UTC 10119kHz National Traffic System (NTS) Net

### Sunday

1900UTC 3599kHz Daily Early Morning Gnarly Net  
2200UTC (Sat UTC) 7022.5/14022.5/21022.5kHz (17WPM) Sunday morning CW News Bulletin Broadcast QST 1st repeat  
2300UTC Sat 7025kHz Sunday Morning CW Net (duration up to 2 hours)  
0415UTC 7115kHz Sunday afternoon Col's CW Net  
1000UTC 10119kHz National Traffic System (NTS) Net

### All Times

7050kHz CW Calling (especially H+15 and H+45)

See <http://www.vkcw.net/7050> for more details.



## Morse Express 2015 Christmas key

Morse Express has released its 2015 Christmas Key, fifteenth in the popular seasonal series. The 2015 Christmas Key is a fully functional miniature camel-back telegraph key commissioned by Morse Express and made by GHD Telegraph Key in Sendai City Japan.

This year's key features a relatively heavy oval base which is perfectly proportioned to distribute the weight of the key and the downward keying force, providing a stable platform for comfortable use. It measures 1 1/4" x 2" at the base. It is 1 1/2" tall depending on adjustment, and it weighs just over 2 1/2 ounces.

The Morse Express 2015 Christmas Key is a limited edition of 150 keys priced at USD \$89.95, plus shipping and handling. Each key has a label with 'Christmas 2015' and a unique serial number.

<http://www.morseexpress.com/xmas/>



## FDU Editor - situation vacant

With a busy year forecast for the year ahead, I have reluctantly decided to retire as editor of the FISTS Down Under newsletter.

I have enjoyed the role and I'm very grateful to those who have written articles and contributed information.

Any member wishing to become the new editor, please contact Nigel Hardy ZL2TX (details in masthead).

73, Chris VK1CT

## FDU members' competition

Here are the answers to the scrambled words competition last month:

1. BAELC

Answer: **CABLE**

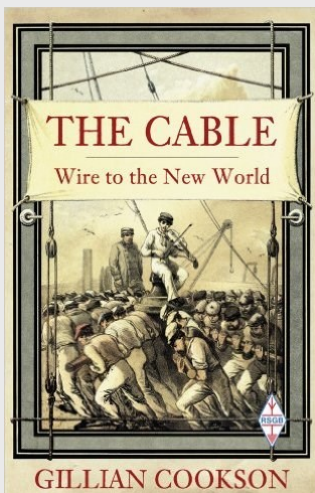
2. RMEOS

Answer: **MORSE**

3. LAEHTEPYRG

Answer: **TELEGRAPHY**

All entrants provided correct answers. The lucky winner is Steve VK7CW #14164 who will receive a copy of 'The Cable'.



## CW Bash

Lou VK5EEE #1124



The idea is still developing, but for now there are a minimum of suggested rules and agreed CW Bash periods as below. The main purposes of 'CW Bash' activity periods are to allow those who need simple 'Rubber Stamp' QSO experience, to have a time when they can call and get a higher chance of getting a reply, and gain on-air experience without being thrown into a long 'rag chew' QSO, for QRS slow speed stations to get on the air and get some practice, and to activate our bands during the weekday evenings, with more people on the same band around the same time, thus increasing chances of QSO.

In addition there are optional 'themes' on different nights of the week, as per below schedule.

### Days/ Times/ Bands of Activity

CW Bash Hour: 8pm-9pm EDST (0900-1000UTC) from Mon-Fri and Sat activity (as much or as little as you like) as follows:

- Mondays: Boat Anchor Night - 80m around 3550, or 40m call on 7050 and QSY (get the old radios on the air!)
- Tuesdays: QRS Slow Night and/ or Straight Key Night - 40m call on 7050 and QSY (use the straight key, don't be shy!)
- Wednesdays: Bug key and/ or sloppy Morse night - 80m around 3550, or 40m call on 7050 and QSY (learn to copy QSD!)
- Thursdays: QRQ High Speed or Keyboard Night - 40m call on 7050 and QSY (use your speed skills, or keyboard/ decoders)
- Fridays: QRP Low Power Night - 80m around 3550, or 40m call on 7050 and QSY (no calling CQ forever without result?)
- Saturdays: Who knows - anything goes? After the 0400UTC QST on 20m 14022.5

Comments: 40m on Tues/ Thurs/ Sat CW Bash hour is very active, but 80m seems usually quiet. Can we improve that?

### Format

- On 7050 or 3550 call 'CQ CQ CQ DE CALLSIGN CALLSIGN'
- If you receive an answer, QSY for QSO so others can continue to call on the frequency, or, CQ calls shift a little up or down
- After, come back and continue again as per above
- If more than one station calling, just call in rotation, the answered station takes the call and moves off frequency for QSO

QRS and QRQ: always slow down to the slower operator's speed, if you are answered slower, match the lower speed.

See [discussion in the forum](#) and you're welcome to post your results there.

### Optional Rubber Stamp QSO Format

- On first over: TNX, RST, QTH, NAME
- On second over: RIG, PWR, ANT, 73



*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*