Dots&Dashes

What Hath God Wrought

The Official Publication of the Morse Telegraph Club, Inc. Vol. 39, Issue No. 5 • Winter 2013 – 2014

MORSE CODE MAGIC – ROMANCE OVER THE AIRWAVES

By MTC member Betty Broome Newkirk, VE3ZBB
Reprinted from the February 1998 issue of The Canadian Amateur

My favorite and only mode of communications on the high frequency (HF) ham band is Morse code. Now I'm beginning to wonder if there is a little bit of magic mixed into amateur radio telegraphy.

It is difficult to believe that what happened in my life could be possible. Cynics will frown, but seasoned amateur radio operators and dreamers will smile knowingly.

In March of 1988 I became an amateur radio operator, the first and only one in the family. I spent as much time as I could on the ham bands and enjoyed 30 and 40 meters very much. Yes, I was fortunate to meet so many fine CW operators, many who have since become good friends. They helped and encouraged me, spending time and sharing their lives with me when I was just starting out on CW. I was still using a straight key, then and they helped me to send code using paddles.

I first met Rod, W9BRD, from Chicago, Illinois on August 28, 1991 at 2:58 p.m. on 30 meters at 10.107 kHz. For some reason, I knew at that moment that this radio operator was special. We exchanged signal reports and the usual information. Despite poor band conditions, we then entered into a lively CW conversation. Rod jokingly told me he was "reliving his teen years with no responsibilities at all, so you better watch out lady." Rod continued by stating he had been widowed for 17 years and "no longer signed any contracts." He also said that we had the best retirement hobby of all.

We continued our radio contact and I found that his way with words really impressed me. The band kept fading so finally we had to say goodbye. I hoped I would meet him again, but knew this might be the only conversation we would have. This had been over half an hour of fun.

Rod and I exchanged QSL cards and pictures. Rod then sent a letter to explain the reason his card had been delayed. My husband, son, and daughter-in-law enjoyed his entertaining and interesting letter as much as I did.

I kept listening on the amateur radio bands for him but never heard W9BRD. I placed his photograph on the bulletin board above my transceiver with many other amateur radio operator pictures that had been mailed to me.

In March 1992, after 42 years of marriage, I was widowed. The following months were busy with routines and adjusting to a different life. Spare time was scarce, but amateur radio was a place where there were always a friendly person to spend a few moments with, plus the bonus of continuing to meet both old and new friends. In some ways, amateur radio was an escape into another world, an extremely pleasant one.

On July 30, 1992 at 2:25 p.m., again on the 30 meter band and the same frequency, I had my second meeting with W9BRD. This was a wonderful and exciting surprise to realize that it was Rod's excellent fist I was again hearing. Here was the person that I had such an enjoyable CW conversation with eleven months earlier. Rod told me that he heard me every now and then but that I was always busy talking with someone else.

I shared my recent news with Rod about my late husband. Because Rod had been through the loss of his wife years before, he was very sympathetic.

☛ *continued on page 4*

Sidewire

Comments from the Editor of *Dots & Dashes*

By Jim Wilson

"I sure hate to see winter return," commented my wife Becky last week (mid-December). Becky's sentiment probably represents all of our feelings about the upcoming cold season of winter. But think of the advantages. Stuck inside for long hours, you have the opportunity to catch up on reading all those magazines that accumulated during the summer and fall seasons. You will have time to practice your telegraph, sending and receiving. And be sure and get your daily exercise. I want each of you to live long, healthy and prosperous lives.

The Morse Telegraph Club considered several important issues during the December 12th conference call to MTC Directors. President Jim Wades organized the conference call and prepared the agenda. He used this time to discuss ideas of value to us all. Among the questions raised were, should MTC hire a professional manager, should MTC rent storage space for its historic items, should the annual dues be raised; should the MTC Constitution be revised, and who should fill several vacant positions? I never see the "President's Line" before writing my own comments. But I'll wager that Jim Wades will discuss these issues in much more detail.

If you have ideas for making our Morse Telegraph Club more valuable to our members, or have articles that you would like see published in *Dots & Dashes*, please send along a note with your ideas and articles. I try to include articles in each issue that will interest you. Many of these articles include humor. So, please keep your letters and articles coming; we all benefit from your input.

And of course, if you get the opportunity to participate in your chapter's telegraph demonstrations, please consider joining the fun.

Jim Wilson

President's Line

Jim Wades, President Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.

The Holidays will have likely passed before you read this, but nonetheless, I hope that everyone had a very pleasant holiday season and may the New Year bring you good health and happiness.

It is now time for our members to pay their 2014 dues. We have already received quite a few payments, but these payments account for less than one quarter of our total membership. If you haven't already sent in your dues payment to either the Grand Chapter (member at large) or to your local Chapter, please don't procrastinate. Our Chapter Secretary/Treasurers and our International Officers are volunteers who invest their own time and resources to keep our club functioning. Their jobs are made much easier when such details are taken care of on a timely basis.

This year, we are trying something a little be different during the dues collection process. Each member who renews receives a "radiogram" acknowledgement and "thank you" for his renewal. A "radiogram" is simply a telegram transmitted via a radio network provided by the ARRL National Traffic System (NTS). NTS is a nationwide messaging network serving the US and Canada, which is available 365 days a year for emergency ☛

Dots & Dashes

The official publication of

The Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.

Jim Wilson - Editor, *Dots & Dashes*

2742 Southern Hills Court • North Garden, VA 22959
Phone: 434-245-7041 • E-mail: telegraphjim@gmail.com

Visit us on the World Wide Web at...
www.morsetelegraphclub.org

Dots & Dashes is published quarterly as a benefit of membership. Nonmembers may subscribe at prevailing membership dues rates. Articles in Dots & Dashes (unless copyrighted or are themselves reprinted from other sources) may be reprinted, provided proper credit is given. A copy of the publication would be appreciated.

communications. However, when no emergencies are occurring, NTS will handle any legal radiogram message. This keeps the networks exercised and always prepared to handle message traffic.

Your International President has been giving his Vibroplex Bug a good workout originating these messages via the NTS. The results have been interesting. We have received quite a few "thank you" messages, e-mails and letters from the radio amateurs delivering these messages. All have reported having enjoyable conversations with the MTC members to whom they delivered the messages. Some have reported having learned quite a bit about commercial and railroad telegraphy and a few have even written me asking for membership information.

As dues continue to trickle in, we will continue to originate the "thank you" radiograms. NTS is, of course, a volunteer organization. Therefore, there may not be an outlet in all communities. Therefore, non-delivery of a radiogram does not indicate that your dues weren't received.

In other news, the Board of Directors of the Morse Telegraph Club met on December 12 to discuss a number of important issues. It is our goal to position MTC in such a way that it remains a healthy and viable organization well into the future. Unfortunately, we didn't' have time to put together a detailed report before this issue went to press. This will be forthcoming in the next issue of *Dots & Dashes.* In the meantime, here are a few highlights:

We have had several International Officers resign or pass on and therefore, we have elected several new members to serve as Directors.

MTC has received quite a few gifts of telegraph artifacts, historic photos and memorabilia. The board has authorized the establishment of a permanent, secure storage facility, which will allow us to better catalog, store and protect these items for future use. This will also ensure the security of these items because the facility will be controlled by the MTC Corporation as opposed to any one individual.

Like many organizations and businesses, MTC is confronting constantly increasing operating costs, which are primarily related to postage increases in the United States and Canada. Your MTC Officers have worked very diligently to avoid dues increases over the past two decades. However, the reality of this situation has caught up with us and MTC members will be seeing a slight dues increase beginning with the 2015 fiscal year. The current dues for 2014 remain unchanged.

That's plenty of news for now. Let's spread the word about MTC. It's a fine organization full of excellent people and motivated volunteers.

-30-

In This Issue

ARTICLES

IN EVERY ISSUE

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

Morse Code Magic...continiued from front page

We spent 45 minutes on the air before we signed. Rod asked if I would like to have a weekly Thursday meeting with him on the air. I agreed. Every Thursday I looked forward to talking to Rod on CW. Then, Rod suggested perhaps we could also meet on Mondays because Thursdays only "weren't enough." More letters were exchanged. Because I enjoyed his letters so much, I told rod that he should have become a writer.

Then, can you imagine how shocked I was when he told me in his next letter that he had been writing for QST magazine, writing "How's DX" column for more than thirty years? This was a complete surprise to me because I did not subscribe to QST magazine. I also learned that Rod had been a ham since July 1937, for 61 years!

With CW schedules, letters, and now telephone calls, Rod and I became good friends. In time, we both realized that we were in love.

My son John and his wife, Cathy, and Rod's family encouraged us to meet in person. It was a wonderful moment when we finally met. We became engaged in November 1994 and were married on June 27, 1997 at All Saints Anglican church at Westboro in the west end of Ottawa. Rod was age 75 and I was age 67.

In many ways, I think Morse code telegraphy is a unique form of communication between two people. To me, it is a soul-to-soul mode because you really have a meeting of the minds, using words to express your thoughts and feelings and passing them on to another person. My special description would be an invisible thread that ties two people together.

I have repeated this story to friends on and off the air. I discovered that on CW, anything can happen. For us, it did!

DUXES AND QUADS
HOW WERE TELEGRAPH LINES "MULTIPLEXED"?

In the early days before the advent of multiple signal frequency carrier telegraph systems, telegraph circuits were multiplexed by use of some innovative circuitry worked out by Sir Charles Wheatstone (of Wheatstone Bridge fame) and Mr. Thomas A. Edison, among others.

When telegraph traffic began to get heavy, there was a desire to improve or maximize use of the existing open wire plant that the telegraph companies had strung all over the country. One of the more successful schemes was the idea of "Duplex" telegraphy, or, the ability to use ONE single wire with earth return to send messages simultaneously in BOTH directions. This arrangement could be made to keep FOUR telegraph operators busy, one sending and one receiving at EACH end of the SAME wire.

The technology to do this was fairly straight forward after Sir Wheatstone devised his famous "bridge" circuit. This circuit was a sort of "diamond" shaped network, with four equal value resistances connected in the shape of a diamond, with a galvanometer (sensitive zero-center DC movingcoil current meter) connected across the "diamond" from the top apex to the bottom apex, and a DC voltage applied at the left and right apexes of the diamond. Then, if all four resistances were equal in value the galvanometer would read "zero" current. The bridge circuit could be said to be "balanced" because the applied voltage divided equally in the equal resistances and was applied to BOTH sides of the galvanometer equally, resulting in zero current flowing in the meter. Vary any one of the four resistances, and the galvanometer would swing one way or another and not read zero any longer.

Mr Edison came along and figured out that if one took a telegraph wire between two stations, cut the Wheatstone Bridge circuit in half where the galvanometer was connected, and connected each half of the bridge circuit at each end of the wire, with the lower connection being made to earth and the upper connection made to the wire, he would have the same bridge circuit with half of it at each station. Then when telegraph battery was applied to the resistance apexes at each station, positive at one station and negative at the other station with the opposite pole of battery earthed at each end, he could have a galvanometer conntcted between the line and earth at each station and

☛

each galvanometer would read zero once the circuit was connected up and balanced by making the resistances all equal.

It was soon noticed that the battery could be "reversed" at one end of the circuit, and the galvanometer at the same end of the circuit would not respond, but the distant one WOULD.

The circuit of course worked the same in either direction. Reversing the applied battery potential at one end, would cause the galvanometer to respond ONLY at the far end, and not at the NEAR end.

Soon, sensitive relays were devised that would move their contacts from one stop to another when this polarity reversal occurred in their windings. These were called "polar" relays, and were connected in the circuit in place of the galvanometers.

By putting a telegraph key in a local circuit with the coil of a double contact relay at one station, the telegraph key could be made to change the polarity of voltage applied to one of these "Duplex" circuits in response to the Morse Code, and the "Polar" relay at the distant station could have it's contacts open and close a local circuit with a telegraph sounder in it so the Morse signals could be received. By making the circuitry the same at both ends of the telegraph wire between stations, it was now possible to telegraph independently in BOTH directions at the same time. when the "near" Morse key was worked, only the "far" end polar relay responded in either direction.

"Duplex" circuits were popular at once, and telegraph offices at each end of the"DUX" were set up with special operating tables, with two operators facing each other, one sending and one receiving. Their counterparts at the distant office were set up the same way.

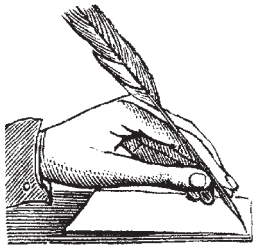
Obviously, these operators had to be very good at copying what was being sent over the circuit, because of one of the receiving operators "got lost" he would have to nudge his companion "sending" operator and have him tell his distant "receiving" operator to tell the "sending" operator at the far end "where to go ahead". This yielded raspberries in the ratio of three to one when either of the receiving operators screwed up, and had to stop business to get his copy straightened out. Thus only the very best telegraphers were assigned to work the "DUX'es" between relay offices.

Pretty soon it was discovered that by adding onto the "Duplex" a little, two more operators could be employed at each end of the same single wire circuit, also sending and receiving in both directions at the same time, The "Duplex" system worked on the change of voltage POLARITY in the telegraph circuit. It was soon found that the duplexes had a lot of latitude as to changes in line current in the circuit and still work fine. Edison and the boys worked out a way to take advantage of this insensitivity to line current value and devised some different relays that had double-wound coils and armatures that worked against mechanical spring bias, and which opened and closed their contacts regardless of which direction current flowed in their coil windings. A small change was made in the pole-changing circuit so the line never went clear open when the polar sending voltage transitioned from "positive" to "negative". Then by adding a second transmitting relay that had a resistance across it's contacts and a mechanical spring-biased armature, a second telegraph key could be connected in a local circuit with this second relay, to cause the line current to vary from "high" to "low" in response to Morse sgnals sent on it. The "polar" relay and the "neutral" relay at each end of the circuit had their windings connected all in series, so each could respond properly to changes in the current Polarity or Quantity made only at the far end of the circuit and not by similar changes made by the transmitting relays at the near end. The "polar" relays responded only to the DIRECTION of line current, while the "neutral" relays would respond only to the variation in the line current QUANTITY and not the DIRECTION of it. Each polar and neutral relay had a a local circuit with a sounder in it connected to it's contacts for receiving.

This new system was called the "Quadruplex" because it could support Morse traffic between FOUR operators at each end of the same wire simultaneously, two sending, and two receiving.

As with the "Duplex", the Quadruplex circuits were set up with special operating tables in the relay offices. "Quad" tables were set up with four operators facing each other, one sending and one receiving on each side of the table. Each worked with his counterpart at the distant office. One pair of operators worked the "polar" side, and the other pair of operators worked the "common" or "neutral" side. Thus EIGHT operators could be employed working between two offices over the SAME single wire.

☛ *continued on page 8*



Letters to the Editor

October 3rd

Thank you for all your work as editor of *Dots & Dashes*. I enjoy every issue and my husband Rod did too. In the summer 2013 issue of *Dots & Dashes*, Silent Keys, the entry regarding the date of Rod's death was not correct. The actual date he became a Silent Key was November 19, 2012.

I am also enclosing a note of interest to you. Rod was a Life Member Number 7606 of the Chicago, Illinois Chapter (Record #363). I am enclosing a copy of the front and reverse side of the card issued to him from his chapter. The face of the card is colored gold on and the reverse s ide is white. Rod also owned a small pin in the shape of a straight key with the printing "MTC."

Morse code was always a favorite mode of communication on HF for rod and for me. Rod and I met on the 30 meter amateur radio band when he was in Chicago and I was in Ottawa. After we married, we lived here in Ottawa, Ontario which is the capital of Canada.

I am enclosing a story that I wrote for the radio amateurs of Canada at the request of the editor of *The Canadian Amateur* magazine. Rod enjoyed dual citizenship as a Canadian and a USA citizen.

73,
Elizabeth A. Broome Newkirk
VE3ZBB

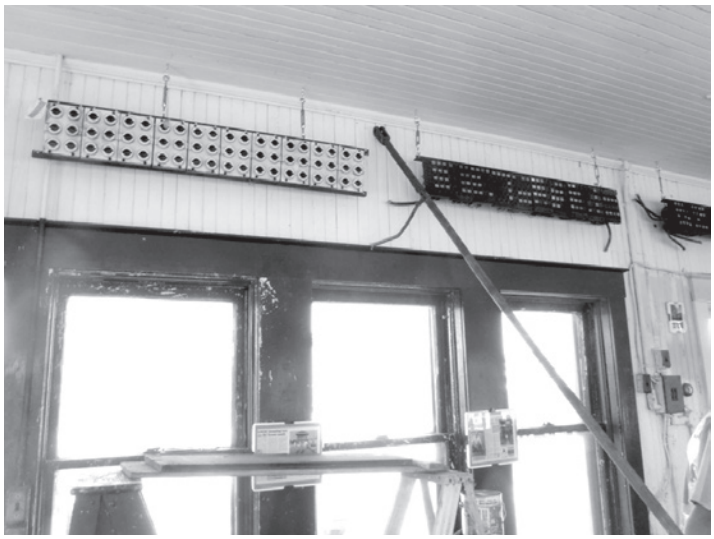
(Enjoy reading Betty's love story, "Morse Code Magic," on the front page.)

October 3rd

Jim Wilson and the Morse Telegraph club are indeed fortunate to have your efficient charming talents. (This letter refers to MTC International Secretary, Cindy Galyen.) I enjoyed your welcoming letter to Will Robinson whom I'm gifting a year's membership. As an administrator during my professional years, I appreciate competence. I know all persons connected with Morse Telegraph Club benefit from your being the International Secretary-Treasurer.

Sincerely,
Joan Thompson

(Members, we receive several MTC gift memberships each year. This is an ideal Christmas or birthday gift suggestion for your friends who are not yet members of the Morse Telegraph Club. ~Editor Jim)



October 13th

The enclosed photo is of artifacts freshly hung in the "BX Tower" Interlocker (now inactive) in Saint Thomas, Ontario Canada. This historic building dates back to at least 1917, erected at the junction of the L&PS Railway and the Michigan Central Railroad. It is an adjunct to the Elgin County Railway Museum in the city. This building is used on occasion to show the public the historic interlocking, a once very busy place. I am attempting to show some artifacts that used to be part of the railway's telegraph relay office in the railway depot a short distance away.

There is one section (at left in the photo) that used to hold special bulbs, perhaps "Edison lamps." I recall a sort of ballast to balance the telegraph lines. There are three sections of circuit boards

☛

now also on display from the old relay office. I am looking for nomenclature to properly identify these artifacts with labels and/or signs. Can any of the readers of *Dots & Dashes* help me?

Charles Beckett,
Member of the Maple Leaf Chapter
Former telegrapher hired on NYC in 1952
Chairman of the BX Tower Maintenance
Committee of the ECRM.

(Readers, if you can help Chuck, contact him via email at adbeckett@bell.net.)

October 31st

The Morse Telegraph Club would like to express our appreciation to the Maple Leaf Chapter of Canada for their generous donation of $500.00. Thank you all for your interest and efforts in "Keeping Morse Alive."

Cindy Galyen,
MTC International Secretary-Treasurer

November 24th

Recently I had a couple of great conversations with folks about Morse code. That got me thinking about the Morse Telegraph Club. I haven't received my Fall issue yet and just wanted to check to be sure it got sent to us.

Best wishes,
Thomas King
Solon Springs, WI

(Since Tom and his family were featured in the Fall issue, I sent them a few extra copies. ~Editor Jim)

PROUDLY WEAR THE MTC LOGO

Apparel is available with the stylish MTC logo. If you are interested in purchasing a hat, shirt, or jacket with the Morse Telegraph Club logo, you may contact Cabla's Corporate Outfitter at (800) 243-6626. The MTC account there is #53339376. More details can be found on our MTC web/Cabela's at www.bit.ly/MorseTelegraphClub.

TODAY IN CIVIL WAR HISTORY

You can view a summary of each day happenings during the Civil War at CivilWarInteractive.com. The telegraph is often mentioned as the technology that won the war.

HOUR OF CODE

The second week in December was declared as the "Hour of Code." Check out this worldwide effort at Code.org.

Duzes and Quads...continiued from front page 5

Pretty neat, huh? With the "DUX'es" and the "QUAD's" the telegraph Company got a lot more out of a single wire than they would have otherwise. These special circuits were normally worked over high quality copper wire circuits between larger relay offices in cities around the country, and as stated above, only the very best telegraphers were assigned to these operating positions, because it required being able to copy Morse without error and without having to "break" the distant operator for "fills" for hours on end. In practice, the "sending" ops traded off with the "receiving" ops on about an hourly rotation during the eight or twelve hour "trick" they were assigned to work.

And that is how telegraph circuits were originally "multiplexed".

Ed Trump
FB
Fairbanks

THE NEWFOUNDLAND RAILWAY

The Newfoundland Railway has a fascinating history. In the early and middle 1800s, before the coming of the trains, the bulk of the population on this vast island was situated on the Avalon Peninsula on the far east coast. In addition, all round the coasts were numerous small scattered and isolated settlements. Nothing much was known of the interior of the land with very little exploration or travelling having been done. It was, in short, pretty much terra incognita.

Early proposals for a railroad were discussed in government circles as early as the 1850s, with lines to the areas of Harbour Grace and Carbonear, being considered. These small communities, like most of the other coastal villages had no road connection to the capital at St. John`s.. They lay about fifty miles to the northwest of the city as the crow flies, but at least twice that distance by rail.

In the 1870s more thought was given to a rail line across the island, and in 1875 a Canadian engineer named Sanford Fleming undertook to survey a route across the island for the proposed railroad. On completion of his survey, Fleming gave a favourable report on the feasibility of such a line.

Due to the discovery of copper ore near Hall`s Bay, just south of Baie Verte, a a 3-foot- 6 inch narrow gauge railway line was contracted to be laid to the area, beginning in 1881. There was also a branch line to be completed from Whitbourne to Harbour Grace, on the Avalon Peninsula. The contractor, an American, one Albert Blackman, was to build the line, supply the equipment and maintain a regular schedule. He would be abundantly rewarded with an annual subsidy and five thousand acres of land for every mile completed. Five years was the time frame for the building of the line. Owing to delays caused by financial difficulties, the deal fell through in about two years and the work stopped after fifty seven miles of rails were laid. The government then completed the line to Harbour Grace. By 1888 a branch line to Placentia, in the south, was also laid.

In 1890 an experienced railroad builder, Robert Reid, was hired to lay down a line connecting Placentia Junction to Hall`s Bay about 260 miles. Fifteen hundred men were hired at one dollar for a ten hour day. Work was hard and living conditions were very primitive, each man building a tar paper shack and cooking his own meals. Utensils and food were fairly priced and the workers seemed content. Work was begun in the fall and by the year`s end ten miles were completed. The next year there were 1,800 men on the job and 50 miles of track were laid. Practically all work was done by hand including the rock drilling. Reid was joined by his two sons in 1892 and with a force of 2,200 men toiling on the line, eighty miles were laid down. By 1897 a cross country narrow gauge line was completed between Port aux Basque and St. John`s, a distance of about 548 miles. On June 29th, 1898 the first regular passenger train left St. John`s en route to the west coast terminal of Port aux Basques, which it reached the next day after a trip of 27 hours and twenty five minutes. Many branch lines were finished and by 1915, the total island trackage was 906 miles.

This route was fraught with hardship and difficulties owing to the weather and the extremely rugged terrain. Almost in the centre of the island, many miles from either coast in an area known as the Barrens, is a range of hills rising from 200 to 400 feet above the central plateau. These distinctive elevations have been named Main, Mizzen, Gaff and Fore Topsails. They are bare, rocky, and windswept and in the long, cold winters are notorious for the terrific gales. The depth of snow that accumulates, especially in drifts, have to ☛

be seen to be believed. Twenty feet or more was not uncommon and snowploughs, including the huge rotary machines were added to the trains as needed. These snowploughs, both of the push type and the rotary were in use all winter and many times the trains had ploughs attached at both ends, to save having to turn round. There were several turn locations (or wyes) located at various points also. In the worst of the weather, telegraph lines came down and tracks and equipment were damaged, but the workers soldiered on doing a yeoman job in spite of the difficulties. During the railroad years one of the many telegraph stations along the rail route was at Gaff Topsails, with the workers and their families living in the little settlement nearby. It must have been a hard life, especially as no schools, medical help and other amenities existed . It was the general opinion that a better route for the railway line could have been selected, avoiding the highest elevations. However, 1936 saw the introduction of an imaginative idea . With the co-operation of the Department of Education, the Newfoundland Railway and the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company, a fifty two foot long railway passenger car was suitably outfitted and converted to a "school on wheels". A qualified teacher was hired and the project was launched. It proved a huge success and together with the introduction of a correspondence course, the children, and sometimes the adults of isolated and remote settlements were thereby given a chance of a basic education. This continued until 1942, when, due to financial woes the experiment was unfortunately abandoned. (See "The School Car" by Randy P. Noseworthy, 1997). In the settlements themselves, equipment and other freight and supplies came in of course, by rail. Some food and small purchases could be made in some local stores in the nearest town, conditions permitting

Over the next few years, the Reids continued building lines and making a good profit. Many coastal and interior settlements were connected by rail. By 1923, however, the Reids decided to abandon railroad building so the Newfoundland government operated the rail line until 1926. when a Board of Railway Commissioners was appointed. The year 1929 saw many much needed improvements made to the lines, including new ties, heavier trails, better rolling stock, etc.

In 1930 came the great world-wide depression which led to wage cut- backs, lay-offs and schedules reduced or cancelled. Rails were removed from several closed lines. By 1934 conditions were improving, owing to a slow, but hopefully, steady recovery in the general economy.

The year1939 brought World War 2 and the railroad business was once again revived. In fact so much rail transport was needed that it was nearly impossible to keep up with the demand. Unfortunately the government could ill afford to replace the, by now, ageing rolling stock and equipment so necessary to operate an efficient service. Just at this time a deal was struck with thee U.S. War Department whereby they would purchase rails, locomotives, cars and other necessary equipment for just over two million dollars, in exchange for a fifteen year lend-lease agreement. So the war progressed and the Newfoundland Railway and its employees did a superb job in meeting the extremely heavy demands made on it. By wars end practically all the equipment was again in poor shape and worn out. In 1949 Newfoundland joined Canada and became its tenth province and the Newfoundland Railway was taken over by the the Canadian National Railway. By1957 Diesel engines had been introduced to replace the steam engines and this resulted in a lay off of many workers.

It was decided in the 1960s that it was soon to be the end for their beloved railway, as buses and cars, and improved roads and highways were becoming more common and the railway was losing money.

In 1969 the last passenger train was taken out of service. Freight trains were still running with, at times, the occasional passenger car attached if necessary. On June 20th, 1988 came the dreaded announcement that in the following September the railway would cease operations. So , on September 30th, 1988, the last train travelled across the island. Truly the end of an era. Then began the sad task of closing down stations, taking up ties and rails and removing equipment. Few places on the globe presented a railroad building challenge of this magnitude, but the sturdy people of this island persevered and may well look back with pride at their many accomplishments in those wonderful railroad years, 1898 – 1988.

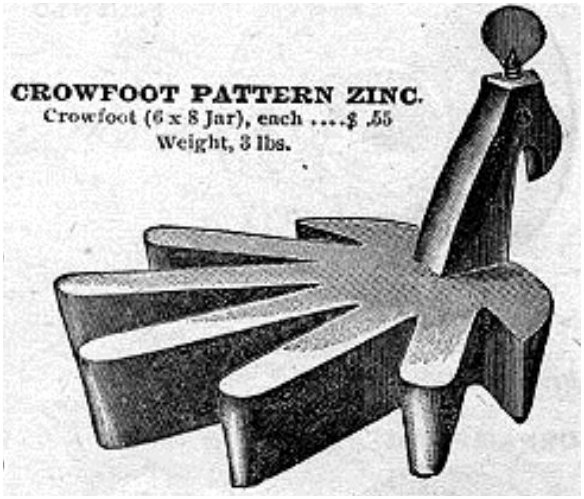
I am very indebted to the many people of Newfoundland who answered my queries about the railroad, among them Mr. Val Dunn who kindly lent me his books about the railway, and to Mont Lingard who authored one of those books: (Next Stop: Gaff Topsail).

To all, my thanks and appreciation,
Pat Kelly

GRAVITY CELL ZINC "CROWFOOT" ELECTRODE PROJECT

By Kevin Saville, Seattle-Tacoma Evergreen Chapter, Morse Telegraph Club

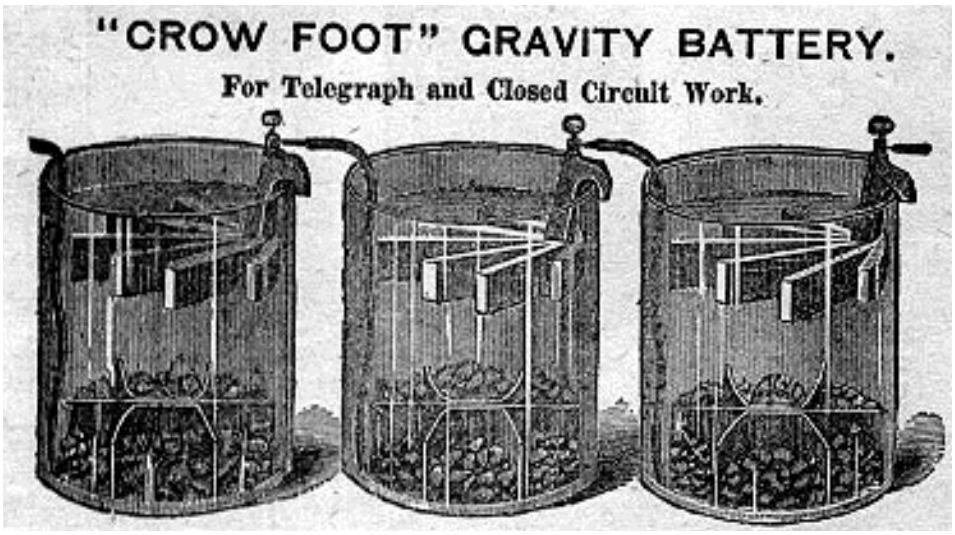
Due to a growing interest in zinc crowfoot electrodes for display and actual use in gravity cells, I have pursued the possibility of having some made in Seattle. An existing relationship between a pattern shop and a casting shop helped facilitate my success in obtaining a commitment to custom fabricate zinc crowfoot electrodes. On these electrodes, the "toe" span would be 5.5-5.75" in diameter, for the larger 6x8 jar. The electrodes would weigh approximately 3 pounds and be made of high grade zinc complying with military specification A-18001K--which means it must be at least 99.4% pure zinc.



The new crowfoot electrodes would be very similar to that shown above, in the left image. A terminal screw or binding post would not be included; instead, each purchaser would have to drill a hole in the top and tap the hole to accommodate a screw or binding post. I may be willing to drill and tap the hole for a nominal fee, if requested by the purchaser.

As with most limited runs, a minimum order is required to distribute fixed costs and keep the price per part as reasonable as possible. The "sweet spot" has been established at a quantity of 40 electrodes, priced at $60 each (not including shipping which is estimated to be $13 per individual electrode). As price reference points, original crowfoot electrodes were recently advertised on eBay for $199 each. I recently purchased a couple of "new old stock" crowfoot electrodes for $100 each, which seemed reasonable compared to eBay. In spite of originals being available for a price, I think antique original zinc crowfoot electrodes should be conserved and not consumed in active cells.

The final step in determining whether to proceed with an order of 40 crowfoot electrodes is the biggest step: there needs to be a commitment to purchase the majority of the electrodes in order to prevent having considerable funds tied up in unsold inventory. Currently, the number of crowfoot electrodes requested stands at about ten, so we are about a quarter of the way to covering the purchase of 40. If you are interested in procuring one or more of these electrodes for $60 each, please contact me, Kevin Saville, by email at kevin@saville.net or by phone or text message at 360-292-0966. Please contact me by February 1, 2014; it would be great to reach a decision and know which way this project is going to go by March 1, 2014. Thank you!



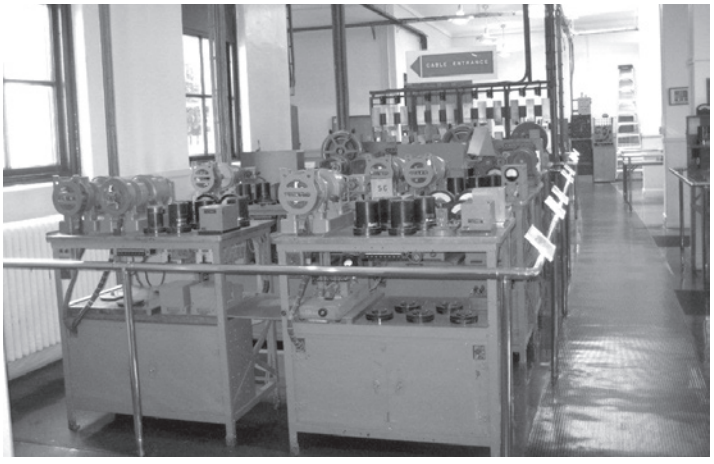
NEWFOUNDLAND

By Lavina Shaw

These are pictures of the inside and outside of the Cable Station in Heart's Content, Newfoundland, plus the remains of some of the Atlantic cable.

Newfoundland played an important part in communications following the invention of the telegraph in 1837. On both sides of the Atlantic, there were networks of telegraph lines, but the 2,000-mile wide Atlantic ocean was a major challenge. In 1854, a syndicate was headed by an American, Cyrus W. Field. who was determined to complete a submarine trans-Atlantic cable line connecting Europe and America via Newfoundland.

After an abortive attempt, a cable was laid across Cabot Strait in 1856, plus a Newfoundland surface line was completed. It cost over a million dollars to establish this telegraph link between New York and St. John's, Newfoundland. In 1857, two unsuccessful attempts were made to lay a cable from Valentia, Ireland to Newfoundland's Trinity Bay . They made three more abortive attempts in 1858. A sixth attempt was also made in 1858, and despite severe storms, the vessels landed the cable successfully. There was great rejoicing, but after two months, the line went dead.



In July 1865 the mammoth ship Great Eastern, the largest ship in the world, made an attempt to lay a cable from Valentia to Heart's Content. After two incidents of suspected sabotage, it ended in failure. Another attempt was made in 1866 with the Great Eastern, with stronger cables. This time, it was successful. Heart's Content became a focal centre of the Western Union International cable system. The cable station operated until 1965 until satellite communication took over. It is now a provincial historical site.

Note from Lavina: They had a very interesting 20-minute video. The cable station is well worth a visit. I had quite a chat with the curator and they were interested in the fact that I was a telegrapher. They also are interested in getting a copy of the little film we made *Telegraphy: How It Changed the World.*

CHAPTER NEWS

Winnipeg "WG" Chapter

The membership in the WG Winnipeg Chapter of the Morse Telegraph Club is slowly decreasing; from 117 members about 15 years ago to the present day 59 members. At the Morse Demos that our Chapter conducted during the past 20 years, there were always 6 to 8 members present. But last year, I have been alone at these demos.

During 2013, I conducted Morse demonstrations every Monday, Thursday and Saturday at the Winnipeg Railway Museum in Winnipeg, MB from May to September; during their Railway Days on September 21 & 22; during July and August at the Lake of the Woods Railroad Museum in Kenora, Ontario; on June 12th at the University of Winnipeg for all the radio people from across Canada during their week long seminar; on July 25th to 28th at the Threshmen's Reunion at the Manitoba Agricultural Museum at Austin, MB in the former CNR station from Baldur, MB; September 13th and November 8th at the Winnipeg Model Railroad Club meetings, and on October 19th & 20th at the Manitoba Mega Train Sow in Winnipeg, MB.

73,
Dan Kollesavich
President
"WG" Winnipeg Chapter

Florida Chapter Activities, Fall 2013

Florida Chapter members, playing the part of World War I soldiers, displayed and demonstrated U. S. Army Signal Corps equipment of that era during the annual Save Our History event at Pompano Beach, FL Sept 14-15, 2013

The old T&G Railroad depot, now the home of the Central Florida Railroad Museum in Winter Garden, FL, resonated with the rhythmic sound of Morse telegraphy, competing with the sound of music during the annual Winter Garden Music Fest, Sept 21-22, 2013. The museum's large flat-screen TV was converted to a computer monitor for the event, displaying the translated Civil War news stories from the Morse KOB server, which proved to be very popular with the many visitors.

The Florida Chapter's website once again provided a means for interested viewers to obtain help in learning more about Morse telegraphy. A home-school co-op in Orlando asked the site's webmaster if it would be possible to have someone visit the co-op where middle school students were studying the period of time in American History when the telegraph became the preeminent means of communication. A chapter member visited the class on Oct. 15th and discussed the role of telegraphy in the development of the United States, and ended with a demonstration which included allowing each student an opportunity to send their name in American Morse Code. Every student earned a Certificate of Accomplishment for doing just that. The teacher stated that she believed that it was one lesson the students would not forget.

Four members of Florida Chapter brought the old Sulphur Springs depot to life during the Fall Jubilee annual event at the Pinellas County Heritage Village in Largo, FL Oct 26, 2013, displaying and demonstrating telegraph equipment. A telegraph line was set up between the depot and a spot under a shady tree and souvenir telegrams for visitors were sent back and forth throughout the day, with many visitors taking advantage of the opportunity to receive a modern day telegram. The event was well attended and a steady stream of visitors kept the chapter members busy.

Florida Chapter members displayed and demonstrated World War I and II, U.S. Army Signal Corps equipment at the annual Stuart, FL Air Show, Nov 2, 2013, reenacting the part of Signal Corp members.

The combination of music and other attractions brought out huge crowds on both days of the annual Fall Jamboaree at the Pioneer Arts Settlement, Barberville, FL Nov. 2-3. 2013. The telegraph instruments in the old Pierson depot, relocated to the grounds of the Arts Settlement, were active for both days, with a steady stream of visitors passing through the depot, drawn by the sound of American Morse code. Several of the visitors were musicians, waiting their turn to perform, who appreciated the rhythm of Morse code on a sounder.

The annual Ocali Country Days event, held Nov. 6-10, 2013, at the Silver River Museum in the Silver River State Park, near Ocala, FL, always attracts a large number of visitors. During the

three School Days, 3979 students from county public and private schools, plus Home Schoolers were in attendance, with an additional 4127 visitors on the weekend, which was open to the General Public. These visitors could see a Seminole Indian family set up in a traditional camp, a blacksmith in action, a cooper making barrels, weavers, candlemakers, Civil War reenactors, including a cannon firing at regular intervals, and, of course, Florida Chapter Morse telegraphers demonstrating the art and skill of sending American Morse code and also giving visitors an opportunity to try their hand at telegraphing.

The Florida Railroad Museum at Parrish, FL provides themed train rides for visitors to the museum. In a different twist, the theme for the weekend of Nov 16-17, 2013, was World War II, with the train transformed into a train operating from Occupied France en route Berlin, complete with spies, saboteurs, black marketers, Gestapo and many others. Florida chapter members set up a German Field Communications site, with WW II type telegraph equipment and a replica Enigma code machine. Another chapter member portrayed an Allied spy, masquerading as a German businessman, with a clandestine radio. International Morse code displaced American Morse code for this event, but Morse was a big part of the event.

The Winter Garden Heritage Foundation celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the Tavares & Gulf Railroad Depot on Saturday, Nov. 23, 2013. The event was marked by a special ceremony with speeches by local dignitaries and the unveiling of a plaque containing the history of the building. The depot is now owned by the Heritage Foundation, but is occupied by the Central Florida Railroad Museum which is operated by the Central Florida Railroad Historical Society. It is also the site of the annual Morse Day meeting of the Florida Chapter of the Morse Telegraph Club. Florida Chapter members were on hand to display and demonstrate antique and replica telegraph instruments and equipment, and, with a nod to more modern technology, used the museum's large flat screen television as a computer monitor to display the text version of the Civil War news wire which was heard on Morse KOB wire 110. There was a steady stream of visitors throughout the day who came to admire the old building, but were intrigued by the news wire, as well as by the other special demonstrations set up for the day.

Florida Chapter members displayed and demonstrated antique and replica telegraph instruments and equipment during the annual Heritage Days event at Floral City, FL, Dec. 7, 2013. There was a steady stream of visitors all day, as residents and visitors celebrated the history of the community, which revolves around the history of the railroads in the area.

DO YOU KNOW?

Do you know who Nikola Tesla was and how he changed the world?

Read about physicist, inventor, and electrical engineer Nikola Tesla in the newly published book, "Tesla," and study him in the recent documentary film, "Nikola Tesla: The Genius Who Lit the World".

Tesla's life spanned from 1856 through 1943. Tesla was a leading innovator in the field of electricity, competing with Thomas Alva Edison. Tesla worked in the late 1880's for Westinghouse on the commercial production of electricity. His alternating current (AC) was proven superior over Edison's direct current (DC), giving us the system that we use today. During his career, Tesla registered more than one hundred patents, among which are patents for alternating current and for radio.

Sources: Science and Technology Department of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburg, and Wikipedia.

GOOD MEMORIES

At 90 years of age, there are lots of things I can't remember. But the following memories may be of interest to *Dots & Dashes*' readers.

In the last few pages of the Railroad Telegrapher magazine, an O.R.T. publication dated May 1959, news items from eleven MTC chapters are included. Most of the news describes the meetings held on the last Saturday in April each year when Western Union connected all the chapters with a free circuit for the day.

The Twin Cities chapter reported 94 members and guests were present at their April meeting. The Chicago chapter reported 58 members and guests present. The Golden State chapter and the Iron Wire chapter each had 57 in attendance. I guess you could say that the Morse Telegraph Club was at its heyday.

Probably 90 to 95% of MTC members at that time were also members of the Order of Railroad Telegraphers. I read every issue of the Railroad Telegrapher since I joined ORT in 1942. Those were the days!

Gene Wood
Madill, Oklahoma

MTC CHAPTERS YEAR END STATISTICS

As we venture into the new year, 2014, here is a list of current chapters with membership and names of chapter Secretary Treasurers. We all owe these folks a debt of gratitude. Thanks to our International Secretary-Treasurer, Cindy Galyen for these statistics.

FN CD Combs Chapter
42 members
Richard F. Behrens

MO Edmonton Chapter
51 members
W.H. Buchanan

SA Sacramento Chapter
17 members
Larry E. Cardoza

CG Calgary Chapter
13 members
Andrew Puezko

TH Hoosier Chapter
12 members
Howard Eskridge

FX Florida Chapter
26 members
Clyde Francis

RK Harry C. Nicholas Chapter
Joseph Fagan

AT Ollie Blackburn Chapter
23 members
James "Mike" Favre

RF Don Waturus Chapter
13 members
Mark Gallaway

GC Members at Large Chapter
257 members
Cindy Galyen

RA Maritime Chapter
9 members
Neil Horsman

WG Winnepeg Chapter
59 members
Dan Kollesavich

GO Canadian Chapter
93 members
Roland Lariault

ON Maple Leaf Chapter
53 members
Don Laycock

GC/RC Rochelle Chapter
11 members
Keith LeBaron

K Grace M. Pond Chapter
19 members
Don Miller

GC/SK James J. Hill Chapter
35 members
June Petersen

MD Medford Chapter
10 members
Beth Phillips

MW Milwaukee-Madison Chapter
27 members
Robert Pluntz

GC/GT Blackhawk Chapter
25 members
Ronald R. Rhine

MS Twin City Chapter
35 members
Charles Roark

DI Vancouver Chapter
48 members
Lavina Shaw

TD Thomas A.Edison Chapter
29 members
Al Skornica

KN Saskatoon Chapter
33 members
Len Solomon

SQ Hugh Braese Chapter
47 members
Cathy Stanfill

MA Montana Chapter
21 members
Burton Stenslie

SX Sea Tac Evergreen Chapter
29 members
Betty Watterson

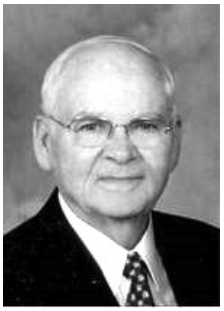
WA Washington-Baltimore Chapter
35 members
Jim Wilson

PD Emory Mulquin Chapter
11 members
R.G. Wornath

"30" SILENT KEYS

News of our brothers and sisters who have closed the key

Rochelle "RC" Chapter



Carl M. Story, age 85, passed away on October 13, 2013. Carl graduated from West High School in Waterloo, Iowa then attended Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls, Iowa. He came from a family with over 220 years of service on the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad, now the Canadian National! Carl began railroading in 1943 as a student telegrapher, followed by positions as a train dispatcher and assistant train master. In 1968, the railroad centralized its offices in Chicago, where Carl reached the position of Assistant Superintendent of Transportation. He retired from this job in 1981. Over the years, Carl was an avid amateur radio operator. His call was W9LLK (formerly W0KBJ), he specialized in telegraphy and participating in numerous "ham fests." His other interests included playing the tuba, golfing and solving word puzzles.

Carl was married for 63 years to Julia Blum. Their children include Deborah Jones, Marilyn Macari, Linda Jennings, and Karen Peterson. He and Julia also enjoyed many grandchildren and great grandchildren as well as nephews and nieces.

Thanks to Keith LeBaron for this information.

C.D Combs "FN" Chapter

Paul C. Calhoun, age 85, of Sioux City, Iowa passed away on August 31, 2013. He was born on December 22, 1927 at Austinville, Iowa to Chester and Emma Calhoun, the third son of four brothers. At age 15, Paul was hired as a telegraph operator for the Illinois Central Railroad at Seward, Illinois, following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. They had both worked for the ICRR. Paul graduated from high school in Freeport, Illinois.

At age 17, Paul took flying lessons at the Chesney Airport, north of Rockford. He enjoyed giving friends and family rides in his small plane. Later, Paul became a member of the South Dakota Civil Air Patrol. He was active with the Dispatchers Union in Chicago, Order of Railroad Telegraphers, and various churches.

On January 10,, 1948 Paul married Katherine Deaver. They both worked at Rockford, Illinois at the Rockford Ticket Office.

Paul was a good telegrapher, working on occasion in the "X" office in Chicago before becoming a dispatcher in Chicago and then in Waterloo. After 40 years of service, he retired in 1983 as Agent yardmaster in Sioux City, Iowa.

Paul liked to travel; he visited all 50 U.S. states, Canada, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, Columbia, Australia, New Zeeland, and four times to Europe. He did most of the travel planning and he wrote a weekly Friday Report to his family via the Internet.

Paul liked to keep in touch with fellow telegraphers. He did this through the Morse Telegraph Club. On each April at the annual meeting, Paul would give the meal blessing via a telegraph and sounder. He is survived by his wife, three children, and five grandchildren.

Thanks to Richard Behrens for this interesting information about Paul.

Chapter at Large "GC"

Joseph J. Schroeder, Jr. age 83, and longtime resident of Glenview, Illinois, died on April 30, 2013. Joe was an active amateur radio operator since 1946. His call sign was W9JUV and he was rated at the top of DXCC honor roll since 1979. Joe was named one of the top three DX ham radio operators in the world by QST magazine, May 2013 issue. He was also the co-author of a book about the classic 1896 self-loading Mauser pistol, System Mauser, and editor of all five editions of the Gun Collectors Digest. He was also author of the book, "The Wonderful World of Ladies' Fashion: 1850-1920." Joe was a pilot and member of the Civil Air Patrol. He served in the U.S. Naval reserves for eleven years.

When Joseph was a student at New Trier High School during World War II, a neighbor radio operator in the Merchant Marines advised Joe that ☛

if he passed the course in radio code, He would "never carry a rifle." Joe passed that exam and also at age 16, earned his ham radio call sign.

Following graduation from New Trier in 1948 he graduated from Lawrence College in Appleton, Wisconsin in 1953, where he majored in geology. He worked as an electrical engineer at Motorola from 1953 to 1960. In 1967 he went into business for himself as a marketing and engineering consultant.

Husband for 55 years to Janet Schroeder Nee Penn, Joe was father of Brad and Elizabeth and grandfather of three children.

Special thanks to Janet Schroeder, wife of Joseph, for this interesting summary of her husband's life.

Frank Sonnek, age 86, of Aberdeen died peacefully at home with loved ones after a six month brave struggle with esophageal cancer on April 13, 2013. Frank was born on March 5, 1927 in Marmarth, North Dakota. He was married to his beloved wife, Muriel Culp Sonnek for 60 years. Muriel preceded him in death five years earlier.

With seven proven Patriot ancestors, Frank was a member of the Dakota Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. He could trace his American lineage back o William Cecil, who came to Maryland in 1665. Frank was also an Army veteran of World War II and was a 60+ year member of the Masonic Lodge and Yelduz Shrine.

Frank worked as a conductor for the Milwaukee Road/Burlington Northern Railroad for 45 years and was elected by his peers to serve as a union griever. His remarks in that capacity at t U.S. Senate committee hearing were published in the Congressional Record by Senator George McGovern at the time of the bankruptcy of the Milwaukee Railroad. Frank was also a published author of magazine stories and a prolific contributor to a Milwaukee Road blog, regarding his reminiscences of early railroading and Marmarth, North Dakota Days, one of which was republished in the Fargo Forum newspaper.

Frank was the last cowboy and was a great storyteller, who would tell limitless fascinating stories ranging from, how to hay with a team of horses, and how to break horses, and how to ford his beloved Little Missouri River on horseback in a flood, and what it was like to ride the Badlands of North Dakota around Marmarth at a time when there were no fences, and how his Stuart relatives had nine lives, and how to build a root cellar, and what his North Dakota homesteading ancestors went through, to what it was like to work on steam engines.

Frank could do anything mechanical, including building his own computers and installing his own central air conditioning. For more than 50 years, Frank held an advanced class ham radio operator license with the call letters K0JM, and held an FAA license as an aircraft mechanic. He had a great sense of wonder about life and all of God's creations. Frank was grateful that he had lived long enough to see marvels such as the Internet.

Frank is survived by his children, Susan, and Frank, Jr. and two grandchildren, Elizabeth and John.

Maple Leaf "ON"Chapter

Charles Wesley Perry, age 93, passed away on June 18, 2013. He was born in Collingwood, Ontario on October 10, 1920. Charlie learned telegraphy in Collingwood in 1939, and then worked as an Assistant Agent. In 1942 he was classified as an operator and then worked on the CNR in Hornepayne, Allandale, Belleville and Stratford Divisions. After closing action in 1969, he was transferred to CNR at MacMillan yards, Toronto in the Tracs Office where he remained until his retirement in the late 1980's.

Thanks to Don Laycock, Secretary-Treasurer of the Maple Leaf Chapter for this information. Don adds that Charlie had been a member since 1978 and that the chapter regrets his passing.

Montreal/Ottawa "GO" Chapter

Richard Corbeil, age 73, of Ottawa passed away on October 18, 2013 after a short battle with cancer. Richard joined the Canadian Pacific Telegraph as a clerk in 1951. He then became a Morse operator in 1954. In 1957 he became the T& R chief then became wire chief until he retired in 1962. He worked at the "RA" office in Montreal.

Thanks to Roly Lauriault for this brief information about Richard.

J. Allan Richens of Chelsea, Quebec, age 81, died on December 31, 2012. He was born on July 1, 1931 in September 2013. While Allan was no a railroader, he was an enthusiastic fan. His father and two uncles worked at different positions for t Canadian National Railway.

☛

Thanks to Joyce Richens, wife to Allan for 57 years, for this brief information. She says that her husband died so quickly of an illness that he was not aware of what was happening to him. Joyce adds that," He enjoyed your magazine so much."

Thanks also to Roly Lauriault for added details.

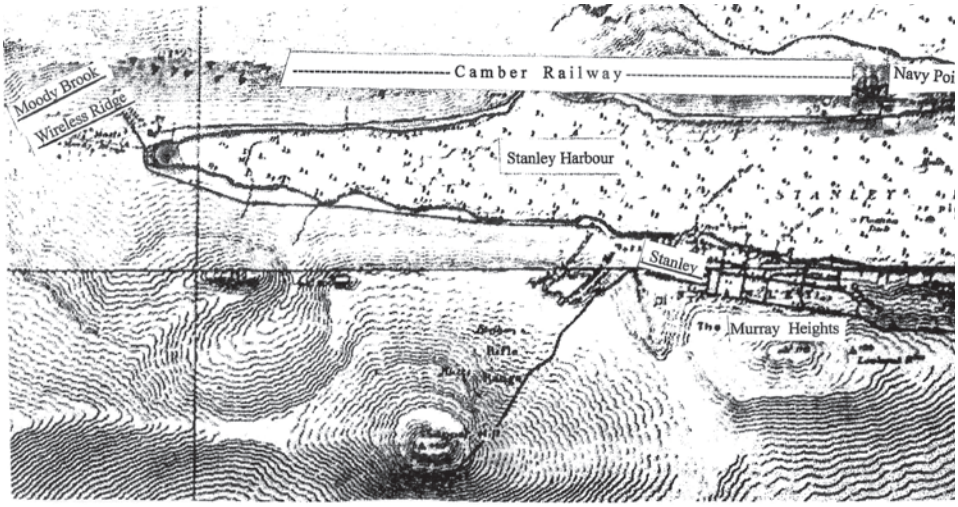
THE FALKLAND ISLANDS RAILROAD AND WIRELESS STATIONS

By Pat Kelly

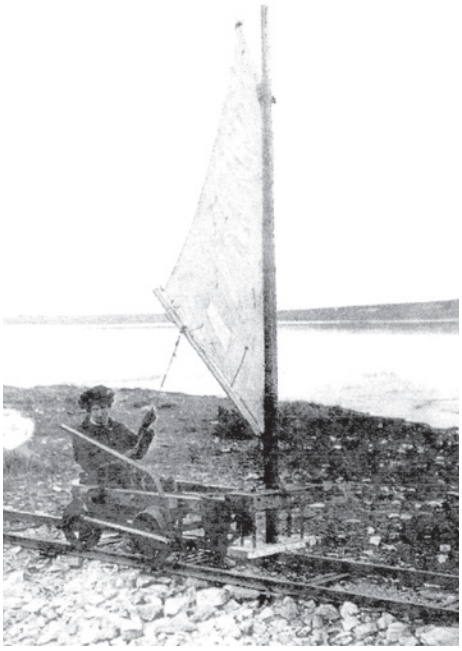
This is the story of a small, little known and now mostly forgotten railroad and two wireless stations in a far off, and at one time, isolated group of islands. In the early 1900s when wireless communication was in its infancy and stations did not possess the power to communicate long distances, naval headquarters and other establishments in England were unable to communicate directly with ships working in South American waters. Vessels on the west and east coasts of South America had to sent their traffic by wireless to a South American station thence by cable to Britain. These conditions prevailed until 1911, when a 5-K W Marconi station completewith two 220 foot masts, a "T" type six wire antenna, was erected in the Falkland Islands at Murray Heights, near Stanley, to communicate messages by wireless to Montevideo, Uruguay, and to Buenos Aires, Argentina, then to be passed by cable to Britain, thus speeding up the process somewhat. On November 1 st 1914, two months after England had declared war on Germany, two British armoured cruisers, the Good Hope and the Monmouth under Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock, were overwhelmed and sunk off the Chilean coast near Cape Coronel by a powerful German East Asian Squadron under Admiral Von Spee who had, until the outbreak of war, been based at Tsing Tao, China. In a few tragic hours over sixteen hundred British naval personnel were lost. There were no survivors from either vessel. In Germany, the Kaiser was jubi lant and ordered three hundred T ron Crosses to be distributed to the officers and men of the triumphant ships. In December, after the battle, the German squadron decided to retum home and alter rounding Cape Horn, contemplated a raid on the British held Falkland Islands, situated east of the Argentine coast off southern South America. A chance to smash the wirel ess station and burn a British naval coal supply depot on the islands was not to be missed and landing

parties were hastily organized for the raid.

But, unknown to the Germans, the British Admiralty, on learning the fate of their ships off Coronel, immediately ordered two heavily armed battle cruisers



and several accompanying light cruisers and an armed merchantman to leave England on the III" of November for the South Atlantic. The Plymouth dockyard was in the process of renewing some of the battle cruiser Invincible's fire brick for its furnaces, and wished to postpone sailing until the 13th but the Admiralty summarily ordered the squadron to depart as scheduled, and depart it did, carrying with her several unhappy civilian dockyard workers. In command of this heavily armed squadron was Vice Admiral Sir Doveton Sturdee, newly appointed as Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic and South Pacific. Also making her way southward down the South American east coast, was the old, slow and outmoded battleship Canopus, en route to Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands. She did possess 12-inch guns however, so could still be a dangerous opponent. On reaching Stanley, she was grounded in the harbour, still in commission, and with all stations fully manned. Sturdee and his ships arrived at Port Stanley, the island's capital, Dec 7th and next morning the German squadron was sighted approaching the islands by a keen eyed islander lookout on top of nearby Sappers Hill. Before the rest of the British ships could get clear of Stanley Harbour, the Canopus opened fire with their 12-inch guns and this surprised the Germans who had no idea enemy warships were nearby. Soon the battle cruisers and smaller cruisers issued from the harbour. The Germans, realizing they were heavily outnumbered, turned and made off. The British gave chase. Some hours later the Germans were caught and all, with the exception of the light cruiser SMS Dresden, were sunk. Sadly, there were not many survivors. The Dresden, being the fastest of the enemy ships, managed to slip away into the south Pacific, but was eventually located and sunk some months later in the Juan Fernandez islands off the coast of Chile.



Realizing the urgent need for better communications, Sir William Allardyce, the British governor of the Falkland Islands, petitioned the home government for a radio link with Britain. The project was approved and shortly thereafter was under weigh. More than 160 workers and the necessary equipment for the erection of a powerful wireless station were sent out from England on the SS Ismailia and by April19lS, the station, complete with seven wireless masts, a residential block and power house, was erected on Wireless Ridge at the west end of Stanley harbour in an area called Moody Brook. At first, signals from the new spark transmitter proved to be so strong that early trials resulted in damage being dome to much of the wiring. However, repairs were soon made and the signals were still powerful enough to be heard at times by several naval units on patrol in the North Sea. Production of this high power necessitated the erection of a large steam generating plant to drive the three dynamos to supply power to the wireless equipment. Huge supplies

☛ *continued on page 22*

WELCOME ABOARD

News of Our New Morse Telegraph Club Members

Ervin R. Waid of Glen Allen, Virginia was born on November 15, 1932. He was employed by the old C&O Railroad out of Richmond, Virginia, Piedmont Sub-Division, Pens Sub Division and Rivanna Sub-Division from November 1953 to mid 1959. Ervin learned to send and receive very slowly, and then teletype took over. He never worked a wire job, all tower and agent/operator jobs.

At 81 years old, Erwin says he had taken a new interest in his communications career. Erwin notes that he has a key and Western Union 1-A 40 Ohm sounder mounted on a board. He wants to know what size battery to use so that he does not damage his sounder. Email Ervin at USNMC236@yahoo.com or call him at 1 804 920-2158. Ervin ads that the newspaper article featuring Matt and Jim Wilson in the feature film "Lincoln" sparked new interest in our lost art. Oh, his telegraph sine was RW.

Ervin, we welcome you to MTC. You will be glad you joined.

John W. Reiser of Mount Vernon, Virginia was born on November 17, 1930. John states that he wishes to become a member of MTC to help preserve the tradition and history of Morse code telegraphy. John says he first became interested in telegraphy in grade school by reading books about Thomas Edison and stories about Samuel Morse inventing the telegraph. John says he visited the telegraph office at the local train depot to listen to the code. He pestered the operators about how the telegraph system worked.

At the age of 13, he was given as a gift a Montgomery Ward catalogue practice telegraph key with sounder. "I learned the code and practiced with one of my Boy Scout friends," states John, adding, "Later I learned the International Morse code for radiotelegraphy after enlisting in the U.S. Naval Reserve"

Upon being discharged from the Navy, John obtained an FCC Radiotelegraph Operators License and an Extra Class Radio amateur License. During his employment as a communications electronics engineer he inspected numerous shipboard radio installations, testing the performance of these radiotelegraph installations.

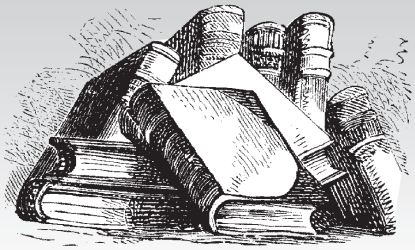
John says his 54 years as an amateur radio operator has mainly been that of using Morse code. In the early 1950's, he ordered a custom left-handed Vibroplex Keyer and since has made thousands of amateur radio contacts on the ham bands.

John states that he has always maintained an interest in telegraph and radio communications history and that he has a large collection of books on this subject. While in Geneva, Switzerland, he visited the ITU headquarters to read the original conference agreement that adopted International Morse code, and a later conference that approved Q code abbreviations. While he was in Geneva, they honored John as a guest operator at IRU amateur radio station 4UIITU, exclusively using Morse code.

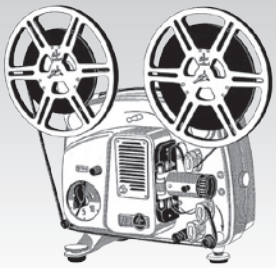
John, we give you a special welcome to MTC and hope that you might write a future article or two for Dots & Dashes.

Gordon M. Fraser of Brandon, Manitoba was born on July 25, 1931 in Binscarth, MB. He learned his telegraphy in 1950 in Waskada, MB. Gordon began his career with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company as an assistant agent on May 29, 1950, becoming an agent/telegraph operator on June 18, 1951.

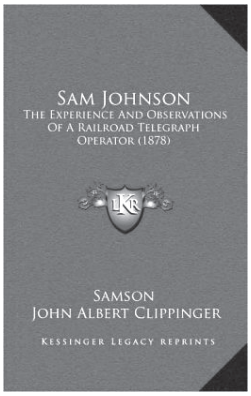
Gordon, welcome to MTC. You have discovered a new world.



J. Chris Hausler's BOOK & MOVIE REVIEWS



For this issue I'm once again going back to older publications. First I'm reviewing a reprint of book titled, "Sam Johnson: The Experience and Observations of a Railroad Telegraph Operator (1878)" and then, in a first for me, I'm reviewing an old radio program, a serial from 1934 titled, "The Green Valley Line". You remember radio, a lot like television, but the pictures are better...

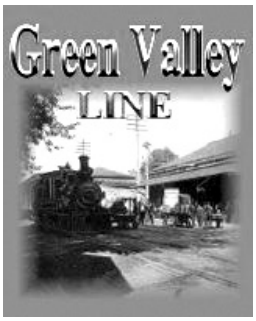


The book *Sam Johnson: The Experience and Observations of a Railroad Telegraph Operator* (1878) was written by John Albert Clippinger and Samson. I tried to find further information about either author but except for the possibility that Samson's initials are F. B., nothing was found and no other writings from Clippinger were noted. The book claims to be a collection of the experiences of one Sam Johnson, railroad telegraph operator, which have been recorded by the authors although one reference I found indicates that the author is unknown. How this was achieved, the relationship between the subject and the authors, is never explained, but much of the book is written in the third person. Despite the title, I have not been able to determine whether Sam Johnson was a real person or that his anecdotes as related in the book are those of this named individual or just a collection from a number of different sources. The preface states that the book was written for two purposes: One, to give some insight to the general public of the social lives of railroaders and two, to promote good humor by selecting incidents from Sam Johnson's experiences which not only illustrate some particular phase of railroad life but also to give rise to laughter and good feelings.

The time frame of the book is in the late 1860's and into the early 1870's. This, of course, fits with the 1878 first publication date. The book follows Sam through four different locales, referred to as "Epochs" in the book. These are "Princeton", "Van Wert", "Newtown" and "California". Whether or not these stories are true, I have been able to find many of the named locations and most appear to be along what was at least once a railroad line. The first Epoch would appear to be Princeton, Indiana. The second, Van Wert, Ohio (and a number of other named stations along that line, still in existence) takes place at stations in both Ohio and Indiana. The third, Newtown, could be either Newtown, Indiana or Newtown, Illinois but although I can find these places, I cannot find evidence that the railroad named in this Epoch, the TP&W, likely the Toledo, Peoria & Western (or as the books refers to it, the "Tired, Poor and Wretched") ever went through either one of them. In fact for that matter I cannot find that any railroad ever went near either of them. Google satellite views of them show no evidence of even an abandoned railroad grade. However, one location named in this Epoch, "Hollis", likely Hollis, Illinois does show evidence of rail service even to this day and there is a town with a similar name to Newtown, Newton, Illinois, which does have railroad service. Finally, when Sam gets to California he is sent to work at "Poverty Flat". The location named is more likely actually named "Poverty Flats" and is now the site of Redding, California, currently on the route of Amtrak's "Coast Starlight". The descriptions in the book match this location as best as I can tell. However, I have been unable to locate some of the other named stations in this Epoch. But in the over 140 years since this story was said to have taken place, location names could certainly have changed or even disappeared. So are these stories true? Are they the experiences of just one man, Sam Johnson? Or are they a collection of true stories from various sources or even complete fiction? You be the judge.

All that said, the book is a fun read. Some of the incidents described seem a little far fetched ☛

but as they say, truth is stranger than fiction. Others, I can easily see happening and most have a humorous aspect to them, although not all of the participants might have thought so at the time. The book is available from a number of sources either for purchase as a hard-copy reprint or for free download in a number of formats from the Internet Archive site: https://archive.org/details/samjohnsonexperi00clip . I think you will enjoy it.



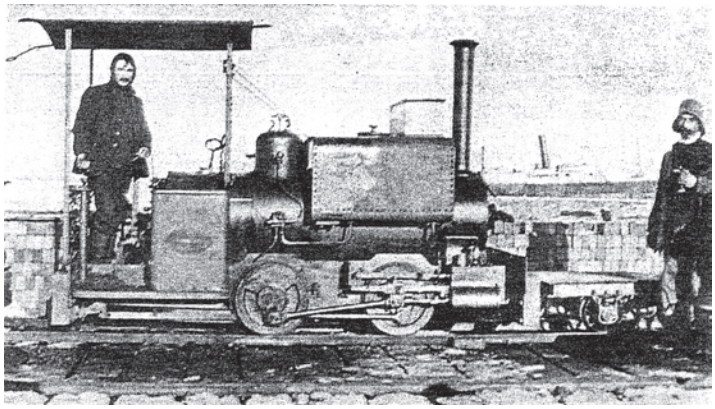
I was made aware of the "Green Valley Line" radio program by way of an article in the winter 2013 issue of "Classic Trains" magazine. Looking around the Internet, I found it available from numerous sources, either for free download as .mp3's or for listening on-line and also for purchase on a CD. Being cheap, I downloaded a .zip file containing all the episodes in .mp3 format and then burned my own CD. Interestingly there are two separate copies of this program available for download in this format from the Internet Archive site. These URL's are: https://archive.org/details/GreenValleyLine or: https://archive.org/details/GreenValleyLineOtr . Doing it this way one can either listen to the .mp3's you've downloaded on your computer or burn a CD and play it on your stereo system or in your car. Although one can just listen to the shows at either of these web sites on-line as well, a third site which just allows on-line listening is: http://matineeclassics.com/radio/1934/the_green_valley_line. Finally, you can buy CD's from several sources including some advertised on Amazon for between $5 and $6. Although available from numerous sites, at least the copies available from the three URL's listed above must have all come from the same original copying effort as all three have a record skip (remember those) at the same place in episode 18. Syndicated radio programs up into the 1960's were distributed on "transcription" disks, limited production phonograph records, sent out to the subscribing radio stations. Someone sometime obviously acquired one of these sets of records for this program, copied them to newer media, and then made those copies available to others. The audio quality on these copies is fair to good.

The serial tells the story of the Green Valley Line, a small back country railroad line at the beginning of the 20th Century. Bill Reed, the son of wealthy railroad baron Jacob Reed, has come to the small fictional village of Morristown in the Green Valley to be superintendent of the line, presumably to make it ready for takeover by a competing parallel line (the CK&W) operated by his father. This initially makes the townsfolk suspicious of him as they have a lot invested in the Green Valley Line both financially as shareholders and emotionally as many of them work for the line or work to provide services for its employees. Defying his father's wishes, however, Bill tries to make a go of the Green Valley Line as an independent operation, thus eventually gaining their support.

Along the way Bill meets up with a young woman just back from college, Carrie Graham, the daughter of the president of the Green Valley Line who becomes his "Girl Friday" in the office, a position she had held before going off to college. Her father, however, is in cahoots with Bill's father in wanting to sell off the railroad. Initially Carrie (or Kerry) dislikes Bill but a romantic subplot builds between them throughout the series with its expected ups and downs. The episodes each address the problems Bill faces as the two fathers engage in various nefarious efforts to cause Bill to fail in his. Bill soldiers on, however, ably managing the railroaders, the equipment and building the traffic volume. All this and using the telegraph too, its clicking is frequently heard in the office sequences, he finally overcomes all obstructions.

The serial plays out in 26 episodes, most slightly less than 15 minutes in length. As typical of such serials, there is usually some kind of "cliffhanger" at the end of each episode making you want to hear the next one. Even when an episode ends on a high note, you can just bet that something is going to go wrong at the beginning of the next. The last episode hints that a follow-on serial on the Green Valley Line would be forthcoming, however there is no evidence that another one was ever produced. But the first is an enjoyable if somewhat simplistic romp reminiscent of many of the fictional railroad stories one would find back in those days in the pages of "Railroad Magazine". I think you will enjoy "riding" on the Green Valley Line, as the song about the Rock Island said, "a mighty good road".

of coal were therefore required for the steam production. The two boilers for this operation were supplied by the Scottish firm of Babcock and Wilcox. The waters near the Moody Brook site of the wireless station, proved to be too shallow to allow vessels to unload coal supplies, personnel and equipment, so other arrangements had to be made. Opposite the town of Stanley, and forming the northern boundary of the harbour, was a long peninsula known as the Camber. This was deemed suitable for unloading incoming supplies and suitable wharves and a depot were built. From there a light railway could be



constructed to convey coal, freight and personnel to the Moody Brook site. This was hardly a Canadian Pacific or Amtrack Railroad operation, but only a short run of some three and a half miles.

Included in the cargo of the Ismailia, along with the necessary labour force, were two narrow gauge locomotives as well as a steam crane. The engines, sent out from Stoke-on-Trent, England, were designated as KS (Kerr Stuart) "Wren" class, six inch by nine inch cylinders and twenty inch diameter wheels to run on the twenty four inch gauge line. The 5-ton steam crane, manufactured by John Wilson, an engineering firm ofBirkenhead, England, used initially for unloading the equipment from the ship, was likely a broader gauge than the camber railway. This arrangement worked well and was in service until about the late 1920's when, owing to the adoption ofthe newly devised wireless tube for the radio equipment, the steam plant and generators were no longer required. The track, not being needed, was abandoned to its fate and for the next few years it was unofficially turned to civilian use and the two locomotives were relegated to the local scrap heap at the inshore end of the Navy Point jetty on the Camber across the harbour from Stanley town. Later on, buried by more junk, they disappeared completely. In the 1980's following the Falkland Islands war, the Royal Engineering Corps and some local residents who wanted to preserve these artifacts, dug out the engines and placed them in a container for later preservation. At this time, however, due to the islanders having little time to spare from their ordinary work, it appears the old equipment still remains where it was left. However, I understand that the local heritage and museum society memhers are striving to preserve this most important piece of local history.

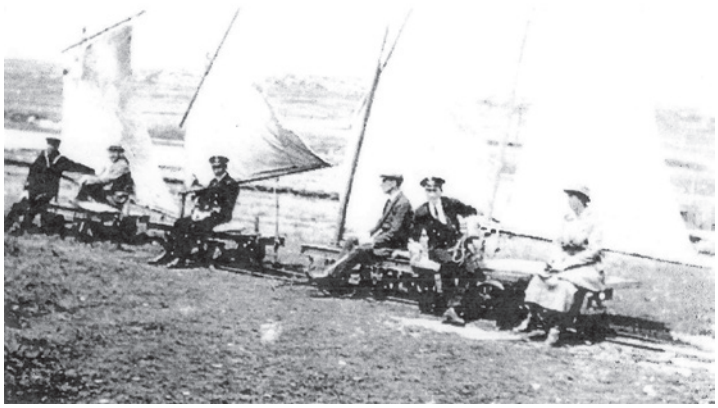
While in service, this operation was sometimes known locally as the "Falkland Islands Express" and pictures show the locos with their locally made or moderated waggons trundling behind, carrying supplies and workmen as required. Closer inspection show some of the waggons jokingly marked I st and 2nd class. At times the workers and others rigged a mast and sails on some of these waggons and took advantage of the prevailing westerly winds to ride the rails as depicted in some old photos and some issues of Falkland Island stamps. Children too, playing happily, took advantage of this novel motive power it seems.

Perhaps it would be be fitting if these two locomotives could be revamped again, one being displayed on the island and the other sent to Britain to be shown near the area where it originated. But it seems likely that the passage of nearly a century and the buffeting from the weather may well have rendered this out of the question.

In several other places on the islands, railway waggons running on improvised tracks were used to transport various products short distances, thus saving a good deal of time and labour for the personnel involved.

This, then, is an outline of a little known railway and wireless stations now long gone, that for a few short years played an important part in the history, economy and security of the Falkland Islands in the far South Atlantic.

Note:, Special mention must be made to the kindness and generosity of the Falkland Islands Museum, Archives and Historical Society members for much ofthe information that I have used, and I hereby tender them my thanks.



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: proy@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: 2014 Railroad Calendar. The Inland Empire Railway Historical Society offers a stylish 2014 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 deductable

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 (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 chalked 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*

AVAILABLE: Telegraph equipment, bug, depot calendar, time tables and buttons. Contact Sarah Schweitzer in Billings, Montana at (406) 896-8598

AVAILABLE: Crests, "Order of Railroad Telegraphers" with emblem in the center, $12 each. Email Mary Roy at terttu@shaw.ca or mail Mary at 3874 Winlake Crescent, Burnaby, BC V5A 2G5, telephone (604) 420-1292.

AVAILABLE: October 1926 Railroad Telegrapher magazine, an Order of Railroad Telegraphers publication. This magazine includes union news and ads from Vibroplex, Bunnell, and other telegraph makers. Alao available is the May 1959 Railroad Telegrapher with news from 11 MTC chapters. Contact Gene Wood at 104 Sunset, Madill, Oklahoma 73446, phone (580) 795-3724.

AVAILABLE: The Morse Express Christmas Key is a fully functional telegraph key made by GHD Telegraph Key in Sendai City, Japan. This key is fully adjustable with precision pin bearings at the trunion and it has two miniature binding posts. Lever tension is provided by an unusual but very effective piston compression spring that is located forward of the trunion post. The contacts are hard silver and the distinctive triangular base is finished in mirror polished hard chrome. The knob is hand-turned ebony and there are three small anti-static rubber feet on the bottom for stability. The 2013 Christmas Key measures 1 3/16 x 2 inches and weighs just over 2 ounces. The price is $89.95 plus shipping & handling. To see and to purchase this unique telegraph key go to www.MorseX.com.

Keep in Touch...

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

Jim Wilson
Editor
Dots & Dashes

2742 Southern Hills Court
North Garden, Virginia 22959
Tel: 434-245-7041
E-mail: telegraphjim@gmail.com

For membership changes, address updates, dues and other information dealing with membership or with chapter operation, contact your local Chapter Secretary or:

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.arnewsline.org
www.usrepeaters.com
www.qth.com
www.qrz.com

Notices & Invitations

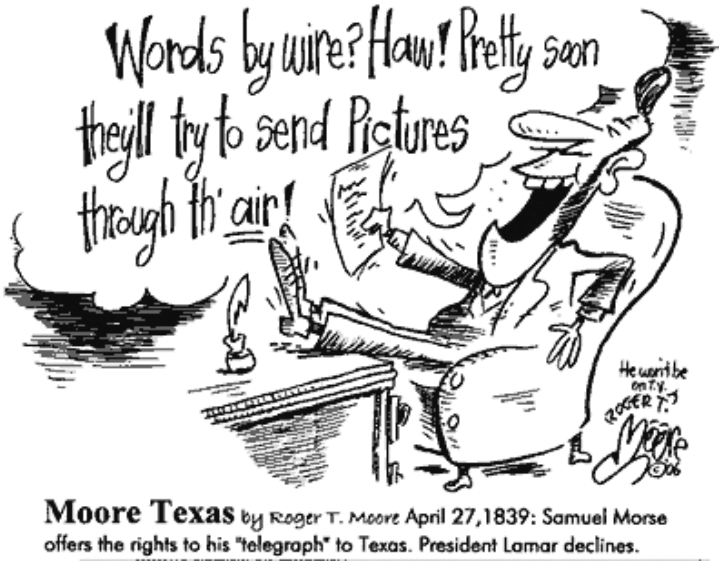
Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.
Dial-Up Information

U.S. (KB) HUB
1-269-697-4506/4508/4513
(Michigan-Ace Holman)

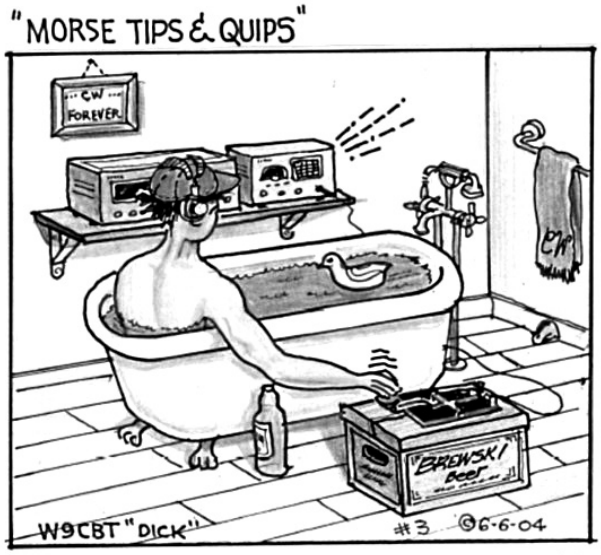
CANADIAN (HN) HUB
1-888-822-3728 (toll free)

MORSE KOB PROGRAM
on the web at www.morsekob.org

DUES
U.S. First Class postage $15.00
E-mail delivery $9.00
Canadian is now by chapter
Foreign Air Mail postage $23.00



Moore Texas by Roger T. Moore April 27,1839: Samuel Morse offers the rights to his "telegraph" to Texas. President Lamar declines.



"PRACTICE MORSE CODE WHILE DOING SOMETHING ELSE"