



Dots & Dashes

What

Hath

God

Wrought

The Official Publication of the Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.

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ANTIQUATE TELEGRAPH EQUIPMENT MAKES THE MOVIE

By Mike Johnston, Senior Writer

This article has been reprinted from the Daily Record News, Thursday, March 21, 2013

Kittitas Valley native Kevin Saville is anxiously looking forward to getting a DVD copy of the movie “Lincoln” when it’s released Tuesday, [March 26th].

He wants to carefully watch to see his small part in the award-winning Steven Spielberg movie.

How he got there was quite a journey.

Saville received a phone call in early fall 2011 about a mysterious movie, then in production, that needed to use his 1860s-era telegraph equipment.

The caller, International Morse Telegraph Club

President James Wades of Michigan, was in Virginia at the time. He wouldn’t tell Saville the subject of the film or its title, only to say it was a “major motion picture” and he was one of the movie’s technical consultants.

Wades stressed that the name and subject of the movie must remain a secret until after filming was completed.

Interest in history

Saville — son of Wendell and Roberta Saville of Kittitas Highway and a graduate of Ellensburg High School and Central Washington University — was then living near Olympia. He is president of the Seattle-Tacoma chapter of the international telegraph club, and is interested in Civil War-era history and re-enactments, and old-time telegraphy.

“Wades was interested in my equipment because I was one of very few collectors in the country that depicts Civil War telegraphy with period-correct telegraph instruments,” Saville, 47, said earlier this week.

His interest, research and collections through the years led Saville to construct an exact replica of a Civil War-era U.S.



Photo courtesy Walt Disney / 20th Century Fox

“Lincoln,” directed by Steven Spielberg, took home two Oscars, including production design, at this year’s Academy Awards. Spielberg sought authenticity for the movie, and among the antique props used was 1860s-era telegraph equipment owned by Kittitas Valley native Kevin Saville.

continued on page 4



Sidewire

Comments from the
Editor of *Dots & Dashes*

By Jim Wilson



Steven Spielberg's movie, "Lincoln" is still playing at our local theater here in Virginia, making it five months since this academy award winning movie opened in theaters nationwide. It is still raking in money. That must be some kind of a record. Members of The Morse Telegraph

Club made significant contributions to "Lincoln," and now we can recall our fond memories of that movie, while moving on to new adventures.

Spring is almost here; with the spring's warmer weather will come more opportunities to show the public the importance of the telegraph. My local MTC chapter, the Washington-Baltimore chapter, already has several telegraph demos lined up. Morse Day is included in our upcoming events.

Recall that it was in 1844 that Samuel Morse demonstrated to the US Congress that messages could be sent by electric telegraph, an amazing new reality. The inventor of the original Morse code, Alfred Vail, sat at the sounder in Baltimore and copied the famous first official message, "What Hath God Wrought." Sam Morse was at the telegraph key sending the message from Washington.

Recently, MTC lost one chapter and gained another. The James K. Hill "SK" chapter was dissolved, leaving their 35 members to scatter to other chapters. Thank you to June Peterson, Secretary-Treasurer for your valiant work with that chapter.

The new MTC chapter in Eastern Canada is named the Maritime Chapter. It currently has about thirteen members and is coordinated by Neil Horseman. We welcome the new chapter. So we now have 28 functioning MTC chapters throughout the United States and Canada. That is good news.

The annual Dayton Hamvention is scheduled for May 17-19th. Members of the Morse Telegraph Club will again be out in force at this event with two exhibit booths. President Jim Wades will be at the Dayton Hamvention, along with other MTC members, at their own expense and on their own time. We thank these loyal members in advance for their dedication to promoting awareness of the telegraph in world history. If you are able, come join the fun!

President's Line

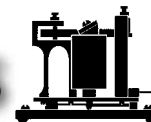
Jim Wades, President
Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.



It has already been a busy year for the Morse Telegraph Club. During the months of December through February, your International President and Les Kerr, creator of the "MorseKOB" program, worked with the State of Minnesota to incorporate innovative telegraph displays into the "Minnesota in the Civil War" exhibit. Two interactive displays were developed, one of which displays news bulletins from the "Civil War News Wire" on a computer monitor background which simulates a US Military Telegraph Corps Message Form, while reproducing the incoming Morse on a nearby sounder. A second interactive allows museum visitors to type a message on a computer keyboard and listen to the message as it's reproduced in American Morse Code via a sounder. Les invested considerable effort developing specialized software for these exhibits.

A number of telegraph instruments were also incorporated into the exhibit. Thanks to several of our members who are pre-eminent collectors and telegraph historians, we were able to provide some excellent examples of vintage telegraph instruments from the 19th century. Included were

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Jim Wilson - Editor, *Dots & Dashes*

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www.morsetelegraphclub.org

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instruments that were used on the set of Spielberg's Lincoln. This connection with the movie resulted in the Minnesota Historical Society obtaining considerable publicity for the upcoming exhibit in the local press. This coverage included feature news stories during primetime newscasts in the Twin Cities area.

We also worked with a documentary film producer to create some still shots simulating press telegraphy in preparation for an upcoming film. Add to this the smaller projects, such as assisting high school and college students with history papers and presentations, answering inquiries from researchers, and other activities, and MTC activities can quickly become the equivalent of a part time job.

Some other recent developments include the creation of a new MTC Facebook page. This page has already resulted in better outreach to younger individuals who have expressed an interest in our organization. A number of individuals have found our Facebook page after visiting the "Minnesota in the Civil War" exhibit. This Facebook page has also proven to be a good tool for posting upcoming events. The calendar feature allows us to not only post an event, but also, by including an address, potential visitors can view a map showing the exact location of a telegraph demonstration or other event. We are asking those who are planning demonstrations, talks, or performing other outreach activities to either post these events directly to the page, or to notify the International President so he can post the information to the page for others to view.

Upcoming Board Meeting

Shortly after you receive this issue of *Dots & Dashes*, MTC Directors will be holding a Board meeting. During this meeting, a number of important issues will be discussed, including the election of new Directors and better policies designed to aid troubled Chapters. Our goal will be to develop solutions designed to allow Chapters to continue to function during those periods in which it is difficult to find a volunteer for a key position, such as Secretary/Treasurer. If you have any additional issues you feel should be brought to the attention of the MTC Board of Directors, please contact us!

Finally, I hope everyone has a healthy, pleasant springtime season. If you are located near the Twin Cities, be sure to stop by the "Minnesota in the Civil War" exhibit at the Minnesota Historical Center. Likewise, be sure to join us for our other planned activities such as Morse Day and the various telegraph demonstrations and talks planned throughout the United States and Canada.

☛ This ad runs routinely in the *World Radio News*:

Morse Telegraph Club

Landline Morse is Alive and well!

Dots & Dashes newsletter
The Ace Holman national telegraph office & hub
Internet Telegraphy Railroad Telegraphy
Morse Telegraph demonstration

Learn more about the history of the telegraph or simply enjoy using American Morse Code and authentic telegraph equipment.

www.morsetelegraphclub.org

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The next issue of *Dots & Dashes* is scheduled for publication on June 30th, with submission deadline three weeks prior to that date.

military telegraph battery wagon that he uses during re-enactment gatherings sponsored by the Washington Civil War Association.

The chassis of the wagon was inherited from his great-uncle and great-aunt, Claude and Ethel Sutherland, also of the Kittitas Valley.

During those re-enactments he takes on the persona of his great-great-grandfather, J.A. Saville. With a slight chuckle, Saville said J.A. served in the Confederate army.

Saville started taking part in battle re-enactments as a Union infantry soldier in late 1996, but now he's a Union military telegraph operator, wearing clothing replicated from research and old photos.

"By the time I was through, my telegraph depiction was more extensive than any other on the West Coast and, perhaps, in the entire nation," he said.

What movie?

Saville, an engineering and quality assurance manager for Northrop Grumman Corp. in Lakewood, later learned that Wades obtained antique telegraph instruments from four collectors around the nation for the unnamed movie.

Through email conversations, Saville offered various items including replica Daniell (wet-chemical battery) cells, antique telegraph keys, relays and sounders and other associated telegraph equipment.

Wades later selected items via email for Saville to insure, pack and ship to a motion picture prop company's temporary warehouse near Richmond, Va.

The fragile equipment is worth thousands of dollars, but Saville values it much more for its place in history and the story it tells about American life, the technology of yesteryear and the men and women who developed it.

In addition, the Civil War period was when major technological changes occurred in the nation on many fronts, Saville said, and the extensive use of photography in that era has expanded greatly

the understanding and visualization of life at that time.

"I carefully packaged everything into three boxes and shipped them off (in October 2011)," Saville said. "The following weeks were kind of anxious as one of the three boxes was lost; it turned out the box was lost in the warehouse."

By December 2011, Saville had put together clues from online information and movie industry news. He knew the production had something to do with the Civil War era.

In addition, there was online news of a Civil War-era movie completed in the Richmond area.

"I surmised it was a Spielberg movie because

there was word about a big production he was busy with in that area," Saville said. "That really got me excited."

'Probably'

In January 2012 Saville received his instruments back from Virginia, along with a rental

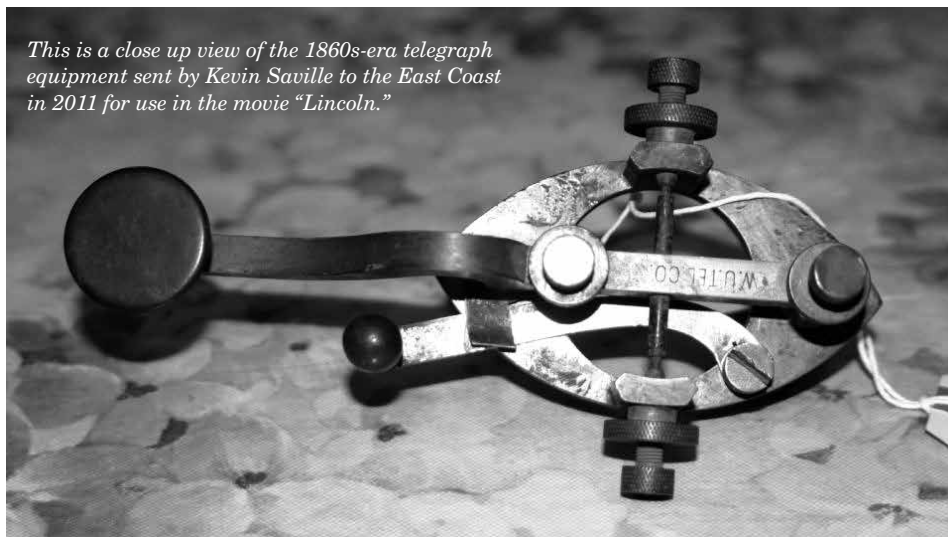
check for \$500. Once again, one box was slow in returning; it turned out to be the box containing the antique telegraph instruments. The other two boxes contained Daniell cell batteries and returned quickly, without incident, except for a few broken jars.

By then the word was out: the movie was "Lincoln," which was nominated for 12 Academy Awards. The star, Daniel Day-Lewis, who played President Lincoln, won best actor, and the movie received the Oscar for best production design.

Saville was told later that his instruments arrived too late to use in the key War Department telegraph office scenes with Lincoln.

The good news was that his equipment may have been used in a later military headquarters scene, the so-called City Point scene. The operative word used by Wades was the equipment was "probably" used.

All that was left for Saville to do was wait for the movie to be released and take a look at the City Point scene.



This is a close up view of the 1860s-era telegraph equipment sent by Kevin Saville to the East Coast in 2011 for use in the movie "Lincoln."

Scrutinize

"Lincoln" was theatrically released in November 2012, and Saville went to an opening day showing with great expectations, ready to scrutinize every scene in which telegraphy is used.

"It was important to me for the movie to get telegraphy as correct as possible because telegraphy has been poorly portrayed many times," said Kevin.

Some members of the Morse Telegraph Club love to scrutinize movie telegraph depictions and report on their accuracy, he said.

"The longer I have been associated with the club, the more I recognize the need to depict telegraphy well so as to, hopefully, reduce misconceptions that result from depiction errors," Saville said. "Many people only get exposure to certain things through watching movies so movies are an important mode of communication."

The City Point scene, within the last quarter of the movie, is where congressional voting result on the 13th Amendment to the Constitution are coming in from Washington and being reported to the military at outlying military posts.

The camera, at one point, swings down to show telegraph instruments on a portable board similar to those used in Saville's telegraph battery wagon.

"After the first time that I saw the movie, at which time I was focused on the actors, I had a lingering suspicion that, perhaps, I saw my telegraph instrument board," Saville said, adding the board has a telegraph key, relay and sounder.

But he wasn't absolutely sure. The second time he saw the movie, about two weeks later, "I was sure of it."

"I wrote to James Wades and he confirmed that my instrument board was used in that scene."

Saville said there was a sense of excitement that turned into a deep feeling of satisfaction knowing that he had a small part in providing a bit of historical authenticity to "Lincoln" in the area of telegraphy.

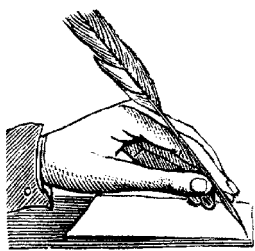
The movie's DVD will be released Tuesday, and Saville plans to go through the movie slowly, frame by frame when telegraph equipment is shown, especially in the City Point scene.

"I'll get an early copy for sure," he said. "I've pre-ordered through Amazon."



This AP photo from February 28, 1944 shows the "glamorous life" of a press telegrapher. One can see the temporary table set up on saw horses, likely in the basement of a courthouse in New York City. The operators pictured are covering the Wayne Longergan trial. Longergan was a RCAF airman who married New York Heiress Patricia Burton, the grand daughter of a wealthy broker who lived in the fashionable Beekman Hill district of New York City. Longergan apparently killed his wife in a jealous rage, resulting in a trial that attracted International attention. Longergan was convicted and incarcerated in the New York State prison system until 1965, when he was paroled and deported to Canada. He died in Toronto at the age of 67 in 1986. Longergan's son, whose name was eventually changed to Burton, ended up inheriting the 7-million dollar estate

This interesting photo was sent to Dots & Dashes by President Jim Wades.



Letters to the Editor

December 31st

I cannot sing Auld Lang Syne as I did many years ago, for heart and voice would fail me and foolish tears would flow. The wire was quiet on New Year's Eve as I thought about the past; third trick was always slow and lonesome last.

Remembering telegraphers I copied then, now Silent Keys, but way back when, they sent great stuff with never a "DN." So on this New Years Eve I say thanks for the memories. I pray, bless them all forever and a day.

Old Bill "Q"

January 3rd

A railway museum located in Charny, QC is now equipped with telegraph equipment and is now in a position to use the HN hub. Telegraphers in the area will be contacted and invited to activate this equipment. I donated some of the equipment wired on the board, including the modified modem. This may be an incentive in the Quebec area for the general public to have contact with Morse telegraphy.

*Guy Hamel
GO chapter*

PS: The museum opens its doors once a month.

January 10th

I am currently working on two unrelated projects which have both brought me in contact with *Dots & Dashes*. I found an old 1974 issue of *Dots & Dashes* in my grandfather's memorabilia. His name was Harold Vincent West. He was a member of the Morse Telegraph Club; he died in 1975.

Grandpa became a telegraph operator in 1918 or earlier. During WWI, he was a signal operator. During WWII, he served as Chairman of the Commercial Telegraphers Union of North America. I am trying to chronicle his working life and have already been in touch with Cindy Galyen.

At the same time, I want to make our Winnipeg Press Club members aware of the significance of the 175th anniversary of the first public

demonstration of the telegraph, which was such an integral part of newspaper history.

The Winnipeg Club is 125 years old, so as you can imagine, we've had our share of telegraph operators among our membership, from Canadian Press (CP) to the Canadian railroads (CP and CNR). This is why I took a further look at the 1974 issue of *Dots & Dashes*. In this issue is an article called "Memories," by a fellow named Louis M. Vogue. While I'm not familiar with his name, this piece included a traffic segment about his time in Winnipeg. In this article, Mr. Vogue mentions working for the Western Associated Press over 100 years ago. The chief operator he refers to, Frank Turner was also president of the Winnipeg Press Club in 1930. He mentions that Turner worked for one of our local newspapers during a critical period in the history of Winnipeg, then later working for the Canadian Press.

What are the guidelines for sharing that excerpt in an e-mail to be circulated to our MTC members and supporters? I couldn't find anything about copyright or reprinting in that issue. Would I follow the current guidelines as indicated in the 2012 fall issue? If so, what would be the correct working for credit? Thanks for your help.

*Cheers,
Wendy Hart
Vice President of
Administration & Communications
Winnipeg Press Club
winnipegpressclub@mts.net*

January 21st

I am a member of MTC, unfortunately not a qualified telegrapher, but with an interest in the history and operation of telegraphy.

I have a small railroad depot on my farm property with a line that connects it with our home. I am in the process of hooking up the system, but would really like to get in touch with someone who could build and sell me a device that would send messages on a continuous cycle. I would like a variety of messages, a mix of railroad

traffic and Western Union messages, perhaps four of five of each.

I not only lack the skill as a telegrapher, but have limited electronic skill. If I received a device with some basic instructions, I believe I could hook it up. I'd like it to run off 110 volt AC power.

Can you put me in touch with someone who might be able to do this project for me? I am willing to pay a reasonable price for their time and materials.

*Thanks much,
Tom Sharatt
Westby, Wisconsin
tssharratt@mut.net*

Roger Reinke and Jim Wades are also assisting Tom

February 2nd

I recently got your name from the Internet and am interested in your career and your magazine, *Dots & Dashes*. Since 1959, I was a wireless operator with the Western Union Telegraph Company in Bou Roberts, Newfoundland, Canada. I would appreciate any information on your magazine or other related material that may help me to stay current. I look forward to hearing from you.

*Regards, B. Demedy
bertandhelen@persona.ca*

February 3rd

I am curious to know where you got the picture of the Royal Hudson shown under "Railway Royalty" on page 9 (winter issue of *Dots & Dashes*). This locomotive is located in the new Conference Center at the west Coast Railway Museum in Squamish, BC, about 60 miles out of Vancouver.

Last July, Jim Mossop and I did a Morse demo and showed some of our film to an audience of BC Rail Pioneers just a few feet away from this engine.

*73,
Larina Shaw
Former MTC International President*

February 3rd

I read Chris Hauser's remarks about the film on the sinking of the Titanic. One film that was made for TV on the Titanic was filmed partially at the Radio Museum in Port Coquitlam (where I live). They have a room that was used to simulate a ship's radio room, complete with the portholes in

the walls. It has been kept like this for years. One of the shots in this little film was made here. "Telegraphy, How it Changed the World," was shot in that room with MTC Member Max Roy sending on the telegraph key.

Larina Shaw

February 4th

I was at the Richmond, VA hamfest the other day and stopped by the *Dots & Dashes* table to pick up some copies of your publication. I enjoyed the articles, especially the ones about trains. I saw several mentions of old stations being renovated. I thought your members may be interested in the former Reading RR station in Minersville, Pennsylvania. This station will turn 100 years old this June. I don't know what is planned and the station has not yet been renovated. The station is currently being used as the workshop for the restoration of CNJ #113, which ran for the first time in 54 years on Friday after Thanksgiving. Maybe your readers will be interested.

*Phil Kania
KJ4JYJ
yardmaster2102@juno.com*

February 14th

Saving Lincoln is a shoe string film which tells the true story of an epic friendship. Lincoln and his bodyguard, U.S. Marshal Ward Hill Lamon, long time friend and former law colleague, made himself personally responsible for protecting the President's life. (There was no Secret Service until after Lincoln was assassinated.) Lincoln was obsessed with saving "our great American experiment entrusted to my care that hangs by a thread." Lamon was obsessed with uncovering assassination plots.

I found the film to be a gem, superbly acted, visually innovative, and a valuable addition for avid Lincoln buffs. Of note is the filmmaking technique with the actors shot on a green screen (like TV weather presentations) electronically composited into the actual Civil War era photographs from the Library of Congress. Brilliantly executed!

I counted about eight scenes involving the telegraph. The telegraph sounds were background to Lincoln's reading telegraphs or his dictating orders. One was a message from General Grant that Sherman had 3 horses shot from under him. Another read, "We have driven the enemy from the

soil,” plus other messages with discouraging statistics of casualties on both sides. A message was read to Lincoln of the fall of Atlanta on election night, thus assuring Lincoln’s re-election. The last telegraph reference that I noted was near the end of the film with a telegrapher in action relaying news of the post-Atlanta battle with the telegrapher on full screen.

In the viewing audience on the night I previewed the film (on February 12th, Lincoln’s birthday) was one of the financial backers of this film, Will Robinson. He told me that Lincoln used the Telegraph as we today use Email. He recommended to me the books, “Lincoln’s Telegraph Stories,” by Homer Bates, and “Mr. Lincoln’s T-Mails” by Tom Wheeler.

*Joan Thompson
MTC WA Chapter*

Joan adds a PS: “The better part of one’s life consists of his friendships,” stated Abraham Lincoln.

February 21st

Thanks to Chris Hausler for the review of what we called “The Green Book,” *Principles of Electricity Applied to Telegraph & Telephone Work*.

I was one of those hired in AT&T’s post depression hiring binge of 1940 & 41. So was Ace Holman, but we didn’t meet until after WW service. Then we became lifelong friends.

Hiring requirements in 1940 were: Male only, age 18 through 20 with a high school technical or academic diploma. A ham radio license helped you get hired. The work was 40 hours per week for pay of \$18.00. Most hams made the transition easily going from International to American Morse code. (During my time in the Army Signal Corps I was made a radio operator right away!)

The first six months on the job were probationary. We were paired with older experienced guys on all types of jobs from cleaning stove heated soldering irons to aligning long

distance carrier circuits. We were also given a companion “Blue Book” to study. This book explained the history and organization of the then giant “Ma Bell.” There was “NY Tel Bell of Pennsylvania, Southern Bell, Pacific T&T,” and others. We were AT&T’s long lines department, connecting all of these organizations together.

Most young men made it through the six months probationary period. Then we were given a small green paperback. This was a review of high school trigonometry and geometry. We got five days off to attend two hour classes to learn the math problems. Finally, we were given the Green Book. This became our bible study for four forth hour weeks (paid) with a top notch teacher. This was our Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering!

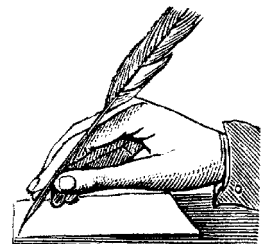
By 1940, leased Morse lines were being replaced by teletype machines. Bridge polar duplex was largely replaced by repeaters with faster relays and lower voltages, superimposed on telephone lines. But Morse was still used behind the scenes for trouble shooting until about 1952.

AT&T carried most press coast to coast as well as telephone and network radio and microwave relay for television. Bell Labs and Western electric Company (both part of Ma Bell), designed and built two of the first communications satellites: Echo and Telstar, and a ground station as well. NASA was paid by Ma Bell for launches with no tax money involved.

Thirst by competitors caused Ma Bell’s break-up by court order. What was left combined with Southwestern Bell to become the present AT&T. The AT&T books are a treasure. In retirement after my 40 years of service, I still feel the spirit of “Ma” caring for me!

30 & 73, Bill Cummings, W2YR, member of the MTC WA chapter

PS: Bell Canada and Northern Electric are also a part of Ma Bell.



A CODE STORY PART 1: LISTENING

By MTC Member, Thomas Wayne King

Pulsed static. Di-di-di-dah Di-di-di-dah Di-di-di-dah It repeated again and again. Dad's shortwave radio drew us together on January evenings of 1956. I was six years old and fascinated.

Many nights before bedtime, I watched and listened while my Dad, Victor, tuned across the multiple bands of his glowing 1950s Hallicrafters receiver. The radio was more than just gear for Dad. Victor's own father, Gideon, was an experienced Canadian logger, who had moved to northwestern Wisconsin in 1879 from his eastern farm home near St. Alphonse, Quebec. Grandpa Gideon passed away tragically in 1916 when Victor was only eight, and Dad always spoke of how much he missed his father. Victor made sure he spent time with me each day after his long hours at work.

Through letters in the mail and lengthy car trips, Dad kept in touch as he could with family back in Quebec. But his radio was the medium that worked best. Listening was our ready, reliable link to the world. Dad's receiver provided nearly-instant cultural connections for us.

Victor switched on his radio most nights soon after dinner to let it warm up. It glowed and hummed. We tuned the vertical marker across the arrays of lines and numbers, soon hearing AM and shortwave broadcasts of music, voices, and noises from all over the planet it seemed. The shortwave world was vibrantly, vigorously alive each night as we listened from our west-central Wisconsin home. Magic!

French Canadian speech and music were always there for us when Victor tuned those sections of the dial. Dad explained how stations identified themselves with call signs and news announcements from Montreal, Quebec City, and other places that linked him with his father's homeland.

Di-di-di-dah Di-di-di-dah Di-di-di-dah There it was again, over and over; mysterious rhythmic static and tones on the bands as Dad dialed across them. I asked him about it.

"That's Morse code," he said. He told how Morse code was used for telegrams, and by the Navy and railroads. He wished that he could make sense of it. I wondered about that, too.

My mother, Madeline, also came into the darkened room some nights to listen. It was all there for her: music, voices, French and other languages, code, static, tones, pulses...mystery. As Mom listened closely to those pulses, she said "I think that's a V." She told me that great uncle Dewey Olsen, based in Seattle, had been a ship's telegrapher. As a young girl, Mom said, she heard code through his radios when Uncle Dewey served as a merchant marine radioman in the 1920s. Too much to take in.

But what? You could read those bursts of noise? They had meanings in letters and words? This six-year old was just then learning to read in school, so I had to know more about code.

Although it took years, I eventually did learn more about Morse code, with it becoming a feared yet important influence in my life. My code story began in Dad's radio room in 1956. It gradually unfolded in ways I never imagined...

Part 1 of 3. Part 1: Listening. Part 2: Receiving. Part 3: Sending

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CHAPTER NEWS

Maple Leaf ON Chapter



We did a telegraph demo at Lang Pioneer Village near Peterboro, Ontario on June 17, 2012. It was their "Smoke and Steam" weekend. Laurie Siblock snapped the attached picture. In the photo from left to right are Clare Conlin (ex CN) and Doug Hately (ex CP), Ted Sprackett (Ex CN and Eastern Division Vice President), Tom Hamblin (ex CP and President of the Maple Leaf Chapter) and Don Caza (ex CP).

Ollie Blackburn AT Chapter



Center is Charlotte Eggeston proudly displaying her "Golden Spike" Award

The Ollie Blackburn Chapter was happy to present its 2012 Golden Spike Award to Ms. Charlotte Eggeston. Charlotte has been a chapter supporter for many years, working hard with the board members of The National Museum of

Transportation

to help install a permanent telegraph booth. She always thought that, although we are not the main attraction, we should still be there, since the telegraph was a part of the 1869 Transcontinental

Railroad of Promontory Summit, Utah and the Civil War. It is well known how important the telegraph communications were for President Lincoln dispatching military troops to the different theaters of battle. Ms. Eggeston has assisted in many demonstrations. She has also helped by processing our paper work and by issuing certificates and our famous Fuzzy Faced handouts.

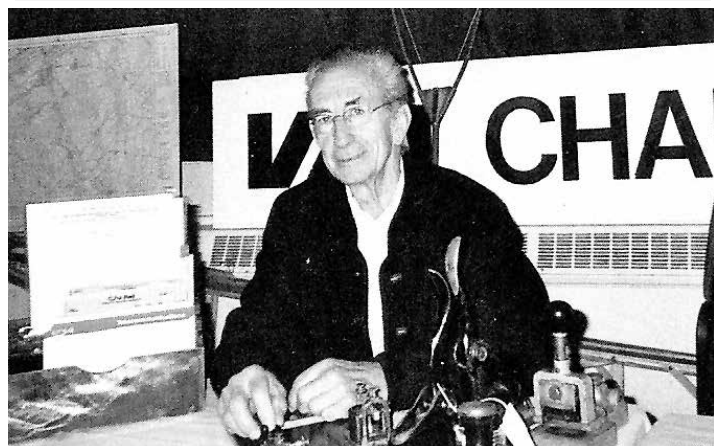
We hear at the AT Chapter are pleased to add Charlotte Eggeston to the list of 28 sponsors who have supported us during the past five years. Presenting Ms. Eggeston the Golden Spike award was Brother Wes Ridgeway (who received his award in 2005). Also, Mr. Robert Eastin, Legacy Coordinator of the National Museum of Transport, received an award.

Charlotte's first love is her three children, five grand children, and her soon to be first great grandchild. She also enjoys the hobby of cross-stitching. Although, Charlotte said she cannot copy the cliky clack of the sounder, she often comments about something said over the wire.

As a point of information, this presentation was made on March 9, 2013 which was the 152nd anniversary of the 1861 battle of the Ironclads, Monitor and Merrimack at Hampton Roads, Virginia. One more thing, March 9th is also the date of her and her husband's 56th wedding anniversary.

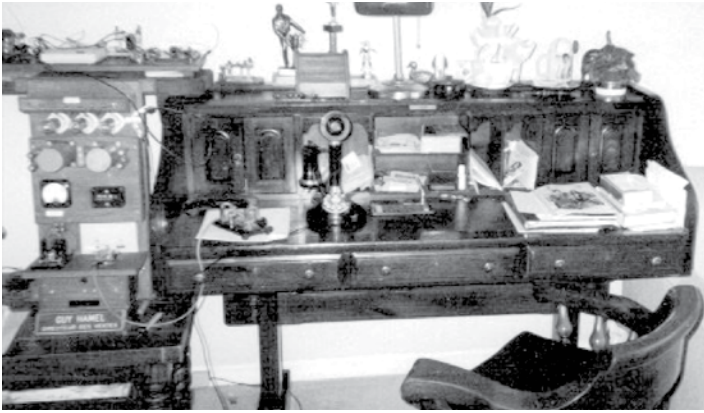
Many thanks to Charlotte. 73 & 88 & good luck. William Eggeston

Canadian GO Chapter



GO Chapter member, Julien Carigan, demonstrated the telegraph during Festirail in Charney, Quebec, Canada

CHAPTER NEWS *continued*



"CK the telegraph terminal and my 1920 bug, they work good on the hub an't close the roll top, cause its full of junk. I love it this way." - J. Guy Hamel

Canadian HN Hub

We have a very qualified participant as Morse instructor on the slow sending sessions. His name is Luc Bonneau, a university professor, sign CN. Luc learned Morse back in the 60's; he worked summer jobs with the Canadian pacific telegraph while attending the university. Luc will cover the Friday slow sessions when his university schedule permits.

We welcomed Luc Bonneau to his first session on March 1st.

*Thumbs up & 73,
J. Guy Hamel*

ROCKY MOUNTAIN EXPRESS

By Jim Munsey

The local Space and Science Centre in Edmonton known as the Telus World of Science recently acquired a new Imax film entitled "The Rocky Mountain Express". It features a trip from Vancouver to Revelstoke B.C. with a Royal Hudson steam engine with a back-up diesel unit hauling five or six passenger cars. It includes scenes in color of the train en-route through the treacherous canyons, tunnels, high bridges and the mountains between these two points. The film is interspersed with black and white still photos taken during the construction of the line in the 1980s together with pictures connected with the search for suitable passes through to mountains and scenes of major disasters which occurred during the early years of operation. One particular sequence was taken with an Imax camera mounted immediately behind the driving rods on one side of the Royal Hudson to provide a fascinating picture of the motion of the rods at about 100 MPH.

The film was scheduled for a premium showing on February 10th for Staff, volunteers and members of the centre and a second premier showing on the following evening for local dignitaries, major contributors and shareholders. Management thought it would be appropriate to have an experienced railroader on hand to answer any enquiries concerning the operation of a railroad. Knowing that Jim Munsey, a member of the Edmonton "MO" Chapter, was a volunteer amateur radio operator at the centre for a number of years had worked for the Canadian National Railway in a number of capacities

for forty years, they asked him if he could make himself available for this purpose.

Jim agreed and was provided with a table in the lobby just outside the doors to the theatre. He took his dial up set, with sounder and resonator box complete with a Prince Alberta tobacco can and his bug as well as a number of railway artifacts. On both evenings, prior to the opening of the doors to the theatre and for about an hour after the film had been shown, Jim attracted attention by sending some code. A large number of people visited him with many questions concerning telegraphy and its importance in the operation of a railway. Surprisingly, many of the young parents accompanied by their children knew nothing about electromagnetic telegraphy and were fascinated with Jim's demonstration of how it worked and how it was used. Many of the older crowd were reminded of the country station agents in the villages in which they lived and remembered the strange clicking sounds emanating from his office.

There were a variety of questions about the dispatch of trains on a single track line, the duties of various employees and seemed very interested in Jim's stories collected during his forty years experience. Jim was permitted to watch the movie while it was being shown on the second evening and was impressed with the quality of the film. The views of the beautiful scenery pictured were spectacular and he highly recommends the show be watched if and when it becomes available at other centers in Canada and the USA.

MEMORIES OF THE RAILROAD TELEGRAPH OFFICE IN ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

By Jim Wilson

Alexandria was a sleepy little Virginia town during the 1940's when my family moved there. My sister, Caroline, and I spent our childhoods in Alexandria; we both attended and graduated from Alexandria public schools. In that era, everyone stayed put, lived in the same hometown and in the same house for most of their lives. By today's standards, we were poor, but we didn't know it.

Upon earning a Master's degree in City Planning, I remained in Alexandria and worked for 31 years at the Alexandria City Hall in Old town Alexandria. My sweet wife, Becky, also chose public service as her career. Becky taught U.S. history in the Alexandria public school system for 31 years.

But back to our childhoods: It was an easy walk, about a mile, for Caroline and me, along with various neighborhood kids, to reach the Alexandria train station. Sometimes we rode our bicycles. In those days you didn't worry about someone stealing your bike, so you could lay it down on the green grass next to the train station without worry.

Many trains stopped here en route, just seven miles down the track from our nation's capitol, Washington, DC. I recall the telegraph office was inside the train station front door and straight ahead. I recall the clickity clacks of the telegraph. On a couple of occasions I recall talking with the telegraph operator. But in those days, children were only to be seen, not heard. So the many questions in my mind were never spoken.

In that time period, children were trained to respect adults and to obey adult authority. I recall that a few adults abused that privilege. Children were always living under a cloud of fear, waiting for some adult to come along with harsh words and toss them out from the train station, toss them out from the nearby National Masonic Temple, or order them out from the downtown shops.

It was in the Alexandria train station as a child that I first noticed the curious bathroom sign, "for colored only." At first I asked a childhood friend why colored people were so special that they got their own private bathroom. My older and wiser friend explained that these people had contagious germs and diseases, so they were quarantined to their

separate bathrooms. That sounded gross, but it did explain the sign.

Ironically, after graduation from college, I joined VISTA, a federal program to help lift U.S. blacks out of poverty. While working for President Johnson's War on Poverty, I met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and worked under the watchful eye of Georgia state Representative and Civil Rights Leader, Julian Bond.

As my seven decades swiftly flew by, I never in my wildest dreams predicted how important the telegraph would become to me. As a teenager, neighborhood kids set up a homemade telegraph system connected by wires from house to house through the trees. We used discarded wire from the C&P Telephone Company where my dad, Lynn, worked. Dad was also an avid ham radio operator, with the calls sign W4JXD.

At age 13, I earned my Novice amateur radio license, KN4BAV, and boy was I proud of that accomplishment. Telegraphy, called CW, became my favorite mode. Later, when drafted into the Vietnam War, the Army made me an instructor of Morse code at Fort Gordon Signal School.

Eventually, when the Morse Telegraph Club needed an editor for *Dots & Dashes*, I was drafted to serve that role. I doubted that I could successfully follow in the footsteps of former *Dots & Dashes* editor, John Barrows. John was a full time newspaper editor in Montana. But John got me up to speed fast. Nine years have flown by since I first volunteered to publish our quarterly MTC journal, *Dots & Dashes*.

Two years ago, our son, Matt, and I were recruited to teach Morse code to a select group of young actors for the Steven Spielberg movie "Lincoln," which was recently playing in theaters worldwide. Matt was also recruited to play an 1860's telegraph operator in the two movies "Lincoln, and "Killing Lincoln." So, I still marvel at the importance in my life and in son Matt's life the telegraph became.

Who would have imagined the role that telegraph would play in my humble life? I'll bet that many of our readers have similar stories. I challenge you to put your stories on paper and send them to me to share with other Morse enthusiasts.

MINI-SATELLITE TO FLASH CODE FROM SPACE

This article has been reprinted from the Sydney Morning Herald, October 8, 2012

A palm-sized Japanese satellite in orbit around Earth will flash a Morse code message that will be visible around the world from next month, the mission commander said.

Researchers hope the satellite, measuring 10 centimetres cubed and launched from the International Space Station on Friday, will become the first orbiter to transmit an LED message across the night sky.

The message was originally intended to be seen just in Japan, but people around the world have asked for the satellite to communicate when it overflies them, said Takushi Tanaka, professor at The Fukuoka Institute of Technology. The satellite measures just 10 centimetres cubed.

"Requests came from far more people than I expected - a man in Silicon Valley wanted to see it while another man wanted us to flash it over Central Park in New York," Tanaka told AFP by telephone.

He said he has also received requests from residents of cities in Italy, Germany, Brazil, Britain and Hungary.

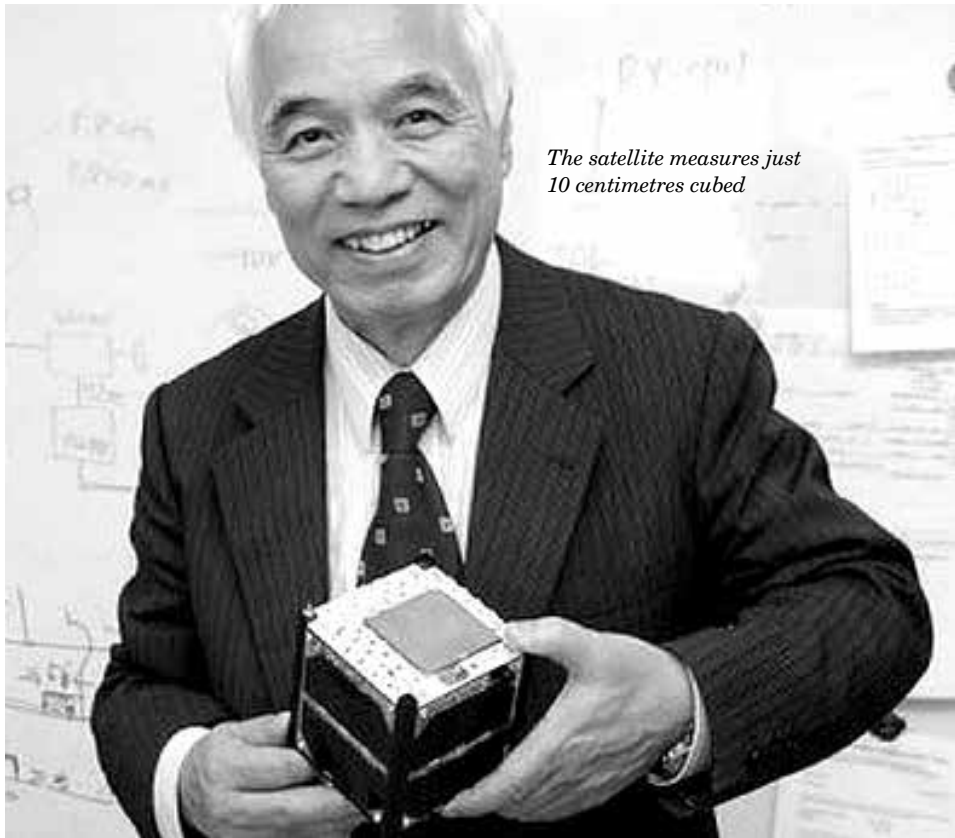
"There is no practical aim to this, but it is a fun experiment that everybody can join," he said.

Observers, ideally with binoculars, will be able to see flashes of light - green in the northern hemisphere, where people will see the "front" of

the satellite, and red in the southern hemisphere, where the "back" will be visible.

Morse code uses a series of dots and dashes to represent letters of the alphabet and is commonly understood across the world as a way of transmitting pieces of text.

"A man in Slovakia who has laser beam said he would flash back if he sees the message from space. He wants the satellite to take pictures of his beam and send them to Earth," Tanaka said.



The satellite measures just 10 centimetres cubed

The professor said his team would try their best to accommodate requests but warned being able to see the Morse code message would be largely dependent on the weather.

The message it will send is "Hi this is Niwaka Japan". Niwaka is the satellite's nickname and reflects a play on words in the local dialect of southwestern Japan.

Besides transmitting its LED message, the camera-equipped satellite will also take images of Earth and send them to a base station in an experiment on high-speed data transmissions.

The solar-powered device was released from the International Space Station 390 kilometres (242 miles) above Earth and is now in a regular orbit.

Specific timings and locations will be announced later on the institute's website in Japanese and English.

“30” SILENT KEYS

News of our brothers and sisters who have closed the key



Grand CG Chapter/Members at Large



LESTER N. FOUKE, age 85, was born in West Point Township, Illinois on February 28, 1927. He died on December 26, 2012. Lester served in the U.S. Navy during WWII, and then he began his career with the Illinois Central Railroad in 1946. He was a telegrapher at West Junction in Freeport, then later a train dispatcher in Chicago.

When passenger train service was eliminated between Chicago and Freeport in 1970, Lester put his aptitude for fine carpentry to work in his own business in Freeport. Les could just as easily build a garage as remodel a kitchen or remodel a place of business, make a custom built-in bookcase or cabinet, hang a door or a window, or repair anything around the house. His creativity with wood extended to crafting beautiful desks and tables, decorative boxes, wall clocks, and signs for homes or businesses.

Lester met Clarice Schweitzer while they both were working for the Illinois Central Railroad. They were married on August 25, 1951. Les and Clarice enjoyed rearing their daughter Carol. They loved their gardens of both flowers and vegetables.

A man of relatively few words, Les was known for his dry wit which often caught people by surprise and doubled them over with laughter. Lester demonstrated telegraphy at the Freeport Railroad Museum. He was also an animal lover who could make friends with every cat and dog he ever met. He was a member of the Bethany United Church of Christ.

Thanks to Carol Fouke-Mpoyo, Lester's daughter, for this interesting biography.

Sacramento SA Chapter

KEITH SMOTHERS of Julian, California was born in 1938.

LESLIE STEPHENSON of Arroyo Grande, California was born in 1922. His amateur radio call sign was N6PAQ.

FRANK WYATT of Scotts Valley, California was born

in 1938. His amateur radio call sign was N6FW.

DOC DYER of Sacramento, California was born in 1919.

Thanks to Larry Cardoza, Secretary-Treasurer of the SA Chapter for these brief information.

I hope to get you more details. ~Jim

Vancouver DI Chapter

NICK RYHORCHUK, age 84, of Surrey, British Columbia died on February 2, 2013. Nick suffered bad health for the final two years of his life. He worked as a telegrapher from an early age in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia during later years as a Rules Instructor. He is survived by his daughter, Laurie, and his brother, Maron.

Thanks to Larina Shaw, Secretary-Treasurer of the DI Chapter, for this information.

Maple Leaf ON Chapter/Toronto

A. KEITH FRYETT, age 85, was born in Hagersville, Ontario on April 14, 1927. He died in Brantford on December 5, 2012. Since 2003, Keith and his wife Doreen had lived in Tempe, Arizona, but frequently came back to visit Canada. Keith began his career in July 1944 with the Canadian National Railroad as an Assistant Agent at Hagersville. He was promoted to telegraph operator in May 1946. He was a Relief Agent on the London Division until August 1956. Then Keith became Agent at Preston, Ontario from 1956 to 1963. This was followed by his being appointed Terminal Traffic Manager in Sarnia in 1963 and London in 1965, retiring on January 31, 1986.

Thanks to Don Laycock, Secretary-Treasurer of the Maple Leaf Chapter, for this information.

Don adds that Keith will be remembered and missed by his great many CNR & MTC friends.

Winnipeg WG Chapter

PHILIP FLEMING STEPHANSON, age 82, passed away on December 12, 2012. He was born in Winnipegosis, Manitoba on November 18, 1930. That is where he learned telegraphy. Phil joined the Canadian National Railway on July 19, 1948.

He then worked at various locations in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta as a telegrapher, becoming a train dispatcher on June 7, 1955, later retiring as Transportation Officer after 44 years of service.

Phil is survived by his wife of 57 years, Marjorie, and his daughters Sheri and Ardith, by five grandsons and three great grandsons.

Thanks to Dan Kollesaich, Secretary-Treasurer of the WG Chapter, for this information.

Dan adds that it is sad that Phil didn't get to enjoy his membership in the club; he just joined on November 30, 2012.

WILLIAM GLENN CARLSON, age 81, passed away on December 13, 2012 in Portage la Prairie, MB. Glenn was born in Portage la Prairie on July 13, 1931. He learned telegraphy there in 1947 & 1948. William's employment with the Canadian National Railway began in July 1948 as an assistant agent. He became a telegraph operator in July 1949. Glenn worked at various locations in northwestern Ontario and eastern Manitoba, resigning as third trick operator in Portage la Prairie in August 1969 because of the implementation of Central Traffic Control. Following that, Glenn became a teacher of Industrial Arts. His screen printing business and municipal politics include his becoming an alderman and Mayor of Portage la Prairie.

Glenn is survived by his wife Joyce and their daughters Deb, Lori, and Marilyn.

Thanks again to Dan Kollesaich for this information.

CD Combs FN Chapter

MEL BUETTNER, age 81, of Omaha, Nebraska passed away suddenly after getting off his shift of volunteering at a local hospital on December 23, 2012. He was born on March 15, 1931. Mel attended school in Elm Creek, Nebraska and graduated with the class of 1949. Then he attended railroad school in Omaha. On June 16, 1951, he married Lavonne Northrup. Mel and Lavonne raised four children, Daniel, Kristy, James, and Patricia.

Following railroad school, the family lived in Elm Creek, where Mel began his career with the Union Pacific Railroad. Mel served at several other mid-Nebraska stations including branch stations Scotia and Ord and stations between Kearney and Gothenburg. Later he bid for and took a job at Millard, Nebraska where the family then moved.

Next, Mel accepted a position in management. He and Lavonne moved to Saint Louis, where he retired in 1987 after 37 years of service. Mel and Lavonne were happily married for 61 years.

In addition to being a member of the Morse Telegraph Club, Mel was a member of the UP Old timers Club. Mel had a great sense of humor and will be missed by all who were blessed to know him.

Thanks to Richard Behrens, Secretary-Treasurer of the FN Chapter, for this information.

Hoosier TH Chapter/Terre Haute

CARL RYSSELL BROWN, age 85, of Findlay, Illinois, passed away on December 9, 2012. Carl was born on July 17, 1927 at Mount Vernon, Illinois. His wife of 60 years was Shirley Evelyn Massey. Carl was a graduate of Findlay High School, class of 1944. He served two years in the U.S. Navy as an aviation machinist mate. He was a recipient of the WWII Victory Medal and a member of the American Legion Post 409 of Findlay.

Carl held a railroad engineer's license and was a life time member of the Monticello Railroad Museum of Monticello, IL. For many years, he also maintained his airplane pilot's license and flew his own plane. Carl was employed as a telegraph operator for fourteen years for the C&EI Railroad, and then served as Postmaster of Findlay, IL for 24 years. He was also an auxiliary police officer and served as a volunteer fireman. Surviving Carl are his wife Shirley and their children: Lewis, Carla, Tina, Lynne, and Russell, plus fourteen grandchildren, and six great grandchildren.

Thanks to Howard Eskridge, Secretary-Treasurer of the Terre Haute Chapter, for this brief notice. Shirley Brown also sent the obituary of her father.

Carl's obituary included "A Railroad Man's Prayer."

O, Lord, now that I have flagged Thee, lift up my feet from the rough road of life and plant them safely on the deck of the train of salvation. Let me use the safety lamp known as prudence and all the couplings in the train with the strong arm or love; and let my hand lamp be the Bible. And, Heavenly Father, keep all switches closed that lead off the sidings, especially those with a blind eye. O, Lord, if it be Thy pleasure, have every semaphore block along the line show white light of hope that I may make the run of life without stopping. And, Lord, give us the Ten Commandments for the schedule;

Silent Keys, continued from previous page

and when I have finished on schedule time and pulled into the dark station of death, may the Superintendent to the Universe say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, come and sign the pay roll and receive your check for eternal happiness."

Saskatoon KN Chapter

BEV OURAY HARVEY, age 88, passed away in January 2012. Bev was a long time member of the KN Chapter and also of the Canadian National Railroad Pensioner's Association. He worked for the CNR in many capacities for 45 years. He also served in the Royal Canadian Navy during WWII. He loved sports, especially hockey, curling, and fishing. Bev was married to his wife, Ann, for 66 years. In addition to his beloved wife, Bev leaves behind grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Thanks to Bill Ryan, KN Publicist and MTC Director for Western Canada, for this information.

Thomas Edison TD Chapter

EDWARD JOSEPH FREDERICK, age 82, passed away on January 12, 2013. Ed was born in Aldborough Township. He served as a Station Agent and

Train Dispatcher for 36 years with the Canadian Pacific Railroad, retiring in 1986. After retiring, Ed and his wife, June Almeida Fredrick, enjoyed traveling in his motor home across Canada. Ed was a member of the Trinity United Church and an executive member of the Capreol Curling Club. The children of Ed and June are Wendy, Katherine, and Michael.

Thanks to Jim Wades and to Duke Mulvihill for this information.

Duke adds, "Ed and I worked at Capreol for many years. When I was a Relief Agent Operator, I was always the one he asked for to relieve him when he went on vacation. He was a prince of a man and never said a bad thing about anyone."

Montreal/Ottawa GO Chapter

HOWARD FORBES of Pictou, Nova Scotia passed away in September 2012. Howard worked for 37 years as an operator for Canadian National Railway in the Maritime Provinces, with a short stint in Ontario.

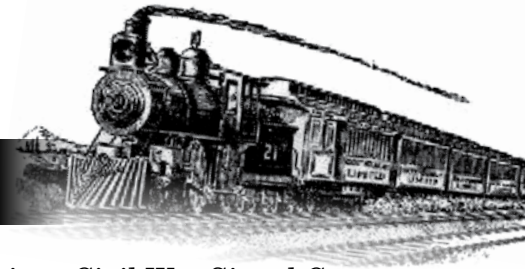
Thanks to Roly Lauriault for this brief information.

William Eggeston snapped this picture of a truck ahead of him in traffic. Above the Statue of Liberty are the letters, MTC.



WELCOME ABOARD

News of Our New Morse Telegraph Club Members



Grand GC Chapter/Members at Large

ROBERT T. BOHRER of Cosmos, Minnesota was born on October 9, 1942. Robert says he started playing with telegraphy when he was about age 15. He was working at odd jobs when one of his customers offered him a pile of old electrical components for payment. This led him to learn and earn his amateur radio license, K0RTB.

In the late 1980's, Robert's wife was the Artistic Director for a little museum near Saint Paul, Minnesota. Because he had the hardware, Bob and his wife were invited to set up an operating small town depot in one of the buildings on the Murphy's Landing site.

With no background in railroading, Robert began researching railroads. He interviewed some old hands: Mr. Earl J. McGraw of Willmar, MN, Mr. Bob King of Barabook, WI, Mr. Bill Lenzen of Saint James, MN, and Mr. Hugh Salisbury "SA" of Oakdale, MN. "SA" was one of the operators working the Princess depot at Minnehaha Park in Minneapolis with Corbin S. Kidder as the Agent. The Princess is the original depot serving the Minnehaha Falls Park area and is located on what was the first Milwaukee main line in service before the Lake Street Depression and the Benton cut off were in service.

Bob and his wife operated the depot at Murphy's Landing in an original Milwaukee Road building. The building was in the original Milwaukee Livery and oddly enough, ended up on the Murphy's Landing site about half a mile north of the old Hastings and Dakota Bridge across the Minnesota River at Shakopee, MN. This line was later operated as the Hastings and Dakota Division of the Milwaukee.

Bob thinks they did a pretty good job, because several old hands visited and gave them a pass. In setting up the depot, Robert devised a tape recorder system to operate the sounder. "Mr. King kindly did not laugh when he told me the old operators had used this idea to exchange tapes for many years," commented Bob. He adds, unfortunately the agents office was gutted then repainted in modern colors as a gift shop.

For several years, Bob notes that he has been

working on an American Civil War Signal Corps event. He and his friends set up US Signal Corps demonstrations at many events. In October, 2013, Robert plans to participate in an event with his old unit in the 9th Texas Infantry Company G. He has been requested to set up a working line between several buildings in a small town to handle the traffic between two elements of the CSA troops. Robert is looking for a few competent telegraph operators for this event. He says they will also use signal flags.

Robert thanks MTC members for their effort in "sustaining a part of history which was so important in the making of our present day United States of America."

Welcome Robert, and may you find success with your upcoming October telegraph event.

The New Wireless Pioneers

The New Wireless Pioneers of Grand Island, New Jersey just joined the Morse Telegraph Club. They invite you to contact them at wireless@pce.net.

Welcome, Pioneers, to the Morse Telegraph Club. You have found the end of the rainbow!

ROBERT A. GIBBS of Rochester Hills, MI was born on October 9, 1953. He invites you to contact him at AA8DD@icloud.com.

We are glad you have joined the fun at MTC, Robert.

DONNA ALLEN BUBAK of Kitchener, Ontario was born on December 17, 1959. Her father, Donald Victor Allen, worked for many years for the Ontario Northern Railway (ONR).

Donna, we especially welcome you, a rare female new member, to MTC!

JOHN CASALE of Troy, New York was born on September 5, 1952. John notes that he previously served as the Secretary-Treasurer of the MTC Joseph Henry Chapter in Albany, NY. John notes that the Joseph Henry chapter was dissolved a couple of years ago due to declining membership. John also notes that his amateur radio call is W2NI and that he has been an active "ham" for 45

years. John also has a telegraph history web site at www.telegraph-history.org.

John, the Morse Telegraph Club needs you; welcome home!

MARK KORSACK of Washington, DC was born on October 15, 1970. Mark says he learned about the Morse Telegraph Club from a recent newspaper article about telegraph assistance by MTC members to the Spielberg movie in the Richmond Times Dispatch. "I too am interested in telegraphic operations during the Civil War," he says. Mark recently discovered that his great, great grandfather was Richard O'Brien, a telegraph operator for the Pennsylvania Rail Road. Richard was also one of the four founding members of the United States Military Telegraph Corps.

For the past few years, Mark has been compiling information about the experiences of his great, great grandfather along with his brother, John Emmet. "Through your organization, I am hoping to learn more about the telegraph and its operation," state Mark.

I extend a special welcome to you Mark. I hope that some of your writings may be published in a future issue of Dots & Dashes.

Mark was so proud to join MTC that he paid for both paper copy and electronic copy of our MTC journal!

JAMES R. MOENCH of Cheyenne, Wyoming was born on June 6, 1939. He invites you to contact him at jimmoench@gmail.com.

Welcome to MTC, Jim.

NORMAN HINKLE of Syracuse, New York was born ninety years ago. He is proud that he earned his amateur radio license W3ICJ in 1939. [His current call is W2NNJ]. In January 1947, Norm was hired to work for AT&T at their main test room in NYC, fixing commercial and government Morse code circuits. In those days, he says he traveled all across the United States. "I used both codes at about 35 words per minute, and it was like two different languages," says Norman.

Norm explains that communication was gradual in those days, starting with Morse code. "Western Union was a large public communications business using the Morse code through AT&T nationally and now through developed electronics they are out of business." He adds, "AT&T also developed commercial electronics and had their personnel in various U.S. cities keeping their Morse circuits in

operation."

Morse code gradually gave way about 1960 to teletype. Then, about 1980, computer operation was developed, causing AT&T to replace the teletype, explains Norm.


He has other stories, like bad storms knocking down long distance communications, hunters accidentally shooting cables, and flood problems and equipment failures. Norm says they had to "patch around" the problem to keep the customers operating." Yet, says Norm, a technician had to understand just where to send the cable repairman to locate and fix a problem, even in the test room. Norman concludes, "A valued technical person was important and still is today." Norm retired from AT&T in 1986.

Norman, we welcome you to MTC and hope you will put some of your stories on paper to share with us.

JOHN E. WESTERLAGE of Houston, TX was born on November 3, 1941. John states that he has been an amateur radio operator since 1956, working exclusively CW only. His current call sign is N5DWI, formerly K5HOQ. John invites you to contact him at john@n5dwi.com.

Welcome to you, John.

Oh, John sent \$20 for dues stating, "I feel that the dues should be at least that much" (For many years, MTC annual dues have remained at only \$15).

CURT R. BARTHOLOMEW of Fredericksburg, Virginia holds the amateur radio call N3GQ. Bart says he learned telegraphy in 1969 from the communications officer at the American Embassy in Athens, Greece. "My father was a career diplomat assigned to Greece during my high school years. After I got into trouble with my Dad, while trying to practice Morse code, the embassy communications officer let me borrow his Bud Codemaster code practice oscillator. The reason I got into trouble is because I hooked up a J-38 hand key to the lamp in my bedroom. I thought I was being smart and careful by spraying the key with clear lacquer that my Mom used on her paintings, so that I wouldn't get a shock. "Bart continues," Greece uses 220 volts AC power. Of course I got the shock of my life while I was practicing the Morse code with my lamp. But before I got shocked, my best friend in high school, Bill Basil, N1GZ, was copying the Morse code that I was sending while sitting in a field about 50 years from my house. 

We thought that was pretty cool.” Bart further explains, “You could see my bedroom light up with the Morse code thru the window on the second floor of the house. However, it just so happened that prior to that period of time, Greece had experienced a military coup (tanks rolled by our house at 5 AM one day) and the Greek Police were apparently curious about my bedroom window lighting up to a Morse code sequence. My friend Bill saw two policemen standing about a hundred yards from our house at the end of our street, appearing to write down what I was sending in Morse code. A few days later, when my Dad arrived home from work, he asked me what the heck I was doing in my room at night. I said, ‘Dad, I’m just practicing the Morse code with Bill, using my room lamp so that I can get my ham license. ‘He told me to stop it, as the Greek Police had contacted him at work and they were now watching our house.’ The next day when my Dad got home, he gave me a Bud Codemaster code practice oscillator that he borrowed from the embassy communications officer.”

Bart continues, “After I reached 5 WPM, and did some studying from an old ARRL license book, the communications officer gave me my Novice class amateur radio license exam. About two months later, I received my first FCC call sign, WN6WSL, in January 1970. I immediately formed a ham club at my high school using donated Heathkit gear from the American air base’s MARS station in Athens. It was very exciting to get the equipment; it consisted of a separate transmitter and receiver. I think they were Heathkit model numbers SB 301 and 401. The high school gave us a nearby small cement block storage shack to use and we strung up a dipole there. Unfortunately, about two months later, a thief broke the lock on our ham shack and stole all the equipment.”

Bart adds, “The next time I listened to telegraphy was at a small outpost of the US Army Security Agency, ten kilometers south of the US Air Base in Udorn, Thailand (AKA Ramasun Station, the 7th Radio Research Field Station). From 1973-1975, I served as a French linguist there, but we were always short of Morse Intercept Operators (MOS 05H). I would sometimes ‘sit pos’ to help them out. Copying code from the Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, or Chinese was okay as long as it wasn’t in 5-letter coded groups, which quickly became boring. The worst operators we had there were the ones who had taken a little high

school French, because they would often guess the wrong words in French as they tried to fill in the blanks that they couldn’t hear or make out. Most of the foreign operators used a combination of French and their local language, making deciphering garbled messages a read shore. The 7th shut down after I left in April 1975.”

“Although I used Morse code off and on in the interim period, I didn’t get back into using the Morse code on a regular basis until a few years after I retired from the US Army in 1993. I had plateaued at 18 WPM back in the seventies, so I was never able to reach the Extra Class level in amateur Radio. But in 1999, with the looming elimination of the 20 WPM code requirement, I took the challenge and jumped back in with both feet to get to 20 before the deadline. I listened to code cassette tapes in my car on the way to and from work every day, and I used a code practice program on my laptop. When I finally took the 20 WPM code test in early 2000, I told the examiner (Ed Forman, W4IN) that he had put the wrong tape in the machine, because it was way too slow. He checked it and listened to it and proclaimed that it was indeed the correct tape. After investigating this strange situation, I learned that the laptop code practice program I was using sent the code faster than what the program was indicating, since the program I was tied to the speed of the laptop’s processor. I was listening to code at 25 WPM, not 20 WPM, and apparently that is how I was able to leap over my longtime 18 WPM plateau.”

*FB & 73,
Bart
N3GQ*

PS Sorry this is so long; I wasn’t expecting to write a book!

Welcome, Bart, to MTC and thanks for the “brief” background of your experiences with Morse code.

JAMES T. LEE of Saint Paul, Minnesota was born on April 20, 1943. He notes that he was licensed as an amateur radio operator in 1957 and that he holds an Extra Class ticket with the current call sign N5BBX, formerly K5KKV. Jim invites you to contact him at K5@blackhole.com.

*Welcome, Jim, to the Morse Telegraph Club.
You will be glad that you joined.*

GARRY PHIPPS of Homer, Arkansas holds the amateur radio call sign KD8GMS. He invites you to contact him at KD8GMS@hotmail.com.

Garry, welcome to the MTC. You will find new friends here.

Vancouver "DI" Chapter

BARBARA J. STERRITT of Vancouver married her husband Neil B. Sterritt and became interested in the history of telegraph. She enjoyed hearing the experiences of former telegraphers connected to Hazelton and learning from an Ottawa connection about the Morse Telegraph Club in Vancouver. Neil's Great Uncle, Wii Lasa (Charles Martin), worked on the "Telegraph Trail" north of Hazelton, BC.

Special MTC welcomes to you, Barbara.

WILLIAM HEPPLEWHITE, who turned age 100 on March 18th, just joined MTC. More details and a photograph are promised by Lavina Shaw.

William, we welcome you to MTC with open arms. Send us your picture!

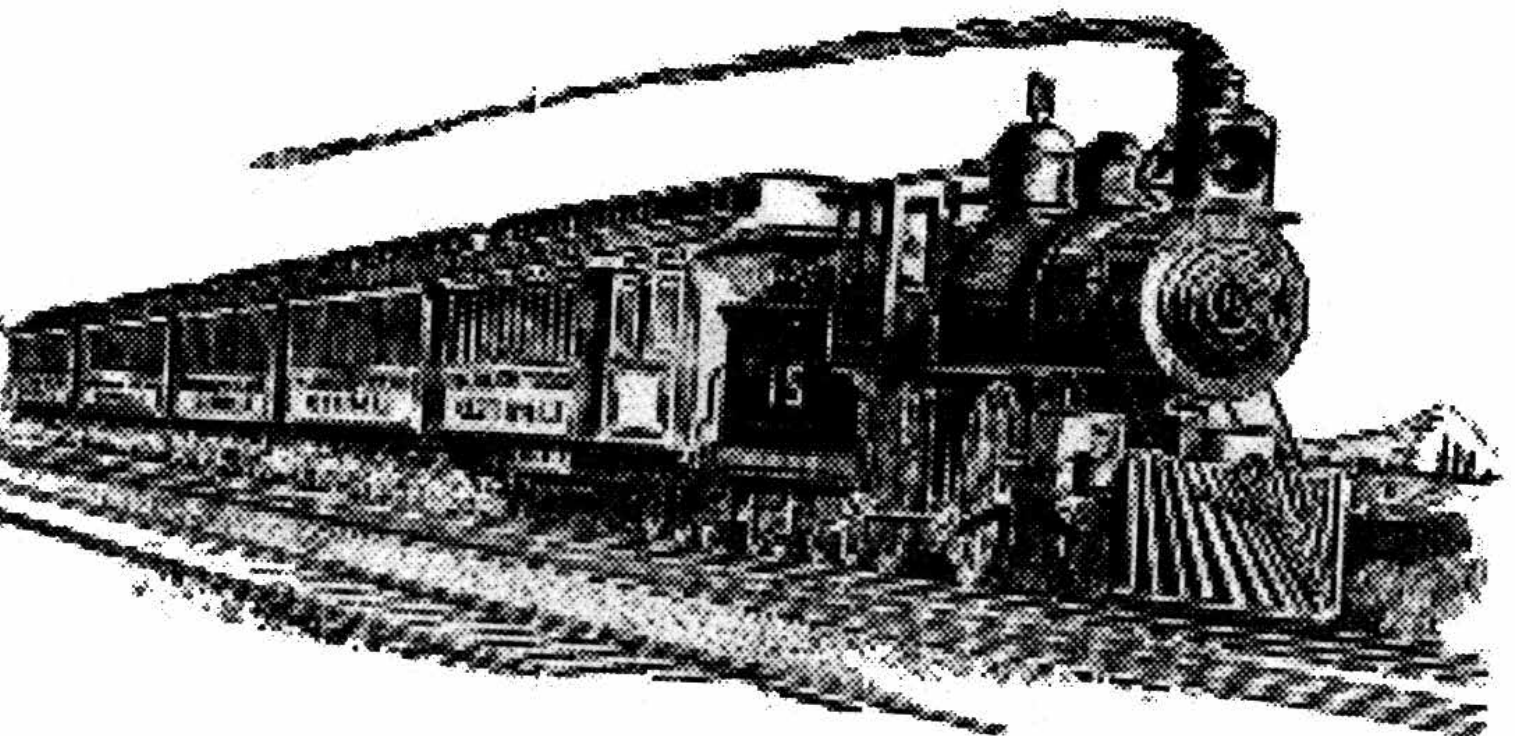
DOUG BALESHTA teaches at Thompson Rivers University at Kamloops, British Columbia. Doug states that his interest in telegraphy and the

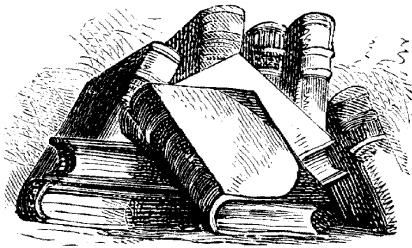
railway stems from several sources, including his past work experience with the Canadian National Railways (1972 – 1980). Doug states that he is 57, so he missed the golden years of the telegraph. But his father was a CN Railway Dispatcher/Operator/Telegrapher in a variety of places including Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Dour says he still owns his father's Vibroplex key.

Doug says he is currently researching and working on a book regarding the Canoe River Train Wreck, which occurred on November 21, 1950 at approximately 10:35 in the morning. A Westbound CNR train of Canadian soldiers was one of several destined for Fort Lewis in Washington State for training before heading over to the Korean Conflict. Unfortunately, a mix-up of train orders meant these two "steamers" would meet head-on at the blind curve just south of Valenmount, British Columbia. At the time, this was regarded as the worst train disaster in Canadian Railway History.

Doug asks that anyone reading this article that may have any knowledge of the train wreck to share that information with him at dbaleshta@gmail.com.

Welcome, Doug to the Morse Telegraph Club. We have knowledgeable members!





J. Chris Hausler's
**BOOK & MOVIE
REVIEWS**



For this issue I'm going to take a look at small town America, at least telegraphically speaking, with both a book and a movie review. The book is *From Richford's Rails to Freeville Stationmaster: Ken Rice Remembers* edited by Elsie Gutches. In 1984, Ken Rice made audio recordings of his memoirs and handed copies out to his friends. This short book, 88 pages, was developed from those recordings a few years after his death in 1995. In addition to the recordings, his wife and some of his friends contributed additional material to the book. It is a look at small town America from a sort of railroad point of view.

Mr. Rice was born and raised in the small town of Richford, NY along a branch line of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. His father was a drayman. His older brother became the agent/telegrapher at Richford. Raised around a railroad he took an interest and started working for the Lehigh Valley Railroad as an agent/telegrapher in 1937. As typical for someone just starting out he was moved around

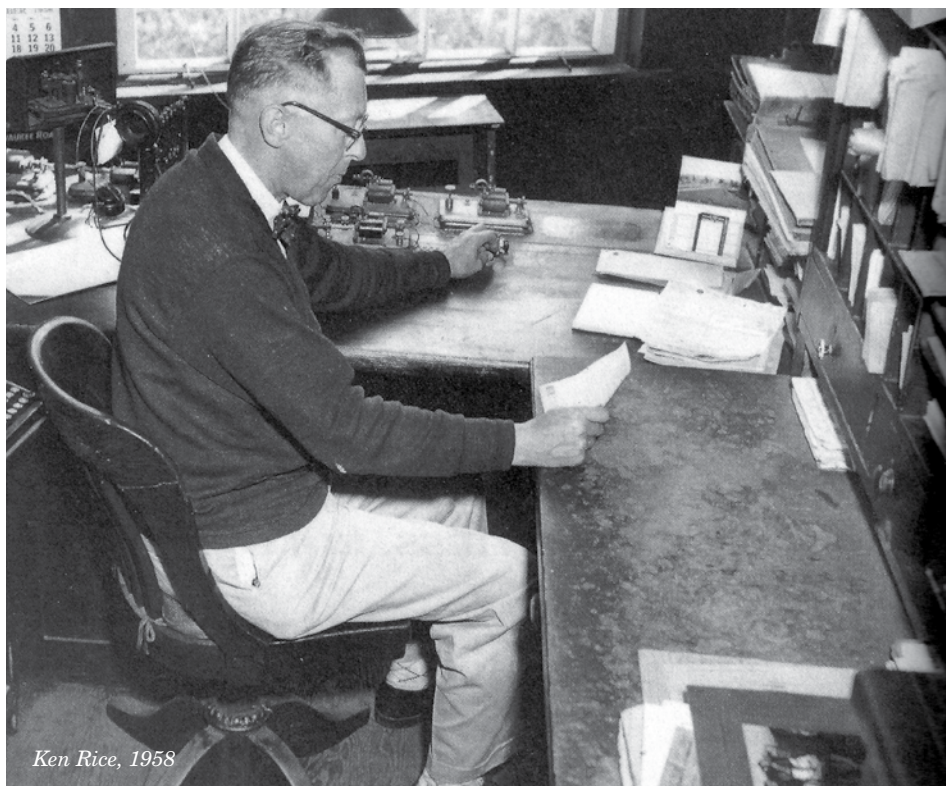
a bit at first but secured the agents job at Freeville, NY in 1945. Freeville was the junction of two Lehigh Valley branch lines in central New York State, the former EC&N (Elmira, Corning and Northern) and the Southern Central Railroad both of which had been absorbed into the Lehigh Valley. Ken

remained as the agent/telegrapher at Freeville until his retirement in 1974. The photo above, taken by a Syracuse Post-Standard photographer and presently held in the Cortland County Historical Society archives shows Ken at his duties telegraphing in the station at Freeville in 1958.

The book presents a history of the rural area, local industries and people served by these branch lines as well as a history of the railroad itself. It presents stories of events which happened along the lines and includes a number of photographs. The book starts with the world into which Ken was born, one not all that long ago but oh so far away and takes us up to the abandonment of the lines and the removal of the track only two years after Ken retired. When he retired he looked forward to going down to the station to continue watching the trains go through. Such was not to be. It was reported that in an interview he said, "If I get to heaven, I hope there's a railroad there."

If you want to get your own copy of this

wonderful little book you can try Amazon as I found a used one offered there for \$50. I would suggest a much better idea is to go to the source, the Dryden Town Historical Society web site at: www.drydenNYhistory.org. Once there, click on member resources and down at the bottom of that page will be an order form



Ken Rice, 1958

with a link to download a copy which you can print out and mail in to the society with your check. This book is the first listing and the price is \$5.40 plus \$2.00 postage. You'll get a new copy and at a much better price than from Amazon.

The movie to be reviewed this time is, *The Human Comedy*. From this title one wouldn't expect anything telegraphic, but another MTC member made me aware of it last year. It probably has more telegraphic content than any other film I've ever seen. It stars Mickey Rooney as teenaged Postal Telegraph messenger boy Homer Macauley and a number of scenes take place in a Postal Telegraph office in the small fictional town of Ithaca, California. This "movie office" features authentic Postal Telegraph signage and the Skirrow swing arm resonator shown in the office was the design favored by Postal. Authentic American Morse Code is heard as well. The movie came out in 1943 and with the more or less coincident take over of Postal by Western Union and the wholesale scrapping of the Postal plant shortly afterward, I wonder if the movie company prop department just bought an entire Postal office, complete, at "fire sale" prices.

The film presents a bittersweet look at the home front during World War II. Homer's father has recently passed away (the movie starts with his

ghost acting as a narrator) and his older brother is in the army. So even though he is only 14 he is now the "man of the family" with his mother, a sister and a younger brother at home. Therefore he must work to support the family as well as still going to high school. As a messenger boy his duties include delivering those dreaded war time telegrams announcing the death of a serviceman. The 67 year old telegraph operator in the office, played by veteran actor Frank Morgan has his own problems with alcohol and that the company wants him to retire. The scene also switches occasionally to the older brother in the army, Marcus Macauley as played by actor Van Johnson, and the friends he is making there as he gets ready to be shipped overseas to join the war effort. There are some other sub-stories as well but I don't wish to give away the entire film or the "surprise" ending. It works as a coming-of-age story and a very, some might say overly, sentimental look at American small town life in war time. In addition, as kind of a background, it also provides a fair amount of social commentary. The film was nominated for five Academy Awards and won for Best Story. It was said to be the favorite film of studio head Louis B. Mayer. I enjoyed it very much and I think you will too. DVD's of it are available from Amazon for less than \$20.

Thank you, MTC member, Ralph Norton of Marietta, Georgia, for sending me the heavy box full of books titled, "The Railroad Telegrapher." These valued articles may provide interesting future reprint stories for our Dots & Dashes readers. ~ Editor Jim

DO YOU KNOW?

Do you know which metals are the best and worst conductors of electricity?

The best metals in order of electrical conductivity are silver, copper, gold, and aluminum. The worst metals for electrical conductivity are manganese, gadolinium, and terbium.

The wire used for early telegraph lines was often made of iron, which is not the best conductor of electricity, but which was less likely to break than copper.

Source: Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh department of Science and Technology.

Do you know when the first US transcontinental telegraph system was established?

On October 24, 1861, the first transcontinental telegraph system was completed, connecting the eastern United States to California. The first telegram sent by the new national network was written by the governor of Utah, Brigham Young. His message read: "Utah has not seceded but is firm for the Constitution and the laws of our once happy country."

The Pony Express system went out of business two days later.

Source: Wikipedia.org: the electric telegraph.

HOUSE TRACK **Want Ad Section**

For Morse Telegraph Club Members

AVAILABLE: O.R.T. lapel pins, 4 styles. Also 3 inch five color cloth crest of O.R.T (sounder in wreath emblem) \$5.00 each or all 5 for \$20.00. Paul D. Roy at 3874 Winlake Cres., Burnaby, B.C. V5A 2G5 Canada. E-mail: proyd@shaw.ca

AVAILABLE: Book *Tales of the American Telegraph*. Issue #3 includes a photo layout. John B. Ryan, 11017 E. Sprague Avenue, Spokane, WA 99206.

AVAILABLE: PC Code Program – The Mill is a many featured American Morse and CW program with teaching, historical, and nostalgic features for users of all experience levels. Download free from: www.home.comcast.net/~w4fok or order a 3 ½" floppy. MTC Members \$5.00, others \$10.00. Jim Farrior. Contact info. 904-277-9623.

WANTED: Re-enactors for Locust Grove, the Samuel Morse Historic Site in Poughkeepsie, NY. Please contact Andrew Stock, Curator of Education and Public Programs at a.stock@morsehistoricsite.org or 845 454-4500 x13 if you are a Signal Corps re-enactor who may be interested in participation in history of telegraphy, including the annual Civil War weekend.

AVAILABLE: 2013 Railroad Calendar. The Inland Empire Railway Historical Society offers a stylish 2013 wall calendar of historic railroad events. To order a calendar, write to the IERHS

at P.O. Box 471, Reardan, Washington 99029. Their annual membership is \$25.00 which includes a calendar. The IERHS is a 501-c nonprofit corporation, so all donations are tax deductible.

AVAILABLE: I can duplicate small wooden resonator boxes for both 4 ohm and 30 ohm main line sounders. You will varnish or paint these to suit your desires. The cost is \$25 each. Milton Hegwood, 206 Kleven Avenue, Culbertson, NE 69024, telephone 308 278-2152

AVAILABLE: Period attire for telegraph operators of any era. Authentic reproduction hand crafted clothing will be made to your exact fit by a certified seamstress at reasonable prices. Several MTC members already have attire provided by this talented and well educated lady. Contact Valerie Mathers at 410 768-3162.

AVAILABLE: Pen & ink railroad drawings on stretched canvas, frame print, art print and greeting cards. See these on the website of *Dots & Dashes* member Peter Hamel at Peter Hamel Fine Art American.com. Telephone 1 705 472-8860.

AVAILABLE: Book. Hubert Jewell, President of the Washington-Baltimore Chapter, offers us his biography titled, *Working on the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad*. This book is chocked full of facts and descriptions

of railroading and of Morse code communications.

Hubert's book is available from the RF&P Historical Society, Inc. PO Box 9097, Fredericksburg, VA 22403-9097 or from the web site www.frandp.org. The price is only \$25.15 postage paid.

AVAILABLE: For all of you who enjoy our hobby and read interesting books on railroading, I am an old time telegrapher who also enjoys painting. I have produced fifteen different scenes pertaining to railroading, which have been turned into sturdy bookmarks. Each of these plastic coated colorful bookmarks is 4 ½ inches long by 1½ inches wide and each is decorated with a red or green (stop & go) ribbon. These sell at the bargain rate of two for \$1.00 or five for \$2.00, plus \$1.50 postage and handling. Amounts of ten or more, postage will be \$2.50 USA & CDA. Send your order to Kenneth W. Hine at PO Box 405, Coombs, BC V0R 1M0. For additional info contact Ken at whitefox29@shaw.ca.

WANTED: Your favorite articles from past *Dots & Dashes*. Keith LeBaron challenges you to send these to me for re-printing in the current issues. Our readers will benefit. ~Jim

KEEP IN TOUCH...

Your participation in *Dots & Dashes* is important. We need your stories, club news, announcements and reminiscences to keep it lively and interesting for everyone.

Jim Wilson
Editor
Dots & Dashes

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Tel: 434-245-7041
E-mail: telegraphjim@gmail.com

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Cindy Galyen
International Secretary-Treasurer

29150 Windsor Road,
Culpeper, VA 22701
Telephone (540) 423-1014
imsohappy@juno.com

Please do not send address changes for Dots & Dashes, dues renewals, etc., to the Editor. All mailing lists and membership rosters are prepared through the office of the International Secretary.

Ham Radio Web Sites

For those of you who are amateur radio operators, here are three current web sites that I find useful:

www.arnewline.org
www.usrepeaters.com
www.qth.com

NOTICES & INVITATIONS

Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.
Dial-Up Information

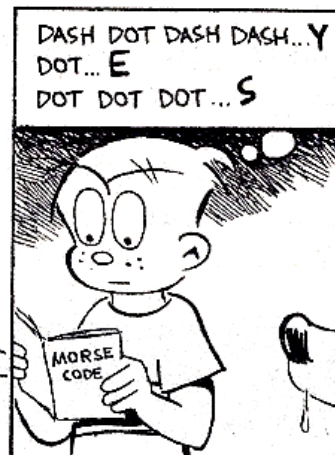
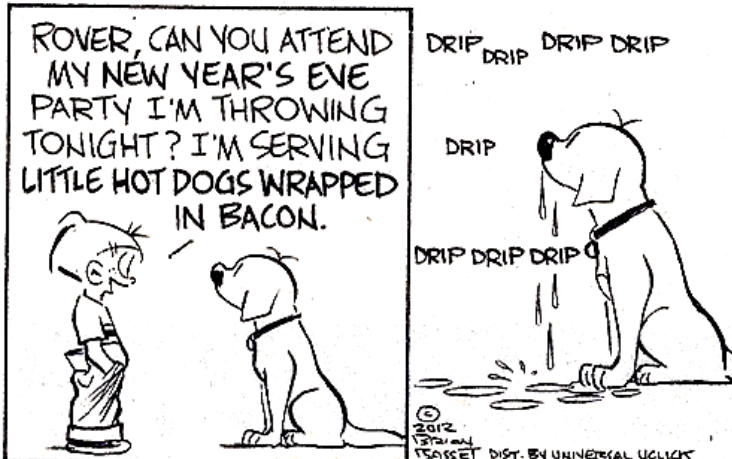
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