

# The Texan

Newsletter of the Texas NTS CW Net (TEX)

**\*\* See "TSN Corner" on Last Page \*\***

Net Manager: Steve Phillips, K6JT, Plano TX  
(k6jt@arrl.net, 972-517-3332)

TEX Web Site: <http://k6jt.home.att.net/>

Assistant Manager: Rodney Baker, W5DY, Goliad TX  
(w5dy@arrl.net)

September 2007



Hello TEX'ans. The change back to 80 meters for early TEX has worked out pretty well this past month. Thankfully, conditions have improved (and we did not have as many T-Storms, either). It is still pretty noisy up here at 7, but by using an NVIS (long looped wire less than 10 ft. high) receive antenna, I find the noise is much less. Interestingly, at 10, the receive noise difference between the NVIS antenna and my G5RV is hardly noticeable.

I hope you all had a good Labor Day weekend. I suspect so, judging by the very low turnout for TEX this past Friday and Saturday ☺

## **RN5 / CAN on 40 Meters**

Our change back to 80 was noted above. Early RN5 and CAN are still on 40 meters as of this writing with no notification of when they will change to 80.

## **W1NJM Saga**

Again, thanks to Sis, WD8DIN, the editor of the "Traffic Call" newsletter of the Hit and Bounce Net (HBN – 0730 CT, 7042 KHz), for passing along George Hart's saga of the "early days". Here's Part 6 of George Hart's recollections. Bunch and "Geo" climb from pure frustration to the heights of pure resonance in their explorations.

## **RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD HAM**

A journalistic history of the life and times in Amateur Radio of George Hart, W1NJM, by George Hart, W1NJM. Part 6.

## **The Great Discovery**

All the next day, Bunch and I, with George Suydam kibitzing part of the time, sorted through the treasures. Bunch started construction of a new transmitter that, he predicted, would make 3NF an outstanding signal on the air, with a pure DC note instead of our weak, raspy AC.

Again it was "breadboard" type of construction with all connections and wiring in plain sight with no effort to conceal or make it look neat. Metal rack and panel, and chassis construction was only for commercial and sophisticated amateur installations.

We were off the air for a few days during this period, for the 210 transmitter had to be cannibalized so some of its parts could be used in the new setup. No changes, however, were made in the receiver.

At last everything was in readiness for testing, with the new DC power supply mounted on a separate breadboard. Safety was not a consideration – we considered ourselves indestructible – everything was out in the open. When Bunch threw the plate voltage knife switch, the 281 rectifier tubes protested but did not arc over, despite the 1000 volts (less voltage drop through the overloaded tubes) they were being subjected to. When he pressed the key the big transformer groaned and the 852 tube tantalum plate turned red. The plate current meter showed 100 ma. and the antenna RF meter moved only slightly higher than it had with the 210. Undaunted, Bunch called a CQ, but received no answer. We didn't use spot frequencies in those days, because unless you had crystal control (which only the more elite stations boasted) and a highly selective receiver, you were never sure just where your signal was in the band (or out of it). After a CQ (CQ CQ CQ DE 3NF 3NF 3NF, repeated three times then standing by with an AR K, you tuned over the entire band for calls. Bunch was distressed at not hearing any one calling us after several attempts. So he called other stations' CQ call: (8BOE, 8BOE, 8BOE DE 3NF 3NF 3NF repeated three times then AR K), finally received an answer and a signal report of R4 (fair) RAC (rectified AC). With such a big increase in input power and a filtered supply, the result was very disappointing. He turned the key over to me, but my results were no better.

"Hell!", he said. "We're not getting out any better than before. And why RAC? We should have a pure DC note." He threw up his hands in disgust and walked away. I continued operating; made two or three more contacts, finally decided we weren't getting out as good as before. And the signal reports continued to be RAC. I persevered for several days with no better result, until Ed decided to increase the voltage to 1500. Surprisingly, the 281 rectifiers did not break down. But although the plate current increased, the antenna RF meter showed no increase in deflection, contacts remained rare and, when made, signal reports were low. In desperation, Bunch removed all power supply components except the big transformer. This gave a slightly higher deflection on the RF meter, 150 ma. plate current, a return to a.c. signal reports, and some of the electric light fixtures in the house glowed dully without the switch being on. Bunch even applied the full 3000 volts across the transformer output, still without any appreciable improvement in signal reports although the 852 plate turned almost white.

What was wrong? Of course I had no explanation and Bunch, completely frustrated, concentrated on his social activities to my complete exclusion. No word from Uncle Sam, although the BCI must have continued, perhaps grew worse. He probably gave up. Bunch and I completely forgot that the purpose of the major rebuilding program had been to placate Uncle Sam. All we cared about was "getting out," putting a stronger and higher quality signal on the air. We couldn't understand why increasing the input power didn't have this effect. Eventually, at my continued pleading; Bunch took time off from his social schedule and returned our (his) station to its former status. The 852, the big transformer and the other power supply components went into storage. The restoration of the 210 into its former configuration seemed to make the performance even worse than it had been before. Bunch didn't seem to care. I cared a lot, but my technical ability was very limited. I was almost completely dependent on my big brother.

It was a crucial time in the history of 3NF and my budding enthusiasm for amateur radio. Bunch seemed to have lost interest, and spent a lot of time running around in his flivver with George Suydam and their close circle of girls. Sometimes Bunch brought a girl to his radio room, and on such occasions I was excluded. I waited, trying to be patient, still operating "the rig" but having little success, and eventually I found him sitting on his bed thoughtfully contemplating the transmitter.

"Wonder what's wrong with it?" he mused. I made a number of eager suggestions, but he completely ignored them. What I wanted most of all was for him to apply his great knowledge of electronics to the problem, fully confident that he could solve it. He rummaged around until he found the QST diagram containing the circuit he had used when building the transmitter and perused it studiously.

"Wonder what that is?" he asked himself, and when I inquired "What?" he pointed to a series of loops in the plate voltage line marked, simply, RFC. He reread the text of the article but found no reference to it, but under the diagram it explained that RFC was a coil of wire. He remembered having seen it when building the transmitter but having ignored it, "It can't be anything important," he continued, still talking to himself more than to me, "but what the hell. I've tried everything else. I'll make one." Whereupon he cut off a piece of broomstick, wound some wire around it, fastened it to the stick with tacks and connected it in series with the high voltage lead from the transformer. He then "fired up" the transmitter and pressed the key.

The plate of the 210 tube didn't turn red as it usually did, and the transformer did not groan, as was also customary, only made a small humming sound. The RF meter in series with the antenna lead, which normally barely moved, deflected to three quarters of full scale.

"Holy smokes!" I exclaimed.

"Whatsa matter, George?" he said, grinning at me.

"The meter's broke!"

"I don't think so."

He turned on the receiver, tuned around until he heard a CQ and called. He received a prompt answer and a report of R-8, one of the highest we had ever received. In the next ten minutes he made three more contacts on three calls and received R-8 from two of them. R-9 from the other.

"I think we solved the problem," he said, and continued operating. I was itching to get at the key, but Bunch was not about to relinquish it. When I pleaded with him to let me take a crack at it, he snarled at me and sent me downstairs to bed. Some time later he awoke me from a sound sleep. "Wake up, George!" he said, shaking me. "I worked three sixes. Conditions are great, but I'm going to bed. If you want to operate, get up."

"What time is it!"

"Four thirty. I can't stay awake any more, but if you want to operate, come on up. Just be quiet."

It was a Monday morning in midwinter, 1928. I rolled out of bed, put on a warm bathrobe and went upstairs. The kerosene heater was going, but it was still a little chilly in the big room. I sat down and started operating, shivering, but soon got so interested in the activity on the

band (80 meters) that I forgot my discomfort. There weren't many signals, but no other noises either, such as we usually had to contend with during the day.

I operated until daylight, managed to work a 7 in Montana and another one in Idaho, called several 6's but got no answers. At 7 o'clock I had to quit to get ready for school. During the day, in school, I bragged to several companions that I had talked by radio to stations in Montana and Idaho, but no one believed me. I believe they thought I was a little cracked, and some of them moved away from me. All day I walked on clouds. 3NF had an outstanding signal, at last! I could hardly wait to get home and do some more operating.

Coming next in Part 7. Traffic Handling at 3NF in 1928.

### **TEX Mailbox:**

**Pat, KD5TXD**, sent in some "book reports" to share. Looks like she has been busy reading up on the history of the mode we all so love and also getting some inspiration to continue on her way to becoming an A-1 CW op! Pat writes:

Just finished reading "The Victorian Internet" by Tom Standage. What a cool book! He has written a very readable history of the telegraph. The telegraph was actually invented by the French. Leave it to the French to have a weird approach. A fellow named Claude Chappe and his brother built an optical telegraph system. They successfully demonstrated it on March 2, 1791. Chappe wanted to call his creation the Tachygraphe meaning "fast writer" but a pal of his talked him out of that name and they called the creation Telegraph meaning "far writer". Hmmm...good choice since it took them four minutes to transmit a 48 letter message! Even I am faster than that.

Standage walks the reader through the development of the electric telegraph in America and its parallel in England. There are interesting differences between the two developments. Lots of false starts and squabbling over inventions and methods occurred. He details the rather stunning, multiple efforts to get the trans-Atlantic telegraph cable in place and working. The description of the growth of the telegraph systems world wide really does bring to mind our modern internet. Standage paints a picture of each inventor and inventor-want-to-be in the development of the telegraph system. It is packed with information about the inventors all along the way, who got credit and who got left in the shadows. He even includes the famous "salting" story about Thomas Edison's skills at copying code.

In the stampede to embrace the new technology the real hero, Samuel Morse, got a bit left behind. It took a long time before he got paid the royalties he deserved for his inventions.

All along the way there are inventions to speed and refine the transmission of information. The book ends as the telegraph is faced with the invention of the telephone and other modern technologies that pushed telegraphy aside. What a fun book and a good read. I was actually a bit sad at the end as the invention of the telephone was described and the heyday of telegraph operators faded away, like the hero riding off into the sunset. I feel I have a much better understanding of the beginnings of Morse code.

My next book was "My Sisters Telegraphic" by Thomas C. Jespen. In case you can't guess, it is about women telegraph operators.

"My Sisters Telegraphic" is a mega cool book. It chronicles women in telegraphy from 1846-1950. I never had a clue about these women. They certainly were ahead of their time in more ways than one. I always thought of the women's liberation issues and fight in terms of factory workers but the women in telegraphy succeeded in many cases to achieve what most women of the age could only dream of, independent living.

It is also amusing that the very first "electronic commuter" was telegrapher Emma Hunter who worked from her sitting room at home. The telegraph line came to her so she could work from home in 1851. How cool is that!?!

Many of these ladies worked their way into management positions and many enjoyed equal pay with their men counterparts. Many were "first class operators". There are some very interesting characters among these ladies. Medora Olive Newell even worked wireless on a ship she was vacationing on in 1905 to assist the ship's operator who could not work the wireless equipment.

During the Civil War there was a real need for telegraphers when the men all went off to war. The ladies stepped in to fill the gap. After the war the men returned causing a surplus of telegraphers. The only hope for the ladies was the continued growth of the telegraph industry.

Economic problems of the late 1800's and early 1900's caused the pay scale to go down. With that event the telegraph operators formed unions and called strikes. The participation of telegraphers in the union movement quickly linked the feminist issues of the age with the general labor issues. None of the telegrapher strikes were successful and many telegraphers, men and women, found themselves unemployed.

In time the telegraph operator was pushed aside for the teletype operator and the telephone operator. This occupation faded away and can be enjoyed now only in museums and history books. "My Sisters Telegraphic", by Thomas C. Jepsen, is a great story of some very interesting ladies and the birth, progress, and demise of the telegraph industry.

The next book on my list to read is "Ma Kiley: The Life of a Railroad Telegrapher". You'll have to wait until next month for another book report on that one!

Catch you on the nets. 73!! Pat KD5TXD

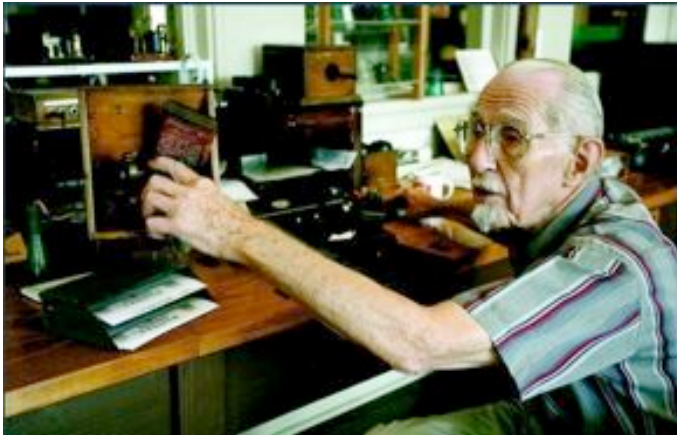
**Scott, W7IZ**, who is the STM in Oregon, sent a notice that they celebrated the 100th Anniversary of Wireless Telegraph Communications in Oregon this past month. Astoria Mayor Willis Van Dusen read a proclamation that the last week of August 2007 was the 100th Anniversary of Wireless Communications in Oregon. Astoria was the first city in Oregon to have Wireless Commercial Telegraph Communications in 1907.

I wonder if they were also the last to stop using Morse code a few years ago? <Ed>

Speaking of railroad telegraphy, how about this article featuring our very own **Floyd, N5EL**, that appeared in the Sunday paper in Temple on September 2<sup>nd</sup>...

# Volunteers bring Morse code to railroad museum

by **TOMIE LUNSFORD** - Telegram Staff Writer  
*Published September 2, 2007*



Norman Reser, working in the telegraph office at the mock Temple train depot within the Railroad and Heritage Museum, demonstrates the role of Morse code in telegraphy.

← Norm, and ↓ Floyd man the telegraph line.



Floyd Bumpus, sitting in the telegraph booth at the railroad museum.

To the untrained ear, it's gibberish or white noise. The quick-to-come dashes and dots sound like never-ending bullet shots or beeps - depending on the volume and type of key used.

But to 90-year-old Norman Reser and 79-year-old Floyd Bumpus, the shots and beeps make perfect sense.

"I don't hear dots and dashes, I hear words," Reser said. "When I speak, you don't hear 't, h and e.' You just hear 'the.' It's the same for me."

The two gentlemen work the telegraph booth at Temple's Railroad and Heritage Museum. Telegraphy is a method of communication that predates the telephone; it uses Morse code. For more than 100 years since the Civil War, trains talked to each other with telegraphs.

"If you have one train coming from one direction and another train coming from the opposite direction on the same track, and if you don't have a way to talk, well then you have a problem," Reser said. "Morse code was how the depots would communicate arrivals and departures."

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the same railroad telegraph line went from Galveston to Fort Worth.

"There were other depots between those two cities, and all the depots had telegraph offices," Reser said, explaining how telegraph lines worked. "A message that Galveston sent to Fort Worth was heard in all the depots between them."

Confusing? Not for those who know the code.

“Think of a crowded restaurant,” Reser said. “You’re talking with the people at your table. You can hear that the others in the restaurant are talking. You recognize it as language but don’t hear every word they’re saying. It’s the same in code. You don’t pay attention until someone says your name.”

In the case of Morse code, it was a call name or ID number.

<end>

Thank you, Floyd, for the link. The above was an excerpt that the paper published on the web. The actual article in the paper was longer. Pretty neat article, eh? If you are a relative newcomer to TEX, or you have not yet seen it, you can view a movie that was made last year of Floyd and Norm at the Railroad Museum in Temple. Go to the TEX home page and find the link labeled: [Link to Hamcom 2007 Pictures and Movies: Hamcom 2007 + 2006 7290 Picnic and Temple TX Railroad Museum](#)

## TEX Net Topics

Thanks to Scott, W5ESE, for taking early RN5 on Saturdays (and filling in other days when he can). We still have **many** openings for RN5 liaison and one NCS slot. If you are able, please take one (or more) of the open RN5 slots. We really need a regular NCS for Friday early. I am often away that evening and Rodney also has other commitments some of the time.

### TEX CW Net Weekly Schedule

Local	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>NCS #1</b>	W5DY	KA5KLU	K6JT	AC5Z	<b>Open</b>	AC5Z	W5GKH
Backup	W5GKH	<b>Open</b>	KD5TXD	W5DY	W5DY	W5DY	W5DY
<b>NCS #2</b>	W5GKH	KA5KLU	KD5TXD	K6JT	N5PWG	W5DY	W5GKH
Backup	K6JT	<b>Open</b>	K6JT	<b>Open</b>	K6JT	<b>Open</b>	K6JT
<b>RN5 #1</b>	W5GKH	KA5KLU	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	W5ESE	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	<b>Open</b>	W5DY	KA5KLU	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	W5GKH
<b>RN5 #2</b>	W5GKH	KA5KLU	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>	W5CU
Backup	W5DY	<b>Open</b>	W5DY	K6JT	W5DY	W5DY	W5GKH

TEX/1: 3552 at 19:00 local; TEX/2 3552 at 22:00 local  
 RN5/1: 7045 (3567 alternate) at 19:30; RN5/2: 3567 at 21:30 local  
 CAN: 7052 (3552 alternate) at 20:30 local; TSN: 3552 at 19:45 local

RN5 Backup: W5DY, W5ESE, W5GKH, K6JT, KA5KLU, K5RG

NCS Backup: W5DY, N5EL, K6JT, KA5KLU, N5PWG, KD5TXD, AC5Z

Note: Although “backup” stations are listed above, anyone is welcome (and encouraged) to take the RN5 or NCS duty slots when it becomes necessary. If you don’t hear anyone open the net within 2 minutes of start time after tuning up and down 3 KHz looking for the NCS, please go ahead and QNG.

The roster, which follows the statistics, was unchanged from last month.

**Statistics:**

This month Pat, KD5TXD, took top honors with QNI of 44 (71%). Rodney, W5DY, was 2<sup>nd</sup> with 40 (65%), closely followed by Floyd, N5EL, with 39 and Scott, W5ESE, with 36. Good to hear you more active again, Floyd. Thanks to all for your support.

The complete list of stations and traffic / liaison totals are shown in the following table. Traffic and QNI were both up, thanks to you all (y'all?). Traffic averaged 3.5 per net session. Net time averaged about 15 minutes per session. Check-ins averaged 5.5 per session, with more than 10 some nights.

**TEX Net Statistics (August 2007)**

Call		QNI	total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
W5BYQ	Earl	1	2						
		1							
W5CDX	Wads	0	2						
*		2							
W5CU	Sam	7	11		3				
*		4			4				
W5DY	Rodney	20	40	4	4	2			
		20		4	10				
N5EL	Floyd	22	39						
*		17							
K0EZ	Lanny	0	1						
*		1							
W5ESE	Scott	27	36		11			12	5
*		9			3			5	2
W5GKH	Charlie	8	16	4	3				
*		8		8	4				
K5GM	Pete	1	2						
*		1							
W5GN	Barry	0	1						
*		1							
W9GVW	Eric	7	8						
*		1							
K7IZ	David	0	2						
		2							
K6JT	Steve	23	51	9	1		23		
*		28		6	5		28		
KA5KLU	Doug	15	20	5	9	7		6	
*		5		4	5	4		4	
AA0NI	Daniel	1	2						
		1							
KA5NNG	Mike	1	1						



			total	NCS	RN5	TTN	DFW	CTTN	TSN
		0							
N5NVP	Jim	3	6						
		3							
N5PWG	Jay	1	9						
*		8		4					
K5RG	Ken	10	19						
*		9							
KA0RMP	Dean	0	1						
*		1							
KD5TXD	Pat	20	44			4			18
*		24		5		5			23
AC5Z	Bert	26	26	9					
*		0							
Totals		339		62	62	22	51	27	48
				100%	100%	35%	82%	44%	77%
QTC 1		132	216						
QTC 2		84		Sessions:		62	100%		
Time 1		514	927						
Time 2		413							

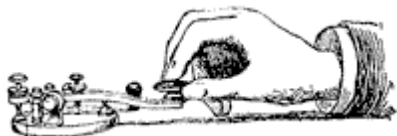
### TEX Roster

Call	Name	Location / Notes	Call	Name	Location / Notes
# KBØAI	David	Minnesota	K5KV	Benny	Star
N5BA	Brian	Houston	W6LFB	Jim	Denton
W5BYQ	Earl	Houston	WA5MUF	Bill	Watauga
W5CDX	Wads	Crowley LA	# N7NET	Scott	Allen
W5CU	Sam	Edmond OK	AAØNI	Daniel	Oklahoma City OK
NV5D	Martin	Allen	KB5NJD	John	Duncanville
* W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	# N5NVP	Jim	Leesville LA
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	* N5PWG	Jay	Pasadena
* W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	K5RG	Ken	Houston
AA7FY	Mark	Fort Worth	W5ROK	Steve	Richardson (K6JT)
W5GKH	Charlie	West Columbia	KC5T	Bob	Houston
K5GM	Pete	Austin	W5TFB	Jack	College Station
W9GVW	Eric	San Antonio	W5TV	Tom	Nacogdoches
KA9IKK	Bill	Houston	* KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville
K7IZ	David	Bridge City	# W5UFK	Ken	College Station
AA5J	Chuck	Plano	* K5UN	Lee	Leonard
KJ9J	Newt	Pharr TX (winter)	KS5V	Ed	Bulverde
* K5JRN	Si	Denton	K5WQG	Eddy	Tomball
K6JT	Steve	Plano	AC5XK	Don	San Antonio
KA5KLU	Doug	San Antonio	* AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches (Lufkin)

# Not Capable of operating in 3600-3700 band; \* Capable of 160 meter operation

I am thankful that conditions, traffic, and participation all increased this past month. Summer is coming to a close and autumn won't be long in arriving. As the days get shorter, conditions should improve even more on early TEX. Hopefully we won't have "long skip" on late TEX for several months yet, but I think it is coming again this winter.

73, Steve K6JT



## TSN Corner

Texas Slow Net (Daily) 1945 CT 3552.0 Khz  
[http://www.geocities.com/scottamcmullen/Texas\\_Slow\\_Net.html](http://www.geocities.com/scottamcmullen/Texas_Slow_Net.html)  
 Scott McMullen W5ESE  
 TSN Net Manager

Here is a roster of stations that have been active on TSN recently. A warm welcome to Bill, K5ECI, and welcome back to Dan, AA0NI, who both are in Oklahoma. Please join us on TSN as often as you can.

### Net Stations (QNS)

Call	Name	City	State	Call	Name	City	State
AA0NI	Dan	Oklahoma City	OK	WB5NKC	Arley	Oklahoma City	OK
W5BYQ	Earl	Houston	TX	WB5NKD	Pat	Oklahoma City	OK
W5DY	Rodney	Goliad	TX	N5NVP	Jim	Leesville	LA
K5ECI	Bill	Enid	OK	K5RDW	RD	Vilonia	AR
N5EL	Floyd	Temple	TX	KB5TCH	Carroll	Douglassville	TX
W5ESE	Scott	Dripping Springs	TX	W5TFB	Jack	College Station	TX
W9GVW	Eric	San Antonio	TX	KD5TXD	Pat	Kingsville	TX
AA5JW	Carl	Stafford	TX	W5VDM	Bill	New Ulm	TX
NN5L	Max	Dallas	TX	N5XGG	Joe	Colmesneil	TX
KD5MMM	Phil	Fentress	TX	KM5YQ	David	Irving	TX
N7NET	Scott	Allen	TX	AC5Z	Bert	Nacogdoches	TX

### Texas QSO Party

The Texas QSO Party, sponsored by the Northwest Amateur Radio Society (Houston), occurs this year during the weekend of September 29-30. Stations participating try to complete as many contacts as possible with stations in as many different Texas counties as possible. I've participated each year for the last four years, and enjoyed it a lot.

There is considerable CW activity in this event, including some CW mobiles. The CW frequencies suggested are 40-60 KHz above the band edge on each band. The contest times are 1400-0200Z on Saturday, and 1400-2000Z Sunday. The rules and exchanges are described in detail at <http://txqp.net>.



### August Activity Report

TOTAL SESSIONS 31  
 TOTAL CHECKINS 119  
 TOTAL TRAFFIC 34  
 BY 9 DIFFERENT STATIONS

Thanks again to everyone that checked in during August!

73 Scott W5ESE

*The telegraph key image is courtesy of FCIT*