Regular Meeting
February 17th 19:30

Gander Mountain
Meeting Room
300 Jay Scutti Boulevard
Henrietta, NY 14623

DXing History
by
Ed Gable, K2MP

Who was the first U.S. DX'er to work Europe? What band did he use? How much power and what type of antenna? Whom did he work? These, and other questions will be answered at the February meeting by our own Ed Gable, K2MP. Ed, using video and audio tapes, as well as actual hardware from the AWA Museum, will enlighten and entertain. Be there.

President's Soapbox   Fred Groner, W2TZ

During the last BOD meeting there was an interesting discussion about DX activity in RDXA. Some comments related the impression that 30-40 years ago RDXA as a club did a lot more Dxing than contesting. In recent years contesting seems to dominate RDXA club activities rather than Dxing. Other similarly interesting comments were that Dxing is contesting, especially when rare and needed countries get on the air and for a short period of time. We all have experienced the contesting aspect of Dxing.

My history as a Dxer has had its ups and downs as far as DX interest is concerned. 25 years ago I was working on 5BDXCC. At that time Dxing dominated my operating time, and when I did operate DX contests it was mainly for the sole purpose of trying to work new ones or work stations in order to get a second shot at getting needed QSL cards.

When I received my 5BDXCC I lost some interest in DX and became more involved in contesting for score rather than collecting new countries. I often didn't even send QSLs to new countries that I worked in contests.

Why did my interest in Dxing decline and shift to contesting after receiving 5BDXCC? I think there are two major reasons. First, it is my opinion that 5BDXCC is a more difficult award to obtain than Honor Roll, for example, because working 100 countries on 40 meters and especially 80 meters is difficult especially without a low-band antenna farm. Dxing on 40 and 80 is real Dxing.

My second reason is the proliferation of e-assisted Dxing. In principal you can earn Honor Roll without even tuning the main tuning knob of your rig. You can let the other guys do all of the work, take their spots, key pad in the frequency, and call. This is very much like going fishing and having someone else put a fish on your hook – all you have to do is reel him in! Not a perfect process, but it is assisted. At least contests have kept up to date with technology and recognize the difference between Single-Op assisted and Single-OP unassisted operation. Perhaps the DXCC and Honor Roll DX communities should update its standards.

Interesting the way Dxing has changed, and how my interest in DX has declined in response. This makes for an interesting discussion.

CU at the RDXA meeting.

RDXA Finances   Charles Kuhfuss WB2HJV

The RDXA financial report as of February 2, 2004 is as follows:

 Current checking balance $1365.79

January activity:
Annual insurance premium paid   ($326.00),
Dues $30.00,
Donation from KE2VN $25.00
Petty cash $100.00

Total available funds $1465.79
Less memorial fund   ($726.89)
Total operating funds $738.90

The RDXA currently has 53 paid members for 2003-04, including one student member..

The RDXA Logbook   by RDXA Members

The articles in this series are composed of input solicited from general members on a particular theme. They are written by you! We will have a different theme each month. Just email your input to the editor at n2rd@arrl.net and it will be in the logbook.

 This month's theme is:

> ### Charlie Whiskey -.-.   .- - CW

Dave, N2CK:

I started in the RARA Tech Plus licensing class. I learned the characters and practiced at home using SuperMorse on the pc. As I played sample conversations to prepare for the test, I covered the monitor w/ a towel so I couldn't see what was being sent. I copied the code onto paper just like in a real test session.

   Was it easy? Difficult? Passing the 5 wpm Tech was easy, the 13 wpm seemed the toughest. Surprisingly the 20 wpm, though daunting actually wasn't that bad.

   Any tips? As someone who doesn't operate CW except in contests, I use some shareware to help out. I downloaded and use CWGet to help decode the audio stream (before any of you CW purists start beating me - yes I know it's an artifical aid - but isn't using the computer to send your exchange just as much a use of technology?). It uses the sound card and displays the result in a nice spectrum display. I use it to confirm what I think I hear. I know I'll never ever place high in a CW `test. But I can get on and hand out a few contacts here and there (and generate points for the club), not to mention building up my country count for the "other" major mode. Also, get to know "cut" numbers. The first time I worked a contest where the power was exchanged, I was left scratching my head. Once I learned the "shorthand" it all made sense.

   Do you like to operate CW? Just in contests.

   Which paddle/bug/key is your favorite? I have a bencher. I don't operate enough by hand to really develop a preference.

Any operating tips? Zero beat on the station you work, and make sure you here a TU back. Don't be afraid to send QRS or AGN?.

 Do you use a keyboard? Opinions on using keyboard. I have occasionally bopped into keyboard mode while logging to send along additional greetings/comments.

Charlie, WB2HJV

CW, Charlie Whiskey, continuous wave...fabulous mode...still!

How did I learn it? Actually I learned the Morse Code as part of the Boy Scout's First Class requirements in the summer of '62. I transformed the flag method to CW with the help of Bernie K2GDI (now W1DNM) at code classes sponsored by the Northern Chautauqua Amateur Radio Club (W2SB) in Dunkirk NY. My good friend Rob who became WB2HJU attended with me. The only sad part was related to our Scoutmaster who drove us and his son every week for code classes covering a two year period. Amazing that Mr. Sage and his son each failed the Novice code requirements three times over that two year time frame while Rob and I moved on to General in May of 1964. Mr. Sage and his son never did make it into Amateur Radio.

Was it easy? Yes, a lot more so than Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice".

Tips? Yes, get on the air and operate CW. Code practice from W1AW is not enough, in my opinion.

Do I like to operate CW? Yes, very much so. Rag Chewing, DX and Contesting. About 75% of my Q's are on CW.

Which paddle, bug, straight key is my favorite? My Vibrokeyer. Although I still use my "Blue Racer" and "J-37" from time to time.

Operating tips? Copy in your head as much as possible. Frequently jump into a Rag Chew session and go at it.

Do I use a keyboard? No and therefore have no comments.

Epilogue...It's sad to see CW take a back seat these days. I will work CW till the bitter end!

SK

Paul, K2DB

How did I learn it ? That is a very interesting question, and seeing that it was about 42 years ago, I really cannot answer the question with any certain method. I was a freshman in high school, and joined the Techams Radio Club at the school. The next thing I knew, I had a novice license WN2ITU and was operating the club station WA2WVF at almost any opportunity. I guess it was one of those things that you do under peer pressure. All the guys were CW nuts, and I guess we just drove each other to be the best.

Was it easy ? Difficult ? Yeh, it was easy. It was fun, competitive and a challenge, but for me, it was a breeze. It was not at all difficult. By the time my General License WB2ITU arrived, I already had the ARRL Code Speed Proficiency Award at 35 WPM.

Any Tips? Just get on the air and start making contacts, ragchew, DX, anything, your speed and comprehension will eventually build up. Do not be afraid of the code.

Do you like to operate CW? Is there any other mode ??

Which paddle/bug/key is your favorite? I have a set of old Kent Twin Paddles that are great, I replaced my old Bencher (lousy paddle) many years ago with the Kent. In fact, recently I broke the plastic dit paddle and sent a letter to Kent Engineering in England, and believe it or not, I just opened the package from Kent, and he sent me a pair of new

plastic paddles and the screws to mount them, free of charge.

I just finished making a paddle kit from AZScorpions, and it is a nice little paddle. I use it on my QRP rigs and the jury is still out, but they are nice, not as nice as the Kent, but real nice @ $25.00 for the kit.

Any operating tips ? Get on the air, and go by the seat of your pants !Do you use a keyboard ? Options on using keyboard. Yes, for contesting only, have used all of the major contesting software, and they all do well. I still like to have a keyer and paddles also during contests, because it is a pain in the butt to keyboard for incidental hello's, etc.

Picture of AZScorpions Serial # 451

Ed, K2MP

When I was learning the code I was really isolated and alone. Too young to drive to RaRa classes and wasn't aware of them in any event. No friends were interested so I was on my own. Not knowing any better I taught myself the code by repeated sending with a home made tube type oscillator, all the time getting shocked off my sixty-nine cent J-38 surplus key.

The code came easily for me that way and the Novice ticket forced CW use which brought on 13 WPM with no problem. I used a Vibroplex bug for awhile and got pretty good at it until keyer use became so much easier and precise.

I greatly prefer CW for DX'ing and what little contesting I do. My conversational CW is not nearly as good as just copying call signs and exchanges, but I think that's

typical. I use a simple black Bencher paddle which is just fine for me. I only use a keyboard in conjunction

with contesting software. Regrettably I have arthritis setting in my wrist and find myself making more sending errors than I like. As such I may have to switch to a keyboard in the future. Then I'll get carpal tunnel syndrome - hihi.

By the way, my absolute favorite hand key is a Swedish Military key using a long lever and a typical European narrow knob. Incredibly smooth and easy to manipulate.

Wayne N2WK

Back in the mid 70's when I started out a group of us took the RARA Novice class and passed the test the first time out. I was really proud of that and also my new ham call WA2JJD. Getting to 13 WPM was a lot harder but I made it a month after I got on the air. The 20 WPM level was very difficult for me but 9 months after I received my Novice ticket I was an Extra class ticket holder. I was rewarded for my effort with my new 1x2 call sign of N2WK in September of 1977.

I like CW but mainly use it CW contests and working DX. I have not had a nice long cw ragchew in years. I work a lot of DX on CW but just the normal info exchange. I use the Bencher paddles for making these QSO's and a keyboard + contest software for working contests.

Gene, W2LU

I am not a cw operator since I have a tin ear and have to send with my left foot as any on who has heard me try can testify. I forced myself, with the help of W1AW, to learn enough to get through the 20 wpm for an Extra Class License but it was a major effort. It is for this reason I have some problem with dropping the CW requirement for licensing.

I have nothing against CW and wish I was proficient at it but just do not seem to "catch on". I have a Bencher paddle and an IC-756 so the goods, but not the talent, are there. I do have a little homemade 5 watt 40 meter CW tcvr that I sometimes take on vacation and enjoy very much.

Most interesting CW operation - Once I forgot to take my old straight key on vacation and made several QSO's just tapping two wires together ! (did someone wonder what I had done to improve my fist ??!!)

Raj, N2RD

My wife signed me up for ham radio classes in the spring of 1991. The local ham radio club in Northbrook Illinois was offering classes through the park district. Right from start I fell in love with CW. I immediately bought the MFJ iambic keyer/paddle kit and started practicing sending and receiving. I popped the CW tapes in my car and listened to that while driving. By the end of the first week I could pretty much receive at 5WPM. A few weeks later I took the license tests. I took 6 tests that night – all the way to the Advanced ticket and got my first call KF9EC. My first contact was with a ham in Colorado on CW and it has remained by favorite mode ever since. For the first ten years or so I had just a handful of phone contacts on HF.

The Kent Iambic paddle is my favorite device. The ball bearings, solid construction, heavy base, and ultra-fine threads on adjustment screws make this my favorite. This is what I use for DXing and casual operation. I tend to use the keyboard for contesting.

I really like the Super CMOS (also sold as Logic Keyer) by Idiom Press. It is very customizable, barely uses any battery power and is programmed using the paddle itself. It has 4 to 6 memories that can have macros for chaining and other functions. I much prefer this keyer to keyers built into rigs.

The best part about CW is that it is family friendly. Hardly anything is audible to others when I operate with headphones. This allows me even to operate in bed. I have a TS 850 hooked up to a dipole on my bed side. I mostly just listen but sometimes I even make few Q's from bed without disturbing my wife next to me. Try doing that with phone!

Cliff, K2SKO

I'll skip by how I wasted my novice license and therefore got no CW experience and I'll even skip my traumatic experience at the Federal building in down town New York City passing my General test.

What I'll briefly describe is my technique for acquiring the 20 per I needed for the extra class.   It was while I was still working at DuPont and we had a Weight Watchers class (I looked then like I do today....chubby to put it nicely).

I combined two activities...riding an exercise bike and practicing code copying. I had discovered that I could copy some bursts of code in my head so didn't have to do any writing down.   I just turned on my rig to W1AW code practice, hopped on the bike and

cranked away. I managed to turn my self into a lean and mean biker and gathered enough code experience that I was able to pass the extra in the first try.

I'm still a little uncomfortable with CW but a ham friend up in Connecticut has organized a small CW net that meets every Monday night and I'm gradually becoming more at ease. We have people who send with varying degrees of skill so it is very practical experience.   Who knows, one of these days I might get brave enough to try a CW contest...QRS type!!

PS I use a Bencher key but have been thinking about trying a keyboard program but right at the moment I have a little problem with my TenTec that I need to solve first.

I take an old Navy straight key with me in the truck when we are traveling.

The *RDXA Logbook* Theme for March

Operating Phone

What is your favorite Mic? How do you adjust the sound of your station? What do you do for Dxing and Contesting? Do you use a digital voice player? How do you set it up?

Just email your input to n2rd@arrl.net by 3/2

DXCC Approvals

Chris, K2CS

These operations have been approved for DXCC credit:

Callsign	DXCC Entity	Date(s)
V63MB	Micronesia	May 13 - 20, 2003
T88VV	Palau	May 21 - 26, 2003
KH0/AC4LN	Mariana Is	May 27 - 31, 2003
V63MB	Micronesia	June 2 - 10, 2003
V73VV	Marshall Is.	June 12-20 2003
5W0VB	Samoa	June 26 - 30, 2003
ZK2VB	Niue	July 1 - 4, 2003
A35VB	Tonga	July 10 - 18, 2003
ZL/UA4WHX	New Zealand	July 19 - 31, 2003
P29VVB	Papua New Guinea	Aug. 4 - 17, 2003
H44VV	Solomon Is.	August 18 - 23, 2003
H40VB	Temotu Prov.	August 24 - 30, 2003
YJ0VB	Vanuatu	Sept 5 - 18, 2003
FK/AC4LN	New Caledonia	Sept 21–Oct. 3, 2003
3D2VB	Fiji Islands	Oct. 4 - 6, 2003
3D2VB/R	Rotuma	October 8 - 14, 2003
3D2VB	Fiji	Oct. 16 - 20, 2003
T30VB	Western Kiribati	Oct. 21 - 28, 2003
T20VB	Tuvalu	Oct. 29–Nov. 5 2003
3D2VB	Fiji	Nov.r 6 - 7, 2003
ZK1/AC4LN	North Cook Is	Nov. 9 - 15, 2003
ZK1/AC4LN	South Cook Is	Nov.r 18 - 26, 2003
FO/AC4LN	Marquesas Is	Dec 2 - 7, 2003
FO/AC4LN	Austral Is	Dec. 11-13, 2003
FO/AC4LN	French Polynesia	Dec. 16 - 25, 2003
V31VB	Belize	May 25 - 30, 2002
YS1/AC4LN	Belize	June 5 - 9, 2002
HP8/AC4LN	Panama	June 26 - Jul 1, 2002
J6/AC4LN	St Lucia	July 17 - 20, 2002
HH2/AC4LN	Haiti	July 23 - 27, 2002
9Y4/AC4LN	Trinidad & Tobago	Aug 2 - 7, 2002
8R1/AC4LN	Guyana	August 9 - 14, 2002
J73/AC4LN	Dominica	August 20 - 23, 2002
J3/AC4LN	Grenada	August 27 - 30, 2002
FW/AC4LN	Wallis & Futuna Is	
TO4E	Juan de Nova, Europa	Nov 25-Dec 21 2003
TO4WW	Juan de Nova, Europa	Nov 25-Dec 21 2003
YI/N2OBM	Iraq	Starting Jan 2004
YI9ABL	Iraq	Starting Dec. 2003
YI3Q	Iraq	Starting Jan. 2004
YI9YMA	Iraq	Starting Jan 2004
YI9ZF	Iraq	Starting Jan 2004
BQ9P	Pratas Island	Sept. 9 - 16, 2003
TX0AT	Chesterfield Is.	October, 2002
4W2DN	Timor - Leste	
YA1D	Afghanistan	
YA0J	Afghanistan	
YA1RS	Afghanistan	
YI/KV4EB	Iraq	

After receipt of the necessary documentation yesterday (courtesy of Bill, W9VA), ZW0S, the St. Peter and St. Paul Rocks operations of April 2001, February 2002, April and September 2003 and a planned visit from November 26 to December 19 2003 by PS7KM are approved for DXCC credit.

Best DX es 73,

Chris, K2CS

Rochester DX Association
W2RDX   **www.rdxa.com**

This bulletin is the official organ of the Rochester DX Association. It is published monthly, September through June. Email your articles to the newsletter editor n2rd@arrl.net by the first Tuesday of each month for inclusion in that month's newsletter.

All those interested in Amateur Radio, especially in DXing and contesting, are invited to attend to attend meetings and to join our club. The club meets at 7:30pm local time on the third Tuesday of each month from September to June. The club web site has the latest information on meeting location. It is currently schMany members meet at a local bar Scotch and Sirloin for camaraderie after the regular meeting. Come and join us!

Officers:
President   **Fred Groner, W2TZ**
(585) 342 9201 / w2tz@aol.com

Vice-President   **Paul Mackanos, Jr., K2DB**
(585) 223 4230 / paul@prohomeinspector.net

Secretary/Treasurer   **Charles Kuhfuss, WB2HJV**
(585) 225 4754 / wb2hjv@frontiernet.net

Send submissions to the newsletter editor:
Rajiv Dewan, N2RD   n2rd@arrl.net

Send dues ($15/yr) and correspondence to the secretary Charles Kuhfuss WB2HJV, 55 Stoney Path Lane, Rochester, NY 14626.

Charles Kuhfuss, WB2HJV
RDXA Secretary / Treasurer
55 Stoney Path Lane
Rochester, NY 14626

To: