



Dots&Dashes

What

Hath

God

Wrought

The Official Publication of the Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.

Vol. 39, Issue No. 3 • Summer 2014

MTC DOES IT AGAIN

By Jim Wilson

Members of the Morse Telegraph Club wowed an estimated 25,000 people during the “Dayton Hamvention.” This annual event takes place in Dayton, Ohio during mid-May at the huge Hara Arena.

This year saw a first by having the MTC booth and the Enigma encryption machine booth combined side-by-side. Professor Tom Perera and his wife Gretchen manned their booth. MTC International President Jim Wades and his associates manned the MTC booth.

For three days, MTC Vice President J. Chris Hausler and member Derrick Cohn spent countless hours at the MTC booth with President Jim Wades

talking to hundreds of interested folks about the telegraph. Other members joining the fun at the booth on other days included your Dots & Dashes editor Jim Wilson, your International Secretary-Treasurer Cindy Galyen and Cindy’s Dad Hubert Jewell (Hubert also currently serves as the MTC WA Chapter President).

When two days of sporadic rain put a damper on outside vendor sales, those folks came inside to get out of the rain. This horde of humanity added to the crowds cramming into the MTC booth. The number of outside flea market vendors was approximately 1,785. Inside commercial vendors and exhibitors were estimated at about 451. The

Continued on page 5 ➔



(Left to Right) Jim Wilson, Derek Cohn, Jim Wades, Gretchen Perera, Tom Perera, and J. Chris Hausler.

Dots & Dashes

The official publication of

The Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.

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Your Articles and Stories: MTC is always looking for original photographs, stories and articles about your experiences in telegraphy or radiotelegraphy. Please send articles and news stories to the Editor of *Dots and Dashes*.

Telegraph Talks and Demonstrations: If you or your local chapter should schedule any demonstrations, talks or other special events, please notify the International President so he can publish your event in our on-line calendar.

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

➡ 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



Sidewire

Comments from the
Editor of *Dots & Dashes*

By **Jim Wilson**



The Morse Telegraph Club was successful at the Dayton Hamvention May 17-19. Read about this educational and promotional event on the front page.

The next big event for Morse Telegraph Club members will be the 100th Anniversary Celebration of the American Radio Relay League to be held in Newington, Connecticut on July 17-19. President Jim Wades plans to set up the MTC booth at this once in a lifetime convention. Derek Cohn and J. Chris Hausler and others, including myself, plan to be at this convention. I will carry along a few hundred sample copies of *Dots & Dashes* to distribute to interested visitors.

In the meantime, some of our amateur radio members we will be involved with their annual Field Day event on June 28-29. That includes me. Whew, some of us have a busy summer ahead of us.

At last, thanks to Jim Wades, I am about to become connected to the Morse Internet. I already have the telephone connection to MTC members using the Dial-Up HUB, but I found that my personal system was not very reliable. This Internet system connection may be "the cat's meow." I'll report to you on it in the next issue of *Dots & Dashes*.

If you want to join other MTC members via the Dial-Up HUB system or via the Internet, help is available. Just give a yell to me and I will help you find someone to assist you.

Meanwhile, with beautiful weather, please plan to join your chapter members as they get together to demonstrate the electric telegraph, rated as one of the world's top ten inventions!

Jim Wilson

President's Line

Jim Wades, President
Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.



A Telegraph Museum

Over the years, the subject of a museum of telegraphy has been discussed now and then. While many believe it's a great idea, there are those who feel it can't be done. While the arguments against the museum concept often seem well reasoned, they are often based on certain assumptions, one of which is the belief that the public cannot "relate" to telegraphy.

In recent years, we have had the opportunity to test this assumption on a small scale within various public museums. Invariably, our displays of historic telegraph instruments along with the interactive tools we have developed are positively received. In many cases, our telegraph displays prove to be one of the most popular features within museums containing a wide range of compelling artifacts.

Part of our success has been achieved by interpreting the past in a manner that allows the current generation to connect to telegraphy in a meaningful way. Because many today are trying to understand their relationship with the modern telecommunications technologies that are now so intrusive in their lives, it is natural that they are curious about the historical antecedents, which paved the way for the modern era. We have proven that when one presents telegraphy properly, it is a compelling subject for modern generations.

Of course, it is not enough to simply display instruments in glass cases. Rather, a museum must tell a story. It is the story of telecommunications that is compelling and which offers insights and understanding for the public. The instruments are simply illustrations within that story.

Over the past four or five years, your International President has made a systematic study of both large and small museums throughout the United States and Canada. We have had an opportunity to see what works and what doesn't. Whether a museum is a small facility specializing in wooden canoes or pottery, or a large state or national museum covering a vast range of historical information, there

are factors which ensure success. Simply put, a collection of lifeless artifacts is not enough to ensure the success of a museum. Rather, each artifact on display must be part of a larger story that speaks to current generations.

Society's current fascination with the Internet and cellular telephony actually works to our advantage. These technologies are largely an outgrowth of the telegraph industry. The Internet itself is simply an incremental evolution from the multiplexing methods and later switching centers developed by the telegraph companies. When placed in their proper context, telegraph instruments of the various generations can tell the entire story of telecommunications and place today's world of data communications in its proper context.

It is our goal to provide a lasting legacy honoring the Morse Telegraph Club members who played a role in building the foundation for our modern world of telecommunication. The time has come for our various telegraph instruments and collections to proudly stand in public view to tell our story. We are all familiar with the Biblical parable of hiding one's light under a basket. Applying this concept, one can identify a simple choice. We can keep our story to ourselves and hide our telegraph instruments in our collective basements, or we can tell our story to the world using our collections to illustrate the important history of telecommunications.

The Morse Telegraph Club, its Chapters and its individual members are already engaged

in outreach and education through telegraph demonstrations. We have assisted with the design and construction of numerous temporary and permanent telegraph exhibits. We have taken the steps to serve as a repository of instruments, documents and ephemera for future projects.

Your Board of Directors is already taking steps designed to culminate in the creation of a museum of telegraphy and telecommunications built on a stable, permanent footing. We are now in a position to obtain grants and funding for such a project and our track record of success with high-profile museums throughout North America provide considerable leverage for continued partnerships with larger institutions, which can assist us in our endeavors. Best of all, many of us are now old enough and wise enough to proceed using a cautious, incremental approach, which will ensure financial stability and long-term growth into a viable museum and library institution.

Let's work together to tell OUR story. Hopefully, we can ensure that the story of telegraphy can be preserved for future generations in an environment in which that story will not be lost or displaced in favor of an exhibit featuring "rock and roll," paintings of Campbell Soup Cans or some such fleeting pop culture tripe. Simply put....the telegraph and the men and women who made it possible deserve better.

73,
Jim Wades

NOTICE

Cindy Galyn, our MTC International Secretary-Treasurer, wants you to know that if you have not paid your 2014 MTC dues, this issue of our Dots & Dashes journal will be your LAST. So if you have procrastinated, please send in your \$15 annual dues for 2014. Send your check to your MTC Chapter Secretary-Treasurer.

You are a valuable member and we don't want to lose you!

MTC Does it Again, continued from front page

Dayton Hamvention is the largest ham radio convention held each year in the United States.

We thank our loyal MTC members for spending their time and their own money for travel, hotels and meals to represent our club. This is a significant personal expense. The volunteer MTC team rated this experience as valuable in educating and informing so many people about the history and importance of the telegraph to the economic growth of both the United States and Canada. These MTC members plan to return

to Dayton in May 2015. Other MTC members like Larry and Linda Card, who attended from Greenfield, Indiana also plan a return trip.

The Dayton Hamvention has been sponsored since 1952 by the Dayton Amateur Radio Association. In addition to more than two thousands flea market and commercial vendors, this convention included dozens of fascinating lectures and demonstrations. I recommend that you put the Dayton Hamvention on your calendar and plan to come join the fun! The dates are May 15-17, 2015.

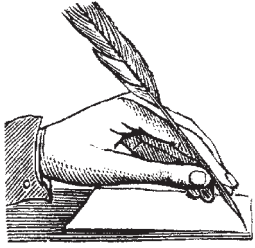


Linda and Larry Card, MTC members who attended the Dayton Hamvention from Greenfield, Indiana



Dr. Tom Perera, amateur radio call sign W1TP. Dr. Perera presented a lecture at the Dayton Hamvention titled "Disappearing Ham Radio History & Hope for the Future." He stated that, "Our history disappeared from the Smithsonian museum," and that, "Morse code is no longer required by radio operators on a ship."





Letters to the Editor

February 27th

I received your parcel yesterday and was surprised and pleased when I discovered how many copies of Dots & Dashes you had sent. Thank you very much. I am sending a copy to my amateur radio friend in Chicago and another to copy to a friend in Skokie. Both of these friends are active in the CW bands. They have both shown an interest in joining the Morse Telegraph Club.

73 and enjoy the Spring!
Betty, VE3ZBB

Betty's story was featured on the front cover of the winter issue of Dots & Dashes.

May 1st

I was glad to hear of the new changes in the Morse Telegraph Club as described in the spring issue on pages 3, 4, & 5. These changes as described by President Jim Wades are significant and impressive.

Regarding the Letter on page 6 from Joe Cristian; I thank you for putting Joe in touch with me. We have now corresponded several times by letter. Joe has been most helpful in my search for information about the typical Railroad Relay Offices and Wire Chief Desks, plus interlocking savvy. I am so grateful for this help, which assists the local Elgin County Railway Museum in St. Thomas Ontario to better present artifacts to the public.

Yes, we do occasional Morse demos at the museum and I get some help on occasion from one or the other of two long-retired local former telegraphers who are also members of the Maple Leaf Chapter. BCC to dear friend Lavina Shaw, Past International President of the MTC, with whom my wife and I had the pleasure of traveling in Cuba a few months ago. This is a trip that Lavina mentioned in her article on page 7 of the spring issue. We are looking forward to seeing Lavina here this month to attend with us the annual CATDRTC convention, being held this year in London, Ontario.

*30 & 73,
Charles Beckett "CB"
Former NYC Operator Canada Division, 1952.*

May 3rd

At the end of World War 2 there was a great revival of sports in this country. Many professional sports leagues had suspended operations during the war and were now back in business. Hoping to make a fast buck, some promoter organized a basketball league with moderate sized cities in Oklahoma. One of the league cities was Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The radio stations in some of the cities decided they would like to broadcast games played by the new basketball league to other cities. The stations turned to Western Union for help. WU said they could supply the circuits, but didn't have any Morse operators they could spare, barely having enough for their own needs. WU suggested the railroads might be able to help.

At that time there were four railroads in Tulsa: The Santa Fe, the Midland Valley, the Katy and the Frisco. The first three railroads didn't have that many Morse operators, but the Frisco had plenty. With a relay office, a train dispatcher's office, and a yard office, all full of expert telegraphers, this was the place to hire a telegrapher.

The Wire Chief in Tulsa was Pat Paulsell. Pat's son, Pat, Jr. was a good Morse man and was on the Extra Board. He decided to do the play-by-play of the games. However, I don't know if he ever played basketball or knew much about it.

Pat, Jr. took his "bug" (automatic keyer) and went to the press box to send the game. He did fine sending the lineups and the usual pre-game information. But once the game started, it was a different proposition.

After struggling for a few minutes, he disconnected his bug, put it in the carrying case and walked out. He never covered a basketball game play-by-play again.

I never heard if another Frisco operator replaced Pat, but I am doubtful that they did, especially if they talked to Pat, Jr.

*Gene Wood,
MTC Member
Madill, Oklahoma*

May 11th

In your *Dots & Dashes* "Sidewire" column, the spring 2014 edition, you mentioned that the annual income tax deadline in the U.S. was April 15th. You asked our Canadian members for the deadline date for Canadian income taxes. That date was April 30th, fifteen days later than the U.S. income tax deadline. But then again, we pay a lot more income tax than you folks do!

*Dan Kolesarich
Winnipeg "WG" Chapter*

June 2nd

I enjoy and learn a lot from collaborating with the alert group of MTC folks in NYC. They understand the potential for Morse code in other applications. Have fun on ARRL Field Day. I never missed Field Day for decades while we and our boys were younger and when Debby and I weren't knee deep in sheep! I still retain this dream of loading up one of our high paddock fences as a radiant dipole/ long wire antenna, and operating QRP CW from our sheep pen! I love working CW contests, am not good at it but love it.

Two of my books are widely available on line at Amazon.com and via all other book sites, plus via the publisher. These two books are: 1) King, T.W. (1998) *Assistive Technology: Essential Human*

Factors. Boston Allyn & Bacon, ISBN 0-205-27326-2 and 2) King, T.W. (2000) *Modern Morse Code in Rehabilitation and Education: new applications in assistive technology*. Boston, Allyn & Bacon, ISBN 0-205-28751-4.

We at UW-Eau Claire hosted the first Morse 2000 World Conference on Morse code in rehabilitation and education in 1997. We had more than 30 attendees from nine nations.

Have a great time at Field Day. 73, Thomas & Debra King of Solon Springs, WI

June 19th

My daughter, Cindy, who is your International Sec. for the Morse Club, and I were putting on a Morse Demonstration in Falls Church, VA for special event there. I had my Morse Equipment set up, two stations, on the table. Beside the equipment I had copies of the Morse Code for distribution. A mother carrying an infant and two little boys stopped by the table and were asking questions about Morse Code. One little boy took a copy of the code sheet and said he wanted to send his name. He spelled out S- A- M which was not good Morse but was readable. I told him his name was SAM. His mother almost dropped the baby! How did you do that, she asked? I said I just read it from the instruments. Then the other little boy said he wanted to send his name. He did the same and spelled B-E-N. I told him his name was BEN. Again, his mother was so excited she could hardly control herself. They were just enthralled with what they had learned about Morse and I'm sure they will never forget that they sent their names in Morse Code. It was a gratifying experience.

Hubie

Civil War Today

To read what was happening day-by-day in the U.S. Civil War, on your computer, type in www.civilwarinteractive.com. The telegraph is often mentioned. Without the telegraph, President Lincoln might have lost this terrible four year war.

A Scrabble Coincidence

For scrabble players, the letters of "The Morse code" can be rearranged to read: "Here come Dots." This tidbit was sent in by Retired U.S. Army General Stan Haransky, a friend of MTC.

WERNER SIEMENS AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE FIELD OF TELEGRAPHY

By Fons Vanden Berghen

Introduction

The motivation for writing this article was the recent acquisition of a very rare and very special 'high-speed telegraph' that was made by the Siemens & Halske company and was used in the Crimean War.

First I'm going to outline briefly a part of the life of Werner Siemens. Then I will explain in short his work in the field of telegraphy, thereby concentrating on his first telegraphs, which will bring me to the Crimean War. And finally I will show, with some small comments, pictures of different telegraphs made by Siemens & Halske.

1. A Little History

The globally known company of Siemens was founded by (Ernst) Werner Siemens, the fourth child of a family of fourteen. He was born on 13 December 1813 at Lenthe near Hannover. After his grammar school education he began graduate studies at the Prussian army's School of Artillery and Engineering in Berlin. After three years of ardent study he left this institution with the rank of lieutenant. In the autumn of 1840 he was transferred to the garrison at Wittenberg, where he could devote himself to scientific studies, making his first major discovery as early as 1842. He managed to develop a system that made it possible to silver and gild small metallic objects by electrolytic means and for which he got his first patent.

A little later he was transferred to the artillery workshops in Berlin. This move was decisive for his future career. Berlin then was one of the most beautiful capitals in Europe and offered many ways to relax. But Werner preferred to remain in the company of people who liked to enhance their knowledge of everything related to science and technology. So he spent whole evenings in the 'Physikalisches Institute' [Physics Institute].

In the army he was confronted with the problems of long distance communication (the word 'telecommunications' was not yet known at that time; it was first coined by Professor Edward

Estaunié in 1904 in his book *Traité Pratique de Télécommunication Electrique*). Back in the 1840s Germany was using mechanical-optical telegraphs (semaphores, like the 'Pistor' system), whose drawbacks are well known. And

Siemens, as a result of his research, learned about the existence in England of the electric ABC telegraph (also called dial telegraph) developed by William Cooke and Prof. Charles Wheatstone and which seemed to offer excellent opportunities. He started a project with a lot of assiduity to make a version of his own that avoided the major problem of the English telegraph, namely the great risk of losing synchronisation between the transmitter and the receiver (the same problem was present also in the dial telegraph by Louis Breguet in France). In 1846, when he was 30 years old, he could show an operational model to his friends of the 'Physikalische Gesellschaft'.

He had managed to solve the problem of synchronisation through the use of a simple principle already used in each electrical bell of that time!

One of his friends, (Johann) Georg Halske (1814-1890), a talented mechanical engineer, was so excited that he offered his services for the production of such telegraphs. Then, Werner Siemens, still active as an officer in the Prussian army, together with Georg Halske opened a small workshop in a rented house. And on October 1, 1847 the 'Siemens & Halske Telegraphen Bauanstalt' company was formally established. His nephew Werner Johann Georg Siemens, adviser to the royal court, took care of financial funding. A week later, Werner got a patent on his dial telegraph. Then in 1847 he was appointed by the Prussian army as a delegate of the 'Committee for Telegraphy', which was to pave the way for the conversion of the optical telegraph into the electric telegraph; a very interesting proposition indeed. Also in 1847 he developed a press tool for covering metallic cables with a sustainable insulating jacket of 'gutta-percha' (a kind of rubber). This latter invention proved later to be extremely valuable, particularly

for submarine cables.

With these achievements and other testimonials it was not surprising that the young company Siemens & Halske was commissioned to install an important telegraph line, more than 500km long (the longest line at that moment in Europe). It had to interconnect Berlin, the seat of government, and Frankfurt, where the first parliament was located. The project was completed successfully and so the future of the young company was assured. Werner was also instructed in 1849 to extend this line to Cologne and Aachen, and then further down to Verviers in Belgium. The ultimate aim was to connect Berlin to London via Brussels and Paris. In 1850 France achieved a connection with England via the Calais-Dover cable and in 1851 Belgium was interlinked with France (the line Brussels-Paris). Note that the Ostend-Dover cable became operational in 1853.

Back to the year 1849. Involved in all those commercial activities, Werner Siemens found that combining these with a position in the army was becoming untenable, so he resigned for logical reasons. Early in 1850, on the occasion of the interconnection of the Belgian and the German networks, he received an invitation from the Belgian king Leopold I. He was to give a presentation on the electric telegraph at the royal court. But alas, it did not give commercial results; Belgium was too involved with Wheatstone and Cooke and continued using their needle telegraphs. The same year he went to Paris, where he could give a lecture at the Academy of Sciences on the same subject as in Brussels. He earned the admiration of all present and also got an interview with Louis Breguet, the authorised provider of telegraphs to the French administration. But he achieved no commercial results here either. In 1851 he went with his brother Wilhelm (who later on called himself William, see below) at the first world exhibition that was held in London's Crystal Palace (built especially for that occasion in Hyde Park). There they received the highest distinction, the Gold Medal awarded by the Council of the Society of Arts, for their dial telegraph, which was well deserved.

When competition arose in Germany, Werner Siemens turned his gaze to the vastness of Russia, which he considered should certainly have communication problems to be solved by 'modern means'. He went on a long trip, made mostly in stage coaches and troikas, to the distant city of St. Petersburg, where Tsar Nicolas resided. He

succeeded in obtaining an order to install a line between St. Petersburg and Kronstadt. He put his brother Carl at the head of the team that had to build this line and to connect the telegraph apparatus. In 1855 he established an independent subsidiary in St. Petersburg under the direction of Carl.

Later in 1880, he built a factory for the manufacturing of cables and telegraph equipment. In 1854 the Crimean War broke out.

Use of the electric telegraph was slow in being assimilated into military planning, and had to await the urgent requirements of the Crimean campaign in 1854-56, at a time when its commercial use was already well established. For the allies — Britain, France (under Napoleon III), Sardinia and Turkey — a major aim of this war was to check the expansion of Russia towards Constantinople (now Istanbul), and preventing the disintegrating Ottoman Empire from falling within the Russian sphere of influence. To this end, capturing the Russian naval base at Sevastopol near the Black Sea was seen as an essential first step. Even before the start of the campaign the Russians held the advantage in communications since a working semaphore system, based on the Chappe system, was in place between their headquarters in Moscow and Sevastopol. (A little reminder, we know from the Crimean War the heroine Florence Nightingale, 'the lady with the lamp'; and it was also the first war in which newspapers reported in detail to the homelands by telegraph. But these are stories for another time...)

In early 1854 the Russians placed an order with Siemens & Halske to construct, as quickly as possible, an overhead telegraph line from Warsaw to St. Petersburg. This was followed by extensions in the north and by a long extension in the south from St. Petersburg to Odessa and Sevastopol on the Black Sea. This telegraph network now covered a total distance of 10,000km, extending from present-day Poland and Finland down to the Crimean Peninsula (see the map). These lines, completed by 1855, were of considerable assistance to the Russian authorities in controlling the movement of troops and war material, and, not least, in enabling direct communication with Berlin to arrange for the shipment of heavy war equipment from Germany. The high-speed telegraph from Siemens & Halske, my latest acquisition, which I will describe below, was the standard equipment on this huge network.

The allies began installing telegraph circuits only in 1855. The French arranged for a 'mobile' network

that could follow the movement of the troops. The English laid a submarine cable of 550km on the bottom of the Black Sea between Varna (Bulgaria) and Sevastopol.

Also, and with the help of the French telegraph regiment, they built a connection to London (the War Office) and Paris, making use of the existing Austrian network S & H had established a representative office in London already in 1850. This situation came to an end with the creation of its own subsidiary in 1858 under the direction of Wilhelm Siemens who as of then named himself William. And in 1863, under the direction of William, a cable manufacturing plant was erected in Woolwich, near London. It was in 1865 that the company name was changed into Siemens Brothers (the brothers being Werner, William and Carl). Two years later Georg Halske took retirement amicably. The company retained his name in the name of the company until 1967, in recognition for his enormous contribution to the success of the company.

I would like to mention here another 'tour de force' of Werner Siemens related to telegraph networks. Between 1867 and 1869, he managed to make a connection that brought worldwide fame to the company: the telegraph line from London to Calcutta. The realisation of this vast project was supported by the cooperation of the Werner's two brothers, William and Carl. Of this 10,000km-long Indo-European line, some 6,000km still remained to be completed. The project, awarded to the consortium of Siemens & Halske and Siemens Brothers, put this line in service in 1870 (it remained operational until 1930). Regarding this line from Europe to Asia, a book was published by

the Museum of Telecommunications in Bern with the title *In 28 Minuten von London nach Kalkutta*. This title obviously refers to the time required to transmit, via many intermediate stations, a short message from one end to the other; an incredible performance in 1870 indeed.

So that was a short retrospective of part of the life of Werner Siemens. I now turn to the last period of his life. In 1888 he was knighted and from that day on he became Werner von Siemens (in German names the word von implies aristocracy or nobility). And it was at the age of seventy-four (on 31 December 1889) that he decided to withdraw from company management. At that time the company had 6,000 employees, including those from the subsidiaries in London and St. Petersburg. He could now use much of his spare time to write his memoirs. On 6 December 1892, a few days after the publication of his book *Lebenserinnerungen*, following a brief illness, Werner von Siemens died at his home in Charlottenburg (near Berlin). Among the mass of flowers at the foot of his coffin was a floral tribute from, amongst many others, Thomas Alva Edison.

For the many other interesting achievements of Werner 'von' Siemens, I refer you to the many books that have been written about him, and especially his own work which had already been translated into English in 1893: *Werner von Siemens - Recollections*. In 2008 his book was reissued with amendments and it is still available (see the Bibliography at the end).

Part II will feature images of his telegraphs in the Fall 2014 issue of Dots & Dashes

COURTESY PAYS

By F.M McClintic, a Former World Champion Telegrapher

Down in Texas they have a railroad with a motto. The Texas and Pacific, which covers the Lone Star State from end to end and adds a few hundred miles of Louisiana for good measure, believes that it is "No trouble to answer questions." Many years ago, before the "Tee-Pee" had gained fame with the public and favor with the Goulds as one of their best assets, the president of the road happened to stop off one day at a little Louisiana town to send a telegram. Railroad presidents in those days were not troubled with private

secretaries, so the president strode into the little telegraph-ticket office to write his own telegram. On asking for a blank he was agreeably surprised at the courtesy accorded him, although it was his first visit and he had reason to believe that the young man behind the ticket window had never seen him before and did not know who he was.

It was not a day to bring cheerfulness, for the weather was as muggy and sticky as only Louisiana weather can get. The operator radiated sunshine, however, and the president liked it.

Over the ticket window he noticed a sign that read, "No Trouble to Answer Questions." A series of interrogations developed that the motto was not an empty one, and the president noted with pleasure that the sunshine on the telegrapher's face never faded. He also learned that the motto was original with the youthful dispenser of good cheer and tickets.

Soon there was a place a little higher up for the boy. Step by step, under the eye of the appreciative president, he forged ahead and year by year the policy, "No trouble to answer questions," permeated the big railroad system. For many years E. P. Turner, the one-time cheerful operator at the Louisiana way station, has been general passenger and ticket agent of the Texas and Pacific, and the policy is in evidence at every station between

El Paso and New Orleans. There is perhaps no railroad in the United States where simple courtesy and plenty of it has worked greater wonders. So famous is the watchword that a letter mailed in New York addressed to "No Trouble to Answer Questions, Texas," would reach Mr. Turner's office in Dallas and receive a courteous reply without so much as an hour's delay.

Texas has another ex-telegrapher general passenger agent in Cyrus W. Strain of the 'Frisco at Fort Worth. Like Mr. Turner, Mr. Strain began his career in a little telegraph office. Following the same policy and giving off the same sunny radiation, Mr. Strain advanced, division by division, until his recent appointment at the top rung of the 'Frisco passenger ladder in Texas.

LINCOLN'S ENVY

By F.M McClintic

President Lincoln once stated to Jesse H. Eunuch, who was then military telegrapher to General George B. McClellan in Washington, that he would give a thousand dollars had he learned telegraphy when he was a boy. Mr. Lincoln used to talk to young Bunnell on matters of state, as will be seen by an excerpt from a letter written by a member of the military corps stationed at Washington to another in New York during the war, dated Washington, District of Columbia, December 14, 1861, and addressed "Dear Jack." The letter follows:

"Washington is a sight. I don't wonder Mr. Lincoln said one could not throw a stone down Pennsylvania Avenue without hitting a brigadier-general. The town is full of them and the Army of the Potomac is stalled at Alexandria. McClellan is here and does business by telegraph. He has for an operator one of the handsomest young men I ever saw - Jesse Bunnell. He and Mr. Lincoln are very chummy. Jesse is considerably under twenty years of age, but the President talks to him in a way that is very funny. Jesse says he should feel complimented, but he realizes that the President is simply thinking aloud.

"It is one of the best possible tributes to the telegraph that it interests the very best minds. Up in Amherst some of the ginger-pop professors used to sniff a little at my enthusiasm about telegraphy. They regard it as a trade, and not just the thing for a college man. Now comes Abraham Lincoln, the foremost of all living men to-day, throws his

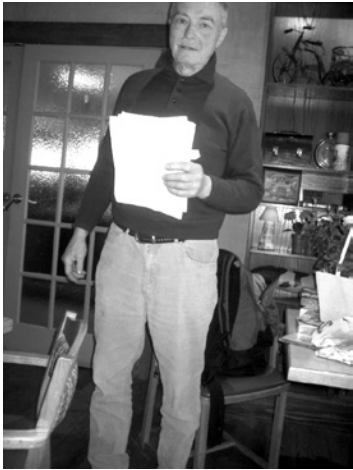
long leg across the table where Bunnell is receiving despatches, stays around until long after midnight, looks over Jesse's shoulder and says: 'Young man, I would give a thousand dollars if I had learned to do that when I was young. The ability to read those signals is a never-ending mystery to me.

"Continuing his inmost thoughts, the President would say: 'And, Jesse, McClellan says he needs more men. What do you think? He has quite a few down there at Alexandria, and he seems inclined to keep them there until spring. Secretary Cameron is growing weary of running a war, and we are going to accept his resignation and put in a more active fellow. I have my eyes on one now. But, Jesse, he may be too active. The happy medium is a mighty hard thing to strike. Don't you find it that way in your own business? Some of the boys send too fast and some too slow, and some just right eh? Well, that is just what is needed in the War Department, a man who can send just right; take a gait and keep it.

"It is with men as with horses; some of them are great at a spurt, but not many are all wool and a yard wide at a pull. The new Secretary of War must be as good at a pull as he is at a spurt, or this war will hang along until everybody will be worn out. Well, Jesse, we are going to do something pretty soon - along in February we will begin moving. I guess McClellan doesn't need any more men to hold Alexandria with - no, indeed."

CHAPTER NEWS

Vancouver "DI" Chapter



Guest speaker for the Vancouver Chapter Morse Day event was Doug Turner, who came across from Victoria by ferry to talk about his research on the McClure Family. Members of this family were taught telegraphy by their dad, who was a surveyor for the telegraph line that came up from San Francisco with the intent

of going through Alaska into Russia. At age 14, Sarah McClure was the first female telegrapher in western Canada. Sarah's brother became an architect of note, having later built some of Vancouver's finest buildings, including the Royal Roads Military College near Victoria on Vancouver Island. A few photographs are attached.

Thanks to Larina Shaw for this DI Chapter news.



Winnipeg "WG" Chapter

On Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays during the months of May, June, July, August, and September, 2013 Dan Kollesavich conducted Morse telegraph demonstrations at the Winnipeg Railway Museum in Winnipeg, MB. You can view these at www.wpg railwaymuseum.com. The museum's "Railway Days" event was held on September 21-22.

Also, a demo was held at the Prairie Dog Central Railroad at the Inkster Junction station in Winnipeg, MB. See this event at www.pdc railway.com.

On June 12th Dan conducted a similar demonstration at the University of Winnipeg for Canadian Radio personnel at the seminar of all radio people from across Canada. And Dan conducted demos during three weekends in July and August at the Lake of the Woods Railroaders Museum in Kenora, ON.

During the weekend of July 25-28; Dan conducted telegraph demonstrations at the Austin Threshermen's Reunion in Austin, MB. See more of this at ag-museum.mb.ca/events/threshermens-reunion-and-stampede. This demo was done in the old CNR station at Baldur, MB. This station was built in 1890 by the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway.

On October 19-20, Dan conducted demos at the Manitoba Mega Train and Winnipeg Model Railway show at the Canlan Sports Center in Winnipeg, MB.

Thanks to Dan Kollesavich for this information. Dan adds, "This year should be about the same." Whew, thank you Dan; you are a busy man!

C.D. Combs Memorial "FN" Chapter

The "FN" Chapter held their 29th annual meeting from 11 am to 2 pm on April 26th, 2014 at the Junction Café in Missouri Valley, Iowa. Seventeen members plus eight spouses/guests attended this Morse Day meeting. This meeting was called to order by President McMillan at 11:30 am. Attending for their first times in many years were Bob Everett and Fred Matulka. Bob and Fred described their individual telegraph histories. Other members also introduced themselves. Gene Zimmerman, the "FN" Chapter founder also attended this meeting.

The meal blessing was given by Ron Peters using his telegraph key. (We know that God reads Morse code at any speed!) The meal cost only \$9 per person, a real bargain. After the meal, homemade cookies that were baked by Wanda McMillan, Judy Butler, and Carol

CHAPTER NEWS *continued*



Front Row L to R: Charles McMillan-Omaha, Dennis Bruns-Omaha, Jim Albin-Valparaiso NE, Fred Matulka-Omaha, Delmar Gifford-Boone IA, Gene Zimmerman-Co Bluffs IA, David London-Newman Grove

Back Row L to R: Richard Behrens-Omaha, Bob Everett-Omaha, Paul Butler-Millard NE, Robert Lager-Logan IA, Ron Peters-Lincoln NE, Lowell Diersen-Boone IA, Roger Sogard-Ames IA, Roger Hinz-Manning IA, Lavern Labenz-Omaha, Jim Smith-Omaha



Front Row L to R: Carol Behrens, Wanda McMillan, Mary Diersen

Back Row L to R: Judy Butler, Darlene Albin, Paul Gifford, Lorraine Peters, Jennifer London

Behrens, were consumed with appreciation by the members.

During the business meeting, the current "FN" Chapter officers were reelected. Serving the members for 2014 are President Charles McMillan, Vice President Donald Tucker, and Secretary-Treasurer Richard Behrens. Ron Peters from Lincoln entertained us with his accordion as photographs were being snapped.

Oh yeah, on the morning of the meeting, The Omaha World Harold published an article in their newspaper about Morse code and our chapter members. In response to that article, about 23 telephone calls were received. Some of the callers expressed interest



David London and daughter, Jennifer Gobel. Jennifer has taken photos at every meeting in recent years.

in joining the club. Other callers offered us telegraph equipment. And others just wanted to chat about the

history of Morse code and the telegraph.

The date for the next annual meeting was set for the same place and same time on April 25, 2015.

Thanks to Richard Behrens, Secretary-Treasurer of the FN Chapter for this interesting info and photographs.

Washington-Baltimore "WA" Chapter

During mid-May, three members of the WA Chapter drove the 350 or so miles from their homes to the Dayton Hamvention to participate at the MTC telegraph booth. These members were our MTC International Secretary-Treasurer Cindy Galyen, Cindy's Dad Hubert Jewell, who serves MTC as President of the WA Chapter, and your *Dots & Dashes* editor, Jim Wilson, who also serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the WA Chapter. A fun time was had by all.

Florida "FX" Chapter

A reproduction of an early pen register was the star attraction at the annual Old Florida Days Festival, held in Naples Fl, March 8 and 9, as young visitors, and some not so young, vied to obtain a piece of the paper tape containing their name spelled out in American Morse Code as a souvenir of their visit. The Festival features re-enactors representing various eras of Florida History from the 1500s to the present. The three Florida Chapter members on hand had the Chapter's Southern Telegraph Office set up and used it to demonstrate the use of the telegraph during the American Civil War.

Model train enthusiasts, as well as other visitors, had the chance to tour the restored Trilby depot with its large operating model train display in the former café space and also hear some American

Morse at the annual Hernando County model train show in Dade City on March 22nd. After a slow start, visitation increased throughout the day as families enjoyed the event held at the Pioneer Village Museum. Two Chapter members were on hand for this annual event to explain and demonstrate the art and skill of American Morse and tell about its role in the development of American railroads and its place in the history of the United States.

On March 29 and 30, Florida Chapter members had the old Pierson, FL depot, now located on the grounds of the Pioneer Arts Settlement, Barberville, FL, open for business during the two day annual Spring Frolic showcasing country style music. The rhythm of American Morse code provided a counterpoint to the music from other instruments and attracted many visitors into the depot throughout both days where many of them learned to send their names in Morse code.

Large crowds were in attendance on both April 5th and 6th when the annual Spring Fever in the Garden event which offers arts and crafts in addition to a wide selection of plants and flowers for sale was held in Winter Garden, FL. An extra added attraction this year was the Orange Blossom Cannon Ball, a 1907 wood burning steam engine with vintage railroad passenger cars, offering hourly rides to visitors. The siren call of the steam whistle acted as a magnet, drawing visitors away from the other venues to the Central Florida Railroad Museum located in the one hundred year old former Tavares and Gulf Railway depot where Chapter members displayed and demonstrated telegraph instruments and equipment similar to that which would have been in use when the depot was in active service. The Morse KOB program, and the Museum's large screen TV used as a computer monitor, allowed visitors to see a translation of the Morse code being sent. Visitors were given the opportunity to learn to send their names in American Morse code. One woman declined the opportunity but asked that her name be sent, so that she could hear it. When the name, Mary, was sent, she immediately responded that "it has a Salsa beat." Morse Code does have a rhythm!

Two Florida Chapter members were nearly overwhelmed with attention from visitors in the Tavares, Eustis & Gulf RR depot at the town's annual Planes, Trains, & BBQ event held April 12th this year. This was the first year the Chapter

was invited to have the mini telegraph office set up in the depot serving this very popular steam train operation. The depot is a modern replica of the former Tavares & Gulf Railway depot which served Tavares for many years. Interest in the telegraph was high at this popular, combined steam train, air show, vintage car show, and BBQ contest event. Along with continuous demonstrations and answering hundreds of questions, the members had the chance to demonstrate hooping up train orders to a moving steam engine as the train arrived and departed the depot on each of its five runs that day. The T.E.&G.'s standard gauge wood burning 1907 steam engine is claimed to be the only engine of that type currently in regular service in the United States. The Chapter has since donated and installed a permanent interactive telegraph display with a code generator in the depot's gift shop area, furthering the MTC's relationship with this popular tourist operation.

Florida Chapter members celebrated Morse Day on April 26th at the Central Florida Railroad Museum in Winter Garden, FL all day, with a break for lunch at a nearby restaurant. The museum's large screen TV was converted into a computer monitor for the day so that visitors could see the translation of the telegraph conversations taking place on Morse KOB wire 11. Florida chapter members enjoyed the opportunity to participate in this activity with their fellow Morse Telegraph Club members from all over the world.

The Winter Park, FL History Museum requested Florida Chapter to furnish the telegraph component to their year long exhibit remembering the railroads in that city, commemorating the operational beginning of Sun Rail commuter service in the Orlando area, which began May 1st. The Chapter provided a typical telegraph desk from the 1920s, plus a Morse Code generator which transmits the message "What Hath God Wrought," when a button is pushed.

Florida Chapter members had the mini-telegraph office set up in Tampa Union Station for National Train Day on May 10th, displaying and demonstrating telegraph instruments and equipment. It was reported that attendance at Tampa was the highest it has ever been for this event. There was a steady stream of visitors all day long, keeping chapter members busy. According to the father of one young boy, his son was fascinated by Morse code and was writing "secret" messages to his friends by printing the dots and dashes

instead of the letters. Needless to say, the young man received considerable attention from Chapter members offering information and tips. Who knows, he may be a future member of MTC.

Fourth and fifth grade students from Ft. Lauderdale's Bayview Elementary School were treated to a history lesson about Henry Flagler and his railroad. The Broward County Main Library provided an exhibit, The Great Days of Rail Travel on the Florida East Coast Railroad. Henry Flagler and his wife Mary Lily Kenan Flagler, were portrayed by Florida Chapter members John and Cathy Feeney. After the school children were given a tour of the exhibit and a presentation on Operation Lifesaver by the Florida Citrus Model Train

Society, an informative demonstration on the telegraph, Morse Code and how it was used on the railroads, was given by Chapter member Robert Feeney. All of this was repeated four times, as the students were arranged in four groups. The students and their teachers were well pleased with the demonstrations.

“30” SILENT KEYS

News of our brothers and sisters who have closed the key



Terre Haute “TH” Chapter

ROBERT MCQUOWN of Bismarck, Illinois died at home on February 20, 2014.

Thanks to Mrs. Jeanene McQuown, Bob's wife, for this brief notice.

Montreal/Ottawa “GO” Chapter

JAMES WEBB, age 87, of Saint John, New Brunswick died on October 5, 2013. James began his telegraph career as an operator in 1942, serving at various locations in New Brunswick for the Canadian Pacific Railway. During World War II, James joined the Canadian Army and was assigned to the Signal Corps. This is where he learned the International code. Following the Army, James continued to work as an operator, and then became a train dispatcher. He retired from the railway in 1985.

Thanks to Roly Lauriault, of the “GO” Chapter for this interesting information.

Dallas-Fort Worth “DF” chapter

ROBERT CHARLES JONES, age 66, a long time MTC member died on November 12, 2012 in Garland, Texas. Bob was born on April 23, 1946 in Paragould, Arkansas. For many years Bob served as the Secretary-Treasurer of the DF Chapter, which later became known as the Lone Star

Chapter.

Thanks to Eugene Wood, past President of the Lone Star Chapter, for this information.

Eugene apologizes for delay in sending this information from 2012. Eugene comments that, “Bob was always in our meeting place when Western Union people came to install the ‘circuit’ in the years Western Union connected all the chapters on Morse Day in April, and he made sure the work was done correctly. Bob was ham radio W5TU and CW was his favorite. He also learned American Morse. I met him at an MTC meeting in Dallas in the uptown W.U relay office in 1984 or thereabouts and we remained friends from that time, until he passed away. He and his wife Alice attended our 50th wedding anniversary in Madill in 1994, surprising us. He is missed by everyone he ever met.”

Members at Large “GC” Chapter

JOHN A. MASSIE, age 90, of Fairfax, Virginia passed away on May 30, 2014. He was born on February 4, 1924 in Victoria, VA. John was involved in Boy Scouts with both of his sons. He was involved with roller skating with his daughter. He was also an avid ham radio fan and was active in the MARS program. John spent nearly 48 years as an employee of IMB.

Thanks to Cindy Galven for this information.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND RAILWAY

By Pat Kelly

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 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 Basques 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 year 1939 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 the 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. By 1957 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.

DO YOU KNOW?

When was the term “television” first used and by whom?

One hundred and fourteen years ago, Nikola Tesla used the term “television.”

In America, Tesla was experimenting with the transmission of radio waves through the “ether.” Tesla was in competition with Guglielmo Marconi who was also running similar experiments with wireless telegraphy in Britain. Several people elsewhere were also competing with Tesla and Marconi.

The June 1900 issue of The Century Magazine explained that Tesla revealed his idea to moneyman J.P. Morgan that envisioned a world system of wireless that would transmit far more than Morse code.

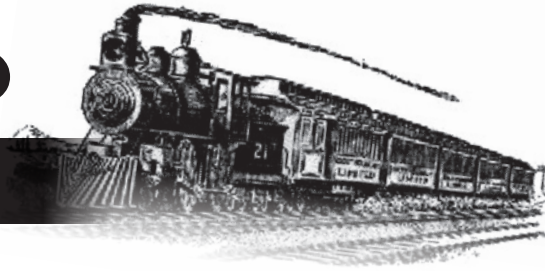
In this article, Tesla stated, “We shall be able to communicate with one another instantly irrespective of distance.” He then went on to predict that, “Not only this, but through television and telephone we shall see and hear one another perfectly as though we were face to face.”

Sources: Erik Larson, page 123 of his book Thunderstruck.

If you have a short quote or an interesting fact for my Do You Know column, please send it to me. ~Editor Jim

WELCOME ABOARD

News of Our New Morse Telegraph Club Members



C.D. Combs “FN” Chapter

RUSSELL A. WEAVER was born on September 16, 1938. Russ says he worked for the C&WI Railroad in Chicago, beginning as a Leverman, and then learning telegraphy to later become a telegraph operator. A friend was very helpful at teaching him Morse code.

At that time, Russ states they had about six different railroads coming into the station. The C&EI and Monon Railroad were the only ones still using telegraphy. The Santa Fe, Grand Trunk Western, Wabash Railroad going to Saint Lois was using telephones.

When his Morse operator friend quit, Russ applied for that job as a telegrapher; he was hired. Russ held that job for about five years before deciding to move on. He invites you to learn more about him at russweaver@cat.net.

Welcome to MTC, Russell.

BRIAN R. ZDAN of Omaha, Nebraska was born on December 14, 1953. Brian comments that back in the 1960's, the Boy Scouts required knowledge of Morse code with a speed of 5 words per minute to qualify for the rank of Second Class. “So I learned the code as a 12 year old Scout,” states Brian. Continuing, “My interest in radio developed at about the same time.” When he entered the tenth grade in 1969, Brian was delighted to find that his high school sponsored an amateur radio club. Determined, that autumn, Brian practiced code in the electronics class over his lunch hour. During Christmas vacation Brian was rewarded when his “ham ticket” arrived in the mail.

Today, Brian says he operates almost exclusively telegraphy using a straight key on the amateur radio shortwave bands. Brian also belongs to a community of hams with interest in low power “QRP” operation. This means that he makes contacts around the world using five watts or less and often using equipment that they hand built. Brian’s call sign is KM0Y. His career is attorney with a focus on family law. Brian invites you to contact him at bzdanc@cox.net.

Brian, you have come to the right place; welcome!

NINA B. HEAD of Omaha, Nebraska was born on November 9, 1954. Nina exclaims, “I am so excited to see there is a Morse Telegraph Club!” She states that her great, great, great, great great, great (6 greats) grandfather was Samuel Morse and that Morse was her mother’s maiden name. Her brother’s middle name is Morse.

Nina says that during the 1970’s she attended college at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. She notes that there were only three telephones on each floor of her sorority building and that when someone got a phone call, they were buzzed by Morse code. Three short dots (buzzes) meant it was a long distance call, likely from parents, so they learned to run to the phone.

Nina’s grandfather, Forest Morse, worked for the railroad in Lakeside and Alliance, Nebraska when she was very young. Her grandfather used American Morse.

“Thank you for letting me join” your club, states Nina. Nina invites you to contact her at rockymtnhi@cox.net. “I look forward to hearing all your stories,” she adds.

Holy cow, Nina, we thank you for joining MTC!

RONALD J. KOLLMANN of Newton, Iowa was born on December 9, 1938. Ron says it was during the 1950’s that he became a railroad fan. In 1951 his family moved to Parkersburg, Iowa. The CNW track ran under the highway near his family’s farm. The Illinois Central ran along the northern border of their family farm. The town of Parkersburg included two railroad depots, one for each railroad. At that time, about half of the incoming trains were steam and half diesel.

After graduation from high school in 1957, Ron enrolled in the Northwest Telegraph School in Minneapolis. The school taught them Morse code and railroad depot management. But unknown to most of the students, within two or three years, the railroads completely changed so there was no longer a need for Morse operators, depot agents, or even a depot.

Back to school Ron went, this time to learn the

work of an agent. The agent in the IC depot got Ron a pass to Chicago, where the superintendent of the IC was ready to hire him. But something stood in the way. "I did not have perfect color vision, so I was sent home." It was then suggested that he try to get a job with Western Union. "They were kind enough to hire me" exclaimed Ron. This turned out to be the best job he had ever had. "I loved the work and made many friends and the pay was fair," Ron adds. This job lasted more than fourteen years.

But by 1972, Western Union had collapsed, filed for bankruptcy and most employees were laid off. Maytag Company then hired Ron for the same hourly rate he had earned at WU, \$3.25 per hour. Ron worked for Maytag for 21 years and then retired at age 53. Ron invites you to contact him at ronko2000@yahoo.com.

Ron, you are persistent; welcome to MTC!

ROBERT L. EVERETT of Omaha, Nebraska was born on November 12, 1937. Bob states that he attended Northwestern Telegraph School in Minneapolis in 1956. Then in 1957, Bob went to work for the CM St P&P railroad out of Austin, Minnesota on the IM&D Division as a relief agent and operator. His home base was Mason City, Iowa, where he worked for seventeen years. Bob invites you to contact him at everettcle@cox.net.

Hey Bob, MTC welcomes you to come join the fun.

EDWARD RHUE was born on January 5, 1938. He learned the Morse code in 1956 while attending Radio Operators School at Keesler Air Force Base in Beloit, MS. Ed states that he became a radio operator in the United States Air Force. Ed invites you to chat with him at erhue@ad.com.

Welcome, Ed, to the Morse telegraph Club. You will enjoy the company.

RON D. VAN CLEVE, SR. of Bellevue, Nebraska was born on December 28, 1938. Ron learned Morse code in 1957 at the Southeastern Signal School at Fort Gordon, Georgia and served in the U.S. Army. He was stationed in Korea with the 40th Armor Division by the 38th Parallel during 1958-59. Later he retired after 36 years employed by the U.S. Post Office. Ron invites you to meet him at ronandbj1@cox.net.

Ron, we welcome you to the MTC. Enjoy your new friends.

DONALD L. ELLISON of Rising City, Nebraska was born on May 27, 1933. "I served as an intermediate code radio operator in the U.S Army from 29 June 1953 until 14 April 1955," states Don. He was stationed at Fort Leobbe in the Canal Zone in Panama. Don earned his ham license, Novice call sign WN0OLA, but never got on the air. He has been a scoutmaster for 40 years with the Boy Scouts of America and is happy to report that the BSZ is re-introducing the Signal Merit Badge this year. Don invites you to contact him at Ellison@windstream.net.

Welcome Don, and success to you in working with the Boy Scouts. Tell them about the telegraph!

ROBERT W. KIES of Omaha, Nebraska was born on February 27, 1928. He didn't explain his interest in telegraphy. Bob invites you to meet him at lakenew6@cox.net.

Welcome to MTC, Bob.

Members at Large "CG" Chapter

ROBERT A. GOODWIN of Newport News, Virginia was born on December 25, 1947 (a Christmas present to his parents). Bob didn't mention his past telegraph experiences. He invites you to meet him at bobgn1@cox.net.

Bob, we welcome you and pledge to assist you with future Morse projects.

DANIEL F. POPE of Flushing HI was born on January 22, 1943. His amateur radio call sign is N8ZP.

Dan invites you to contact him at dfrankpope@yahoo.com.

Welcome to MTC, Daniel!

HENRY LIPPOLD of Eau Claire, Wisconsin was just given a gift membership in the Morse Telegraph Club by his friends Dr. & Mrs. Thomas W. King. The Kings, Debbi and Tom, describe professor Lippold as a dear friend who will really enjoy reading *Dots & Dashes*.

I bid you a special welcome, Professor. You will enjoy hearing about other MTC members.

BOB HOWARD of Fort Lupton, Colorado was born on December 20, 1953. His amateur radio call sign is AD0FH. Bob explains, "I first learned International Morse when I got my Novice license in 1993. I didn't use it until 2012, when I got my

general class, then my amateur extra class ham licenses.” Bob continues, “I’m trying to get my speed up to 20 words per minute now and learn American Morse. I bought a couple of sounders from Cliff Hine in Canada and he got me very interested in telegraphy. I’m really having a lot of fun with all of it.” Bob’s amateur radio call sign is AD0FH. He invites you to contact him at bobh@skybeam.com.

Bob, we look forward to hearing more from you. MTC is the right place for you!

NORA E. MEIER of Deer Lodge, Montana was born on February 2, 1935. Nora didn’t provide the details of what interests her about the history of telegraphy, so we hope to hear more from her later.

Welcome to you, Nora. We need more girls in our group of friendly and knowledgeable people.

CAPTURED NAVY PILOT USED MORSE CODE

JEREMIAH DENTON, JR., age 89, lived his life from July 15, 1924 through March 28, 2014. As a U.S. Navy pilot, Captain Denton was shot down during a bombing mission over North Vietnam on July 18, 1965. He was a POW in Vietcong prisons, surviving nearly eight years in enemy prisons, four of those years in solitary confinement. In 1966 the enemy North Vietnamese put Denton on television as a propaganda event. This event backfired when Denton used Morse code to blink the word

“torture.” Later Denton went on to become a U.S. Senator. Denton reflected on his life, that he lived it one minute at a time, one hour, one week, and one year at a time and that if you look at life that way, “Anybody can do anything.”

The source of this Dots & Dashes summary article comes from a lengthy story published in the Washington Post newspaper on March 29, 2014. You can Google this article for more details and photographs. ~Editor Jim

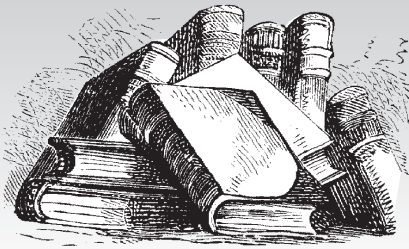
MORSE THE “CRANK”

By F.M McClintic

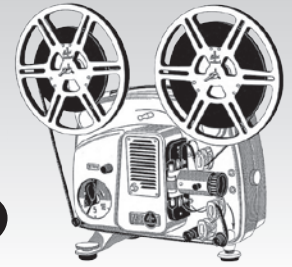
PROFESSOR S. F. B. MORSE is said to have been the first man to whom the appellation “crank” was applied. The professor was in Washington before Congress with his paraphernalia, asking an appropriation of seventeen thousand dollars with which to build an experimental line from the capital city to Baltimore. He ran wires in and about the capitol and established a “generator” which was operated by a crank. Senators and Congressmen became so absorbed in the invention that they neglected their other duties to such an extent as to arouse the ire

of Senator Benton. After a vain attempt to obtain a quorum, the latter arose in the Senate and said:

“Mr. President, it is quite evident to my mind that we cannot proceed with business until this crank man and his bill are disposed of, and, with the object of making him fold up his crank and get away so we may have the attention of Senators, I move that the bill to construct a line between this city and Baltimore be passed.” The bill was passed, but from that day the inventor was called “Morse, the crank.”

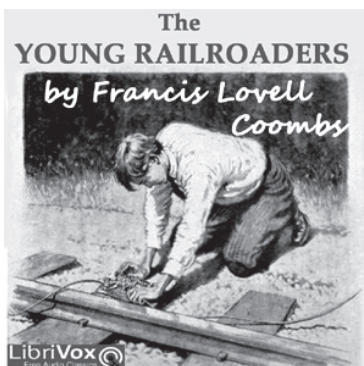


J. Chris Hausler's BOOK & MOVIE REVIEWS



I want to again remind folks that I don't "own" this review column and submissions to our editor by other members are welcomed. I am presently reading and thoroughly enjoying Thunderstruck by Eric Larson as reviewed by MTC member John Green in the Spring issue. Thank you John! I also want to remind you once again that I am running out of ideas for further material to review and if you have any thoughts about material you would like to see reviewed, but don't want to write the review yourself, please send those ideas to me. I'm sure there's more stuff out there which can productively be reviewed in these pages but I'm having problems locating it. My email is jchausler@earthlink.net and you can find my address on QRZ.com, my call is WB2TLL.

With that thought, the ideas for the two items I am reviewing for this issue were received from others. The first is a book titled, The Young Railroaders by Francis Lovell Coombs published in 1910. This idea came from a visitor to our MTC booth at the Dayton Hamvention this spring, thank you Vic!



This book is a collection of fictional stories, one might better say "adventures", experienced by one or another, or both, of a pair of teenaged boys who have learned telegraphy and become friends. They both

quickly become employed as operators even though they are quite young, one only 14. Such employment, however, was not uncommon in the days before child labor laws. In many ways it is much like other such collections of fictional stories which were once written as "boys books" such as the Tom Swift series. Our fictional heroes, Alex Ward and Jack Orr, find themselves in a number of situations in which ingenuity, quick thinking and their knowledge of telegraphy, not to mention some hard work, allow them to save the day, as well as sometimes

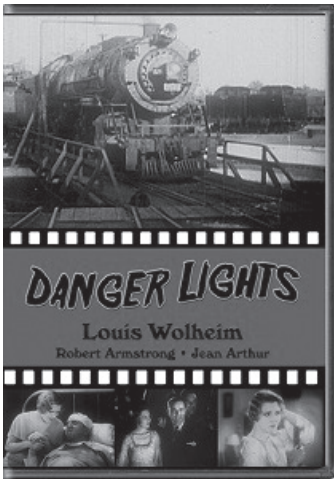
themselves. In doing so they also become productive contributing members of their communities. Toward the end of the book a third young telegrapher, Wilson Jennings, joins the story. At first the subject of derisive humor due to his "dude" appearance, he soon proves his mettle in some independent adventures and then joins the other two in the climactic final chapter.

Each of the twenty-two chapters in the book is a short story in and of itself and can be read as such. However, each chapter builds on the characters accumulating experiences, and also sometimes refers to events, in the preceding chapters. These stories and others of this type written back in the days, even those available to me when I was a child, also seem to encourage certain activities which in today's world would be considered risky or just plain dangerous for a young person to undertake. However, while acknowledging the risk, the stories also view the world as a place offering great opportunity for those willing to grasp at and engage it in an intelligent and thoughtful manner. In this way they inspire young readers to seek knowledge, work hard and become useful citizens. The stories suggest that young folk should by applied intelligence strive to become their own heroes rather than just hero worshipers. On the other hand, it seems too many stories written for young persons today tend to warn them that the outside world is a dangerous place to be observed at a distance and with caution, or, of course, address the budding sexuality of the teenaged brain. Somehow, to me at least, this doesn't seem to be an improvement.

The author obviously had some knowledge of telegraphic practice and technology although possibly not so much of electricity. At least in one situation, he has a single hand built gravity cell bringing a dormant telegraph line to life, not likely to happen by adding just a single volt to the circuit. But in general the stories, at least from a telegraphic point of view, describe reasonably realistic possibilities and behaviors even if the situations described can be somewhat fanciful. And like in many such writings, our young heroes have many more such adventures

in a short span of time than real life would tend to provide.

This book is available for free download in a number of formats from this link: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/25868> . I like the Kindle version with images. There is also an audio book download in case you would rather listen to someone else reading the stories from: <https://librivox.org/the-young-railroaders-by-francis-lovell-coombs/>. Unlike many audio books, this reading is not abridged either, you hear the stories essentially the same as you would if you read them. Finally it can be ordered from Amazon if you just want to buy a hard copy although the hardcover copy is expensive and from what I can tell neither the hardcover or paperback versions include the nice images from the original. Of course you can always just download the images from the first link above. Anyway you “read” it, I think you will enjoy.



The movie I'm reviewing this time, *Danger Lights* was released in 1930 by RKO. Our former GST, Keith LeBaron made me aware of it. Thank you Keith! It stars Louis Wolheim as crusty railroad superintendent Dan Thorn, Robert Armstrong as Larry Doyle, a hobo and former railroad engineer who had lost his

job due to insubordination and is now on the lam, and Jean Arthur as Mary Ryan who becomes the shared love interest of both of them.

If you like movies of steam engines this is a film for you with a lot of live action filmed mostly in Montana on the “Milwaukee Road” (Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad). This was in the Milwaukee’s electrified territory but although you see the overhead wire in some scenes, none of their electric locos make an appearance. It’s all steam (yea!).

The film starts out with the occurrence of a rock slide blocking a fast freight train on the main track. Wolheim’s character, superintendent Thorn, is a real hands on guy and arrives at the rock slide site to manage the clearing of the track (read hurry it along). Being short of men, he enlists (rather forcefully) some hobos who were riding on the freight train as manual laborers to help clear the slide. One of them is Armstrong’s character Doyle who takes

rather unkindly to Thorn’s prodding and the two get into a rather one sided fist fight in which Doyle is knocked to the ground. Wolheim’s character, however, sees something in Armstrong’s hobo character and almost stuffs a job down the man’s throat, only to lose the girl to him as an eventual result. Think about that the next time you want to do someone a favor...

Most of the telegraph action shown in the film is right at the beginning. We see the occurrence of the slide being telegraphed into headquarters from a nearby station or tower. The scene then moves to the dispatchers office, several telegraph desks with instruments are seen, where the message is being received. This causes the chief dispatcher character, played by William P. Burt, shown as an old guy in sleeve guards and complete with visor, to figuratively start pulling his hair out complaining that all his schedules are ruined and wanting to “red board” the entire line including stopping the limited, the “Olympian”. This chief dispatcher character is definitely not displaying the “equanimity” said to be possessed by fictional telegraph operator Eddie Sand and deemed desirable for a man in such a position. At this point, Wolheim’s character, “Dan Thorn” steps into the office and in a great little scene straightens out the chief dispatcher and the others in the office big time, “Hold up the Olympian, are you off your nut, tell her to come through... I’ll clear the track. Don’t stand there looking at me, lift those red boards and keep traffic moving.” He then starts issuing orders, grabs the dispatcher’s “chew” out of his hand, bites off a piece, then stalks out of the room with the comment, “You office guys, put the Olympian in the hole.” This scene alone is worth the price of admission, good “olde tyme” railroading!

Due to the failure of the copyright holders to renew the copyright registration in 1958, the film is now in the public domain and is available for free online viewing and/or downloading from a number of sources including the Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/details/DangerLights74Minutes>) and YouTube. There seems to be a couple different versions (different run times) and I have not yet investigated the differences. You can also buy a DVD of it from Amazon for under \$6. As for me, I downloaded it and burned it to a DVD to watch on my home entertainment system. Nothing like the (sort of) big screen! Whether you watch in online, download it to your computer, burn your own DVD or buy one from Amazon, I think you will enjoy it.

If you want to learn more about either this book or this video, there is much additional information on both on the web. Just Google the title of either.

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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 Farris. 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 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 PeterHamelFineArtAmerican.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.

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: Western Electric Company main line sounder 15-B, 120 ohms, marked AT&T Co. Eugene Wood, 104 Sunset, Madill, Oklahoma 73446. Call 580 795-3724 after 5 o'clock

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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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 four current web sites that I find useful:

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

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