

**Newsletter of the Australian / New Zealand chapter of the International Morse Preservation Society
August 2018**

Editor: Bill Kirkwood #15215

VK1MCW email: bill.vk1mcw@gmail.com

VK Secretary / Administration: Garry Cottle #14151

VK2GAZ email: vk2fdu.auz@gmail.com

ZL Administration: David Allen #14195

ZL4LDY mail: zl4ldy@gmail.com

Newsletter Distribution: Derek Dawkins #14125

VK3KX email: dfdawkins@optusnet.com.au

FDU Web site: www.fdu.org.au

FISTS Down Under Sked Page <http://n8fq.org/sked/index.php?board=fdu>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1765058520392148/>

CW Practice Sessions: Michael's VK2CCW #14198 CW Practice Sessions which are available on the [Club website](#) are growing. Plenty of daily practice for all of us. Thank you Michael for the massive amount of time you devote to promoting CW and for making these sessions available to FISTS Down Under.

Recommended FISTS calling frequencies (MHz):

1.808	3.528	7.028	10.118	14.058	18.085
21.058	24.908	28.058			

LETTER CHASE words for July are: **ANODE, RESONANCE, DECIBELS, COLLECTOR**

(Rules and Info on our webpage). Results from the July Letter Chase and contest appear later in this newsletter

oooooOooooOooooo

From the Editor: Bill VK1MCW #15215



For those of us living in the southern half of Australia and I am sure all our Kiwi members, the fact that we are mid-winter has escaped no one's attention! This morning I believe it was -8C in Canberra. It makes sending any form of CW in the open air (SOTA), and even in the shack, quite challenging! Stay warm and keyed up.

Folks – again I am practically BEGGING one of you to please volunteer to help run this club. We need a new VK Admin to manage all the VK memberships. Though some of us may be “retired” which we all know is the busiest time of our lives, it takes just a few hours a month for each of us on the committee to keep FDU a going concern. This newsletter may take me a day or so to pull together – but it is a month of badgering people for articles, looking for interesting and topical items, sorting out just what goes in, and in very rare cases, what is not for publication. Garry, who is

our VK admin now is also kept extremely busy coming up with contests, collating submitted logs maintaining our web page and our Facebook page – he never stops. There are several email exchanges between committee members each month – but it is not onerous. It begs the question; DO YOU WANT FISTS DOWN UNDER to keep going? If so, please consider being part of the small team who keeps it going.

Subscriptions: List of members whose subscriptions become due in August and September 2018

August: VK8FEET, VK5GG, VK8CAW, VK2GDI, VK1CT, VK3HJ, VK3JOB, VK3TP, VK4AP, VK4EBP, ZL4SA, JE1CLH

September: E51AND, VK6GX, VK2GZ, VK4BJS, VK4CC, VK4EI/VK4SWE, VK7AD, ZL1BLR, ZL2AUJ

We ask that you keep an eye out for your callsign in the subs section and treat that as your reminder for you to pay your subs.

Our website http://www.fdu.org.au/join_renew.php has all the details for making payments. **Don't forget that if you are paying your subs to include your callsign.** Please do not send cash in the post as this causes problems for us in banking.

Thankyou!

FISTS would like to thank the following members for the generous donation included with their subscriptions; Michael VK2CCW #14198, George VK2DLF #9052

OoooOOOOOooooo

Welcome our New Members

Bob Beck VK4RJ #15227

"I was first licensed in 1983 in Papua New Guinea with the callsign P29NRB and later on P29RB. When I arrived back in Australia I changed my Papa New Guinea licence for an Australian one with the call VK4CPM.

Later on I changed the call to the current one to VK4RJ.

During the last few years I have done no CW operating, so I became a bit scratchy. It is only recently that I decided to take CW up again with my present speed no greater than say 15 words per minute. I hope to gain better accuracy and speed through various activities with Fists Down Under.

Thank you for the opportunity for me to say a few words of my past and also my present ambition regarding CW.

Regards

Bob Beck (VK4RJ)

Member #15227

Sean Yazici VK1FMGG #15228

"Hello fellow CW enthusiasts. My first exposure to CW was via my father who was former military and thought that tapping on the table at me from a young age was a good thing. Pity I brushed him off and never retained much of it...I thought it was annoying!

Forward on 40 odd years and here I am trying to learn it (it must have left a mark during my younger years...) as I finally have some time to myself. I also have my children to practice with (they are still of an age where CW is a curiosity... I hope at least one of them keeps it up!).

Learning this new language is not easy but the amount of resources available certainly makes it more readily accessible, in particular the nightly practice sessions and I hope it won't be too long before I make my first live QSO.

73

Sean
VK1FMGG"

Matt Grice VK3FNG #14881 Matt has literally just joined FISTS Down Under, so Matt please send me a short story to introduce yourself!

OoooOOOOOooooo

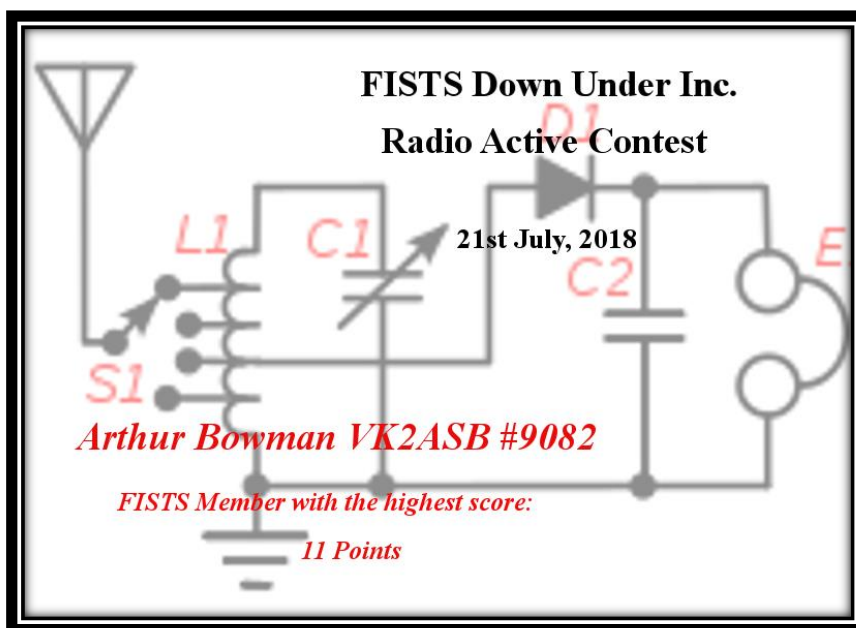
July Letter Chase Results:

Congratulations again to Steve **VK7CW #14164** and Ian **ZL2AIM #9683**

Results of our Radio Active Contest Saturday, 21st July, 2018

The monthly Club contest was run on Saturday, 21st July, 2018 with the following operators sending in logs. **Arthur VK2ASB #9082 (11)**, **Steve VK7CW #14164 (8)**, **Laurie VK2GZ #15218 (7)** & **Garry VK2GAZ #14151 (6)**.

Arthur VK2ASB #9082 will be sent a certificate for the highest scoring FISTS member.



Full details of the contest can be found at: http://fdu.org.au/contests_open.php

OoooOOOOOooooo

From our Members

Michael VK2CCW #14198 has sent me a copy of a ditdit.fm podcast. (You can find links to some of these podcasts on our Facebook page.)

PAY IT FORWARD

Amateur radio has a long tradition of giving back and Elmering new radio operators. Anyone who has ever received the generous and patient attention from an Elmer is ever so thankful and appreciative for that help.

John Merkel, AJ1DM, is a shining example of the spirit of giving back and paying it forward. His volunteer activities include teaching tech classes, being a Volunteer Examiner, actively participating in fox hunts and special events, and donating time to introduce kids on Indian reservations to the fun and excitement of Morse code and CW. Amateur radio has much to offer and can be a source of great personal enrichment and fulfillment that can come from giving a little of ourselves to the next generation of amateur radio operators.

Dedication and persistence pay off. Everyone learns the code differently. Some people are fast learners, others need more time. Stick to it, you'll be glad you did!

No matter what speed you operate at, get on the air and have fun. You can have a QSO at 6 words-per-minute. You can contest at 6 words-per-minute. You don't have to be fast to get on the air and be a CW operator. Just get on the air!

There are many ways to participate in and enjoy amateur radio. For me, for the longest time, it was the joy of operating on the air and receiving an occasional QSL card. It's still a thrill to power up a radio and tune up an antenna. A big part of the amateur radio tradition is being of help to others.

And there are all kinds of ways to be helpful... there are ecomms, passing network traffic, participating in a special event, being a fox, teaching a class, or even producing a podcast to name a few. But without a doubt, the most time-honoured way to give back to amateur radio is to be someone's Elmer. And here's the thing about being an Elmer, you don't have to have any particular license, you don't have to have been a HAM for 50 years or be 80 years old. You don't have to be an expert or be able to send code at 40 words-per-minute. **All you need to be an Elmer is the desire to help someone.** I guarantee you, there isn't a scout troop, youth group, boys or girls club that wouldn't be thrilled to have you introduce their group of kids to amateur radio. There isn't anyone who ever had an Elmer and wasn't thankful for the one they had. Spark someone's interest. Help them get going. Work with them through the hard parts and encourage them, even more, when they are having fun... **Let someone be thankful they had you for an Elmer!**

Podcast ditdit.fm

OoooOooooOoooo

From Chris VK1CT #9057

VK1 SOTA Demonstration Days

Canberra hosted its first SOTA (summits on the air) demonstration day at Mt Ainslie on Sunday 10 June. Ranging in age from 13 to 73, nine enthusiastic newbies attended, plus three experienced SOTA ops who supervised the radios.

There was an impressive array of equipment on display, including stations for HF, VHF and UHF. It was also very civilised, with portable tables and chairs. That's not something that usually accompanies a SOTA activation! Operators took turns at each station to make contacts using SSB and FM. They also had the chance to try their hand at CW on 70cm.

Bill VK1MCW #15215 was on another SOTA summit at Isaacs Ridge and he responded to each CW caller. It was an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the use of Morse Code and no doubt very memorable for those who took part. After all, it's not every day that you make a contact on 70cm using CW!



The Pre-brief Briefing – with Chris VK1CT in foreground left of picture!



Bill's antenna setup for 70cm CW

Although conditions on HF weren't too good, the sun was shining, and everyone was wearing a smile. With easy access and great views over Canberra, Mt Ainslie is popular with tourists and locals alike. We had quite a few onlookers and enquiries about what we were doing, so it was also an opportunity to explain amateur radio to the public.

A second SOTA demonstration day was held at Mt Stromlo on Sunday 22 July 2018. In foggy, sub-zero conditions, several F-calls and seasoned SOTA ops turned out to show how the SOTA game is played. This time, Bill VK1MCW was the CW operator in the group and he showed the others the basics of a CW contact.



Civilised at Mt Stromlo. CW S2S on 23cm

I was stationed at a convenient tree branch in Percival Hill Nature Reserve and made contact with the group at Stromlo on 2m FM and 70cm CW and SSB. Despite the chilly weather, it was another fun day of radio.



Chris' luxurious shack!

Chris VK1CT #9057

Thanks for article Chris – and also, thank you for your help with showing our local VK1 F Calls the ropes of CW and SOTA – much fun was had on both days! Bill/Ed

Key Of The Month

The Stampfl STM-11 Army Key



I purchased this key a few years back now and since that time this key has gone out of production, being replaced with the STM-11 Army Classic.

This is a quality produced bit of kit. All screws and adjustment knobs are polished medical-grade stainless steel while the aluminium parts are glass bead blasted, chemically brightened and red anodize.

The latest version of this key can be seen at:

<https://www.heinzstampfl.ch/en/shop/stm-11-classic/>



73, Garry VK2GAZ #14151

oooooOooooo

So here I am on another page thanks to a couple of recent articles! That makes me happy! I guess I have room to show off my latest addition – direct from Brescia Italy - home of Begali Keys – The Begali Camelback - I havent even connected the lead to it yet!



FINAL PLEA!!!

Please consider volunteering for the FISTS Down Under VK Admin position. We DO need your assistance! We need it NOW. All we are seeking is for just one more of our current VK members to assist. We have 95 VK members and I am happy to say the number of members is growing. However, if you want your club to continue to grow and increase the popularity of CW, then someone has to step up to assist with the VK Admin/Membership. Without people to run it, the FISTS Down Under chapter will be forced to shut down. Keep those cards and letters flooding in – Show us your keys, your shacks, your antennas – share your CW world, but for that to continue – we need just ONE more volunteer!

de Bill
VK1MCW #15215

