

MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS



NPARC - The Radio Club for the Watchung Mountain Area

VOLUME 38

April 2003

NO. 4

N2XJ
Club Callsign

Meeting scheduled for Monday April 14, at the Salt Brook School N2OT will present "The Quad Antenna"

From: The Prez

Well, the 2003 Club Auction is history and I would have to say that it was a success. This year we had a new location, the Salt Brook School cafeteria, and it proved to be an excellent location. We had a great turnout despite the inclement weather and almost all the items were sold.



And it was good to see some old friends there. A special thanks to Andy, WA2DKJ, who with Joe, K2JAO's, help, did a terrific job as our auctioneer. And now that the auction is over, is Field Day far behind?

In other matters, Ryan, KC2EAI, recently passed the General exam. Congratulations to him. Now he can work some real DX on the HF bands!

The club is now an official sponsor of a New Providence Recreation 6th-8th grade girls softball team. I will keep the club informed on the team's performance as the season progresses!

Bob, KB2IKC, and Ralph, KC2RLM, have continued to successfully link the Whippany repeater with EchoLink on our Sunday Night Club nets. Several "DX members" continue to check into the net.

The April issue of CQ magazine has a great article on using EchoLink with repeaters which is worth reading. We have been doing what the article discusses so we are right on the cutting edge! There's also an article on the history of ham radio in space and the space shuttle program, worth reading in the same issue.

Club Meeting on Monday

We are fortunate, for this meeting, to have Gary Kath N2OT deliver a talk on Cubical Quad antennas. Gary S. Kath, N2OT, was first licensed in 1968 as WN2EPP. He holds a BSEE degree from Widener University and a MSEE degree from Carnegie Mellon University. Gary has 25 years of experience at Merck & Co., Inc. as an instrumentation and automation engineering manager.

He enjoys DXing, QRP, circuit design, software development, contesting and experimenting with HF wire antennas. Gary is a member of ARRL.

"Hobby Day"

The Mountain Park Elementary School in Berkeley Heights will hold their first Hobby Day on Friday April 11th from 0900 to 1200 local time. NPARC members will be operating a temporary HF station, and displaying QSL cards for the kids. Control OPs will be Harry AB2CM and Joe KC2EYG. On-the-air activity will be handled by Emily KC2KMK. This is a great opportunity to show off Ham Radio to the students, teachers, and parents at the school. For NPARC this will be our first opportunity to experiment with the type of QSOs which will be necessary for the ARISS program.

Listen on 20 meter SSB for the Club station N2XJ.

From the Prez, continued

We have some great meetings scheduled for April and May, and the seismometer project is wrapping up, so come out and join us for a good time.

73 de K2AL

Meeting Schedule

Regular Meeting: 7:30 - 10:00 PM
2nd Monday of each month at the
Salt Brook School Cafeteria
Springfield Ave. and Maple St.
New Providence.

4th Monday each month: 7:30 - 9:00
Informal Project Meeting, at the
New Providence Memorial Library
Elkwood Ave. and Academy St.
One Block North of Springfield Ave.

Everyone is Welcome

If a normal meeting night is a holiday
we usually meet the following night.
Call the contacts below.

Club Officers for 2003

President: K2AL Al Hanzl
908-464-1323

Vice Pres: KC2EAI Ryan Kelly
973-543-2454

Secretary: K2GLS Bob Willis
973-543-2454

Activities Mgr: KB2IRS Cameron Hall
908-756-3712

Past President: AB2CM Harry Schwill
908-322-8867

Treasurer: K2JV Barry Cohen
908-464-1730

On the Air Activities

Club Operating Frequency

145.750 MHz FM Simplex

Sunday Night Phone Net

Whippany Repeater at 9:00 PM
Transmit on 147.63 MHz
Receive on 147.03 MHz
Net Control: KB2IKC

RTTY Net

Sunday evenings 8:00 to 9:00 PM
60 WPM Baudot 145.75 MHz
Net Control: K2AGI

Club Internet Addresses

Website: <http://www.qsl.net/nparc>
Reflector: nparc@mailman.qth.net
Webmaster: KC2RLM, Ralph

MOUNTAIN SPARK GAPS

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Climatological Data for the Watchung Mountain Area Provided by WB2QOQ, Month of March



	2003	2002
Maximum Temp.. °F:	73	65
Minimum Temp. °F:	10	15
Average Temp. °F:	41.6	38.1
Total Precip Rain/Snow (in.):	4.95/2.4	0.57/0

The above information was provided by WB2QOQ, who has been recording daily weather events at his station for the past 22 years.

Calendar of Coming Events

April 14th: **REGULAR MEETING** at Salt Brook School
N2OT will present a talk on Cubical Quad Antennas

April 28th: **PROJECT MEETING** at the Library
RED CROSS Net. Monitor the Net at the Library

May 12th: **REGULAR MEETING** at Salt Brook School
Jerry Sevick W2FMI, will talk about his new book!!

May 16 - 18: **DAYTON HAMVENTION.** It's not too late to think about
attending this year! Rooms and rides are still available.

May 27th: **TUESDAY TUESDAY TUESDAY**
PROJECT MEETING at the Library, Monday is a holiday.

June 9th: **REGULAR MEETING** at Salt Brook School
Field Day Planning Meeting

June 28/29: **FIELD DAY**

Local Hamfests Coming

Roseland ARC on Saturday April 26.

Held at the West Orange Senior High School. For details see their web
site at www.qsl.net/k2gq

The Continuing Saga of “Ivan in Africa”

Last month, I showed you two QSL cards received by Joe Painter W2BHM way back in 1947 and 1951. I hope many of you remember that both cards came from an Ivan Pastre who was the operator at both african locations, and whose home call was F3AT. At the time I wondered what may have happened to Ivan, and after not finding him in any of my logs I looked up his call on QRZ.com. Was I ever amazed to see that he was listed there and with a photograph and an e-mail address. After a couple of e-mail messages the following photograph arrived:



Joe Painter W2BHM SK



And with the photograph another astounding revelation. One of the QSL cards Joe received was the FQ3AT card from French Equatorial Africa. It turns out that this call was the only call ever issued with an FQ3 prefix. It was a legal call, issued by the French Authority, but no one else has ever had an FQ3 callsign.

Then, even better. On Monday March 31st I had a QSO with Ivan, on CW, at the bottom end of 20 meters. He currently has an FT-1000 and a 2 element Quad, and he moves right along at 20 wpm on CW, almost as smoothly as Joe Painter used to go.

And there is even more to the story. On April 7th Ivan will turn 89 years old. Since he was originally licensed in 1930, he has been a ham for 73 years. I have asked you all to send him a birthday greeting by e-mail, and I hope you all did it.

Next month I’ve got more fantastic old QSL cards.

W2BHM de K2JV MNI TNX, GUD DX ES 73 SK

Salt Brook - NPARC - ARISS Project Report

The Curriculum for the ARISS application is now under final review by the Salt Brook School teachers. I expect to pick it up and submit it to ARRL this week. The astronauts had two ARISS QSOs last week, one with a school in Japan and one with a school in Slovenia, So the program is definitely accelerating.

Once we get the application in to ARRL, we’ll want to start terrestrial operations for the Salt Brook Kids, and we’re going to need lots of help from Club Members. By “terrestrial operations” we mean having practise communication sessions from the school to a club member who simulates the ISS operator. We will also want to start a program of visual observations of ISS passes. Thanks to K2GLS the school is being regularly informed of the dates and times of Visible Passes.

Most of the educational activities will start in September, probably with a Poster Contest, and most important: a contest to design the official Salt Brook Earth Station tee-shirt. At that time we should be ready with the necessary equipment and a plan to engage as many kids as possible in various parts of the program.

Auction Report

This was the Best Auction in a long time!! We had a GREAT turnout of members and guests. There were lots of beautiful treasures available, and there were many ready buyers. Our able Auctioneer WA2DKJ handled the procedure professionally and with such dispatch that the Auction ended when ALL items available had been sold. This year we didn’t have to worry about “cleanup committees” because everything was carried away by happy buyers.



Some interesting statistics:

Auction Tickets Sold	42
Number of items sold	71
Number of Sellers(not Club)	12
Gross sales (not Club)	\$658
Club Sales	\$484

Net Club Proceeds	\$638
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Not too bad for a bunch of Amateurs!!!

Was 73 Inspired by a Vacuum Tube?

By Bob Willis K2GLS



There is an “urban legend” going around the bands these days that 73 (current ARRL definition: best regards) was inspired by the 73 vacuum tube. The story goes as follows: In the early days of ham radio the most desirable and most difficult tube to obtain was the type 73. It was so rare that whenever a ham asked for a 73, the reply was “good luck.” It was alleged that this gave rise to the use of 73 on CW to mean “good luck”, and later “best regards.”

I had never heard this story before, and never heard of a type 73 tube, so decided to do a little research. First, I could not find any reference to a type 73 in either the RCA Receiving Tube or Transmitting Tube Manuals. Next, I looked in my old copies of the Handbook, no luck there either. Finally, I went to the source; Saga of the Vacuum Tube by Gerry Tyne, again no reference. There were several tubes in the 70s, but no 73 and the other 70 types were 1930 vintage, so it is unlikely that the legend has any basis.

So what is the origin of 73? Searching old QSTs, the earliest reference I could find was in Strays, May 1921, page 53, as a tongue-in-cheek letter to the editor. I quote:

“Dear Eddy:
Please advise if 73 means you have 73 msgs to send, and if so
how do these fellows have so many all the time?
D.B.”

So the use of 73 was well established early in radio history. There was no reply to D.B. The next reference can be found in QST for April, 1927, page 115. The author of this Stray is complaining about many hams using “Best 73s” on the air. (Literally meaning best best regards) This improper use was highlighted in this month’s QST, so the proper use of 73 has been under attack for decades.

Well, this established the hams have used 73 from the early days and it means “best regards”, but I had not discovered where it all started. The next reference got me a little closer to the origin. In QST for April, 1934, page 45, the Office of Operations Bulletin, U.S. Navy, indicates numeric codes were in use during the civil war. This reference mentions that the Order of Military Telegraphers was formed during the Civil War while Andrew Carnegie administered both the railroads and telegraph. As a tribute to Carnegie on his 73 birthday, the Order of Military Telegraphers gave him a testimonial dinner and from this the term “73” came into being as a symbol of good wishes.

This was getting closer, but what were the numeric codes used during the Civil War and where did they originate? Back to the old QSTs for another reference. April 1935, page 60, (I wonder if all the references to April Issues is significant?) has a reference to Telegraph and Telephone Age, dated 1 June 1934. This article mentions a convention of telegraphers held in 1859 to discuss saving “line time.” A committee was appointed to devise a code to reduce standard expressions to symbols or figures. This committee worked out a figure code, from 1 to 92. Most of these figure symbols became obsolescent but few remained in use on the radio circuits, and ham radio. The following is a list of signals that were in effect in 1905:

- 1 Wait a minute.
- 4 Where shall I start in message?
- 5 Have you anything for me?
- 9 Attention, or clear the wire.
- 13 I do not understand.
- 22 Love and kisses.
- 25 Busy on another circuit.
- 30 Finished, the end.
- 73 My compliments, or Best regards.
- 92 Deliver.

So there you have it, the origins of the modern 73. How did love and kisses evolve from 22 to 88?
That is a story for another time.

73 de K2GLS