



The 3905 Century Club Telegraph

February 2022 Issue

A 3905 Century Club Monthly Newsletter

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Welcome!

Welcome to the February 2022 issue of the 3905 Century Club Telegraph.

Starting with the March issue, the Telegraph will be published on the 5th of each month.



The club elections are over. The voters have spoken and the newly elected officers will start their terms on March 1, 2022. The results are well known, but published in the Telegraph for posterity!

We are always looking for article ideas and contributions. As Kirk would say—The Telegraph would not be the same without your articles! - Please send articles or suggestion for articles to:

k7qhu@outlook.com.

3905 Century Club Eyeball 2022!

The excitement is starting to build for Eyeball 2022 which will be hosted this year by Gene Marsh, W8NET. The Eyeball will be held between August 4, 2022 and August 7, 2022 in Kent, Ohio. It's not too early to start planning your trip. Follow the updates that will be posted on the Club website and in the Telegraph Newsletter. Remember, all roads lead to Kent Ohio during the week of the eyeball!



Dean's Column

Notes from the President

By Dean Davis, N7XG



The QSO Party reminded me of a train going uphill, then cresting and coming down the other side at an unsafe speed. This is what I observed. In early January there were a few people making contacts. By the middle of the month someone must have told our members that we were running a QSO Party, and by the end a large number of stations were working each other just for the QSO Party. I think we all should thank Fred, K1UU with coming up with this activity and from my vantage point it was a huge success. Again, thank you Fred for bringing this to the club.

Another huge success this past 2 months was our elections. Mid last summer our webmaster, Matt, K2YS analyzed our election practice and fully automated getting members registered on the website and using the new software. Matt, thank you and a job well done. The results of the election are elsewhere in this issue of the Telegram. I also want to thank everyone that voted for me, and we will continue working on club activities.

zoom

Just a reminder that the club has a standing Zoom video conference every Wednesday at 1:30 Pacific time. From time to time, we have members presenting material and also have open Q&A discussions on many topics. More information can be found on the club's website.

73,

Dean

Notes from the Telegraph

Starting with the March issue, the Telegraph will now be published on the 5th of each month. This will allow the Telegraph to include interesting monthly statistics on the Club's nets and operations. This information will be provided thanks to an initiative from our club president and implementation by the club's IT team.

Ben's Column

An Anniversary Gift from the Awards Committee

By Ben Goldfarb, AE4NT



Our club's Forty-fifth Anniversary occurs on February 7, 2022! Your Awards Committee has concocted an anniversary present for all members in the form of a two-tiered award with a one-year qualifying contact period commencing on February 7.



The basic 45th Anniversary Award is earned for forty-five confirmed contacts made on any Early Net and forty-five confirmed contacts made on any Late Net for a total of ninety contacts during the one-year anniversary period. Easy enough, right?

For the overachievers in the club, the enhanced award, named the 45th Anniversary Award with Oak Leaf Clusters, will require that the applicant must first have earned the basic 45th Anniversary Award and then make an additional ninety contacts (again, forty-five on Early Nets and forty-five on Late Nets), which must not duplicate any of the contacts used in the basic award. These additional ninety contacts must include the following: four Old Timers Award holders, five YLs, four members of the BoD, five Masters, and five VIPs. The remainder may be any net contacts, so long as they are not duplicates of call signs used elsewhere in either the basic or enhanced award.

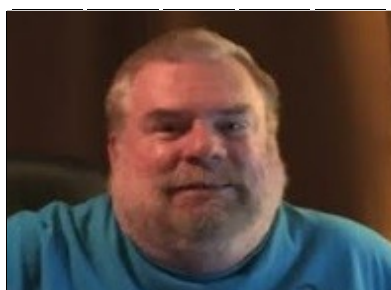
For this award, club stations and special event call signs are not usable; however, a club station may earn the 45th Anniversary Award and/or the 45th Anniversary Award with Oak Leaf Clusters.

Hard on the heels of K1UU's very popular QSO Party, the 45th Anniversary Awards will provide more fun and participation for our members. Many thanks to Kirk, AA1NA, for being the major source of ideas for this award and to the other committeemen for their valuable input.

I'm working on creating the final PDF application, which will be posted on the website soon. Look for my announcement of the new award on the Club's reflectors.

I'll be stepping down as Fourth Area Director at the end of February to make way for my successor, Gary Slagle, K9GWS. I'll continue to serve the Club as Awards Secretary. Congratulations to Gary, who has served the Club well as its treasurer for many years, and who will bring some fresh ideas to the Board!

Silent Keys Remember our Friends and Families



by Marty Blaise, AG5T

Silent Key is a term that goes back to wired telegraphy, adopted in the early days of ham radio. At the time Morse code was used to honor a CW operator who had passed away and whose key would not be heard again. This tradition has carried over into modern times when voice, video and data have been added to the amateur radio repertoire for silent keys.

When the 3905 Century Club learns of the passing of one of its members, that person's call sign is listed as number one on all nets. When the first round begins, the net control will call the call sign three times and then announce that that call sign is checked out for the final time and is now a silent key. Recently, WA3EOP became a silent key and was remembered on all nets for his final checkout. WA7ND was also a recent silent key.

The 3905 Century Club also lists an archive of Silent Keys, many with photos, in Rick Mobley WB5FDP's web site. <http://hamshackonline.net/gallery2/main.php>. A sample is shown to the right.

One night while on a net I was looking at the Silent Keys and decided to write down how many I had worked. It took me awhile but the total was 144. (There are probably some people in the 3905 Century Club who have worked at least twice that many) And then it hit me that these were real people that I personal contacts with. Some of them helped me as relays, some were Eyeball coordinators, QSL bureau managers, officers, net controls, part of combos and more. Several were masters degree holders and some were DX. I still have QSL cards from these people and I usually stop for a few seconds when I come across their cards and say thank you for being there. Some of those I worked died naturally, some in accidents, some from disease and others in different ways.

Silent Key is a term of respect for a deceased ham radio operator. In some cases, a family member has revived the call sign through the vanity program.

One example is W1XN, Clinton Wise, who resides in North Carolina. Many people worked his father, whose call was W1XN and the 3905 Century Club even has an award based on

Gallery

Silent Key

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Silent Key

The 3905 Century Club silent keys.



AA0IP, Arden H. Fonda

Colorado (24-Jan-2009)

Date: 05/16/2009
Views: 125



AA0KN, Mary L. Moore

Wisconsin (04-Dec-2012)

Date: 02/15/2013
Views: 22



AA2DS, Donald D. Sayre

New York (03-Feb-2013)

Date: 11/30/2015
Views: 40



AA3A, Derek R. Scorer

Florida (04-Oct-2012)

his father's accomplishments. The award is for extensive mobile or portable operations and the application is on the club web site www.3905ccn.com.

Here are some other web sites that remember silent keys

- <https://forums.qrz.com/index.php?threads/remembering-a-silent-key-name-someone-you-miss.603176/page-3>
- <https://www.qsl.net/k8ge/SilentKeyMemorial.html>
- <http://www.arrl.org/news/national-silent-key-archive-lives-on>

I found this on QSL.net:

My chair is sitting empty. My call is no longer heard.

My radio rests quietly. From it comes no words.

On my shack door is a message. That reads "From Me to Thee."

My frequency's much higher now I've become a Silent Key. -- Judy Hudson KC9CCJ

73,

Marty AG5T

The 3905 Century Club QSO Party

By Fred Caswell, Jr K1UU

The idea

The idea of a QSO party came from Yukon John KL7JR. He submitted a proposal to the board of directors (BoD) through his area director Ben AE4NT in September 2021. I agreed with John's assessment that the QSO party would spark some enthusiasm on the nets. I loved the idea.

Board members discussed the proposal on the BoD reflector. Many comments were positive, and a few concerns were raised. I had two concerns about how the BoD would handle the QSO Party, but I had no concerns about John's idea or his implementation plans.

On October 5th, Steve N6RSH wrote an email describing his thoughts on how the QSO Party might be structured. I remember thinking that Steve's ideas were nice improvements.

In early October the KL7JR proposal was pulled from the BoD agenda. I was disappointed. In my mind, the Club was being deprived of an opportunity to have a little fun. This was simply too good of an idea to pass up, so I got busy writing up a proposal of my own.

My initial proposal used ideas from John KL7JR and Steve N6RSH. I also used ideas from phone discussions with a couple of other members. I submitted the proposal to the BoD



on October 19th. The BoD informally agreed to allow me to use the club's name and some space on the club website. I then submitted my proposal to the club membership hoping to get comments. N2XTT suggested extra points for QRP, KI4WCQ corrected issues I had with multipliers and others provided more improvements. All were incorporated in the final announcement.

Let's get this party started

I tried to be on as many nets as possible starting January 1st. It quickly became obvious that I needed a way to track which states I worked. I added functionality to my database to provide reports to anyone who submitted a log. The reports show QSO's points earned in the various categories along with multipliers earned. They also show what states, provinces and DXCC entities have been worked. Samples of the reports are on the club website.

On January 4th I sent a note to the reflectors to clarify "dupes". There was no rule in the QSO Party proposal limiting the number of contacts one station could have with another. My intention all along was to limit contacts between two stations to once on each of the 20 standards Century Club nets. To help participants avoid dupes, I added a report showing the callsigns worked on each of the nets. Again, send me a log and I'll reply with the reports.

Log science

When I was writing up my proposal, my biggest fear was that I'd received many types of logs at the end of the QSO Party. I did not want to be scoring manually so I set the requirement that I would only accept "ADI" files. My plan was to develop a database that could a) import check-in lists and logs and b) calculate QSO points, multipliers, and the total score.

Even though there is a published standard for ADIF, not all logging programs implement the standard the same way. Also, Individuals use the various logging programs differently, which creates even more variation. I wanted all this variation to be invisible to me and to the participants.

In the end, I want to score the QSO party in a fair, accurate and fast way once we get to February first. Many members have helped me by submitting their logs early. Because of their support, I have seen ADI files from Net Logger, N7XG Logger, DXLab/DXKeeper and N3FJP Logger. I have seen how different participants use the loggers differently. In every case I had to do some work on the database to handle the variation. The database handles all the variations easily now. Thank you for your support!

Stay tuned for the exciting finish

We have four net days to go before the QSO Party is complete. You can see the current leaderboard on the club website – I try to update it daily. Next month I'll write up the QSO Party results and a few lessons learned from the 2022 event. Have fun!

Fred

K1UU

If you have been a member of the club for a while, you have likely worked Clay WA6LBU and his club station AF5NN. Did you ever wonder about the Jolly Roger image that Clay uses on the QSL card for his Club? Well, you need to wonder no longer, as the Telegraph has worked hard and long (actually just an email from Clay) to uncover the story behind the club station AF5NN and the Jolly Roger!

The Story of AF5NN and the Jolly Roger

by Clay Mayrose WA6LBU



A club member asked me about the significance of the Jolly Roger on my AF5NN QSL card. He thought the story was interesting and I thought that it may be of interest to others in the 3905 Century Club.

AF5NN is the club call of the South Logan County Radio Society. It is an actual Amateur Radio organization that has about 20 members. The origin of the group stems from a field day rebellion in 2006. There are a few other members of the Century Club who are members of the South Logan County Radio Society

(SLCRS). There are no dues and we get together on most Friday nights for dinner.

Now to the rebellion. ARG! In 2006, a very prominent amateur radio club in Oklahoma City decided to hold field day about 60 miles south of Oklahoma City. That made it about 120 miles from my home as well as several other members. I was a volunteer Firefighter and was scheduled for station duty on field day weekend. This made the 240-mile round trip somewhat impossible. We had another member that was a cell-tech for AT&T wireless and was going to be on stand-by that weekend and a couple others just were not doing the drive. I came up with the idea that we could do a very informal field day at the fire station and have some fun. I asked the Fire Chief, who thought it would be a great idea. The only caveat was although I was on duty that weekend, I would not run any calls and would instead secure the fire station that would have 4-5 visitors for 24+ hours. What POSSIBLY could go wrong???

Prior to field day, I sent an email to the ARRL-OK news group and invited anyone who was in the area to stop by and visit and say Hi. That email did not receive a very warm reception from the President of the very prominent amateur radio club. I received a rather terse reply calling us "borderline traitors" and we needed to support the club for which she was the leader. My response was something to the nature of "sounds like this very prominent club in OKC is afraid of 4 hams in Logan County". Just a small note for the record, that did not receive a warm reception either.

So on to Field Day. I packed one of my Air Force Deployment bags with everything that I thought I would need for field day and went to the fire station. Antennas were being assembled and coax was being rolled out. I opened my bag to find absolutely nothing ham radio related...I grabbed the wrong bag. I did find a 3 X 5 Jolly Roger that I purchased in Italy in 1997 during Carnival in Venice (thought that I had lost). That is the only thing from that bag that was used for field day. Call was made to the house and the correct bag was brought to the station by my son Chris. KD5QBS. Field day is saved. We put up a 30-foot Rohn 25 tower with a tri-bander beam on it and the Jolly Roger was hoisted very quickly thereafter.

About 5 minutes after the first CQ Field Day was sent, the tones for calls started. Medical call for a heat related sickness was the first one. The Fire Chief looked at me when he got to the station and wanted to know why I was not suited up. I reminded him that he stated that I was not running calls because of station security. That was quickly reversed. Next call was an injury accident on I-35. We arrived back to the station about the time the severe thunderstorms started. Winds of around 70 miles an hour hit our tower and started pulling the guys out of the ground. There was no way that tri-bander was going to hit the ground. So, four of us ran out to the tower and redid the guys in a raging thunderstorm. (insert pucker factor here) I was still in my bunker pants and took on about 3 inches of water in my boots but, the tower and antenna were saved. About the time I took the boots off, the thunderstorm related calls started. Seventy-five-foot oak tree across Waterloo Road. (Line between Oklahoma County and Logan County) The trunk of the tree was 6 foot thick. It took us four hours to clear the road.

When we arrived back at the station the Jolly Roger had been removed from the tower and was now flying on the Fire Station flagpole. Fortunately, I was fully in view of the Fire Chief at the tree incident. He knew it was not me and thought it looked cool, so it stayed up there. Unfortunately, the County Commissioner did not think it looked cool and the Chief took a butt chewing. But the flag stayed up until sunset.

While I was running around South Logan County on fire calls, the remaining amateur radio operators kibitzed about the political uproar our rebellious field day had caused and felt we needed a club name, so the South Logan County Radio Society (SLCRS) was born. By the way, the acronym is pronounced SLACKERS. When this name was developed, I was out looking for a lady that popped 20 Lortabs and went for a walk in the woods. Ladies and gentlemen, I was 46 years old and had run 6 fire calls since noon, three of which were physically taxing calls. I ate dinner about 11PM, made two contacts and went to bed. Slept about 4 hours on a cot between two fire engines and ran two more fire calls. By the way, Lady Lortab strolled home on her own after she started feeling somewhat poorly.

When I started getting deeper into the Century Club, I approached SLCRS and suggested a club call. Everyone thought it was a great idea and signed off on it. Since we were all former members of the U.S. Air Force, AF5NN was the winning vanity call. We have used the phonetics Air Force Five Navy Nothing from the beginning. The call has been used on 3905 CCN by several hams. One of the Original Slackers, AE5MH (SK) used it on 40 early

nets on a road trip to Ohio. I have used it on several road trips, and I believe it has been on the air in every state West of Oklahoma apart from California and Oregon. It has been used by two YL's and has been on every mode the club operates.

I still have the Jolly Roger. It hangs on the wall behind my radios. When I moved a few months ago, it was the last thing packed.

73,

Clay WA6LBU

2022 Election Results

2022 Regular Election Results

Position	Callsign I=Incumbent	Name	Vote Count	Percent
President	N7XG (I)	Dean W. Davis	66	71%
	WA6LBU	Clay Mayrose	27	29%
2nd Area Director	N2XTT (I)	Peter B. Summers	9	100%
4th Area Director	K9GWS	Gary W. Slagle	24	65%
	K7QHU	Stephen P. Davis	13	35%
6th Area Director	KJ8O (I)	Joseph B. Miller	3	100%
8th Area Director	KG8WL (I)	Ralph A. Mitchell	2	100%
10th Area Director	AA0HF	Eric J. Johnson	16	100%
	W6PNY	Win J. McCracken, Jr.	0	(withdrawn)

February 2022 Contests

Contests in February that could impact net operations:

- CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest 0000Z, Feb 12 to 2359Z, Feb 13
- KCJ Topband Contest, 1200Z, Feb 12 to 2359Z, Feb 13
- ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW 0000Z, Feb 19 to 2400Z, Feb 20
- Russian PSK WW Contest 1200Z, Feb 19 to 1159Z, Feb 20
- CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB 2200Z, Feb 25 to 2200Z, Feb 27
- FTn DX Contest 1200Z, Feb 26 to 1200Z, Feb 27
- North American QSO Party, RTTY 1800Z, Feb 26 to 0559Z, Feb 27



Upcoming Events in February, 2022

Note: Regular Board Meetings are always held on the second Saturday of each month, local time at 9PM Eastern, 8PM Central, 7PM Mountain, 6PM Pacific.

- 3905CCN Board Meeting: Saturday February 12, 2022
- Weekly Zoom Meeting on Wednesdays at 01:30pm Pacific Time. Check your email for the Zoom log-in information

Road Trips!

KL7JR and KU1V are planning an epic road trip in the future. John has allowed the Telegraph a peek at how the trip is being planned.

KU1V and KL7JR Northbound in March

It's been my experience that trips to/in the North Country should always include a "back-up plan", and sometimes a back-up plan for the back-up plan is required. Mother Nature has a way of butting in! The purpose of this trip, starting late March, is to get Mike KU1V and I into Alaska, the Yukon and Northwest Territories in my motorhome (Icemobile IV) provided the Canadian border is open to non-essential travel. We plan to operate from several states and National Parks enroute and a couple of glaciers in BC and AK to give K7ICE and K8ICE some exercise! Are glaciers new to CCN? We are hoping to be joined by Kirk AA1NA somewhere along the way later (plan A).



If the border is closed for us due to Covid restrictions, we will activate states, National Parks and hug the border for a few Canadian provinces. I know some back roads, hi hi! (plan B).



Another possibility is staying south of the border for the many new states and National Parks we need for our awards and eventually end up in Richland, WA. Saying goodbye to Mike, I'll now spend a couple weeks with family in WA then head south for more states and NP's. Yellowstone Nat'l Park is a tri-point and then there's 4 Corners on my radar (plan C). In keeping with our promise to bring fun and excitement to the nets, club WE4FUN/p will ride shotgun! Updated info to follow when our itinerary is finalized. Although we will be happy pulling off just one of the plans, all 3 are possible!

73, KL7JR and KU1V

KL7JR's Amazing Shemya Story

In addition to the above planned trip to the north, it should be noted that John is no stranger to operating in the north. John aka Yukon John aka National Parks John has spent many years conducting ham radio operations in the far north. Below is an article that John wrote in 2003 detailing his adventure in one of the most remote locations in the United States. Thanks John for sharing this article.

Shemya Story

Story and Photos by John Reisenauer Jr., KL7JR
July 22, 2003

From one of the most remote places in the United States, history and DX come alive.



A view from the northwest corner of Shemya Island, overlooking the Bering Sea.

I never leave home without my ham gear when my job takes me to remote areas of Alaska. Being a history buff and avid island activator, I jumped at the opportunity for a short-term job assignment on Alaska's Aleutian Island chain. The Aleutians are steeped in WW II history --just ask any veteran who served in the North Pacific. Shemya Island, more commonly referred to as "The Rock," is out near the tail end of the Aleutian chain 100 miles from Russian waters, or about 1400 miles from Tokyo. A godforsaken place like that, famous for the foulest weather imaginable, would certainly be a challenge for mobile Amateur Radio operating. I was up for the challenge of both working on Alaska's ballistic missile defense project and hamming from The Rock. And, I had some experience to draw from: a few years ago my friends John Wolfe, AA0NN, and Frank Hurlbut, KL7FH, logged many contacts from Shemya Island.

The Adventure Unfolds

Whoever first uttered, "Getting there is half the fun," surely wasn't sitting on a hard canvas-laced chair in a cramped and cold C-130H cargo plane next to crates of equipment and supplies bound for Shemya Island. But I was ecstatic to be on board since I'd just cleared security at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage with a briefcase full of radio gear in one hand and a 5-foot long steel whip antenna in the other. All I heard was, "So, you're gonna do some fishing, huh?" Don't you just love it when some things look like other things?



Shemya Island is one of the most remote places in the United States, as is evident from this map of the Aleutian Islands showing the chain's main military islands.

We made our first stop 90 minutes later at the town of King Salmon to refuel and take on more cargo. After four more hours of flying we set down on Shemya, second to the last rock out on the chain. I'd experienced the allure of the Aleutians a decade ago from Dutch Harbor; it was awesome to be back.

My rig was my trusty old Kenwood TS-50 transceiver and AT-50 auto-tuner. The antenna is a RadioShack mobile CB whip on an old mag-mount

base. Naturally, the vertical would work on 10 meters and some whips I've experimented with work well on 20 meters using a tuner--hold your laughs until the results are in! Now I only needed to borrow a vehicle and a set of jumper cables for fast temporary power hook up to complete my mobile station.

Mobile from "The Rock"

The vertical easily loaded on 10, 20, and to my amazement, 15 meters, as well. It was great to have an extra band or two to try when 10 meters would fade as it often does up in the Northland. By 2000 UTC, only weak stations were heard on 20 meters, which was a good sign the bands were improving. I was able to borrow a truck from our safety department, but I had to stay close by in case they needed the vehicle. So, I remained in the parking lot surrounded by six-story tall office buildings, dorms and flickering street lights which no doubt caused the heavy interference I was experiencing on 10 meters. It was raining and windy. Then came freezing rain, then snow, as I watched a storm front off the Bering Sea collide with another storm front from the Pacific Ocean right in front of me. Snowy whirlwinds swirled about. Out at the confluence of these two great bodies of water, hurricane-like winds and monster waves are born. Twenty minutes later, the sky cleared and HF came alive with strong signals.

First in my log was my buddy Geno, AL7GQ, on a prearranged schedule. I also called my island-activating buddy Rick Kaplan, KL7AK, but to no avail. Geno said he was hearing us both just fine. Shortly afterward a ham in Papua New Guinea called and we exchanged 10 over S9 reports on 10 meters. Then I was overwhelmed by Japanese hams for about an hour--JA7OWD, JA8OKR and JG0TL to name a few--with DU1SAN, NH2PW, VE7SMP and a couple of W5 stations wedged in. When 10 meters faded I was back on 20 meters with another Japanese pileup until that band dropped out as another Bering Sea storm began to brew. I was band switching by what color the sky was!

Back on 10 meters I worked RA0LGH, NH2PW and others needing Shemya Island, AK-019S for the US Islands Award and NA-037 for Islands on the Air. By then, most of the reports I received were 5-by-9. The other operators would often chuckle when I explained my operating position sitting in a pickup truck on a tiny Alaskan island! I moved up to 15 meters to work JM1KYY and a string of W6s and W7s. Then another JA station broke in to say 10 meters had reopened and there was a bunch of hams calling for me! I hated to leave 15 meters because it was so quiet and I was enjoying a bit of ragchewing, but back to 10 meters I went. Often I was asked what I was doing "out in the middle of nowhere." I just didn't feel comfortable answering some questions. My vague replies of "for your protection" quickly got the stateside ops to say "Roger" and change the subject.

I was surprised when VK6PP called me at 2330 UTC and BA4DW next, both of whom said they needed Shemya Island. Relentless gusts of snow-turned-ice pelted the vehicle as I worked DS5ACV, WH6LU, AY3HR and RA0LDA. Unfortunately, I had to pull the plug because the safety guys needed their truck, leaving a big pileup with, "I've gotta go and will be back on in a few days." In five hours of operating I made over 300 contacts with 12 countries--almost half on 15 and 20 meters--using a CB antenna. Not bad considering the first two hours I was merely talking to myself while the storms played out, the constant band switching and the fact that I ragchewed a bit.



Amateur Radio station KL7JR, as set up in the temporary mobile operating position from the job office area on Shemya Island--note the jumper cables running into the cab through the window.

Bering's Discovery

The Aleutians are the tops of submerged mountains belonging to a range stretching more than 1200 miles into the Pacific Ocean from Alaska's mainland. A partially submerged continuation of the Aleutian Range separates the Bering Sea from the Pacific Ocean. The Aleutian Islands are comprised of four island groups: the Fox, Andreanof, Rat and Near Islands. Shemya is part of the Near Islands group. About 200 islands containing more than 25 active volcanoes--13 over 5000 feet high--several glaciers and fish-rich rivers make up the whole Aleutian chain. In 1741 Vitus Bering, a Danish explorer sailing for Russia, discovered Shemya Island. Nizki, Alaid and Hammerhead Islands, stepping stones off Shemya, are dwarfed by large Attu Island some 30 miles distant. On a clear day, Attu, the end island, can be seen from Shemya and World War II debris remains scattered about the island. On Agattu Island, snow-capped peaks tower a few miles out on the Pacific Ocean side adjacent to Shemya's main runway.



One of dozens of concrete pillboxes, relics of WW II, that litter Shemya Island.

Shemya Island is 2 miles wide by 4 miles long and has had soldiers stationed here since World War II. At its peak, Shemya Station housed over 1100 American personnel. By 1980, the workforce had been reduced to 600 and in 1993 Shemya Air Force Base was renamed Eareckson Air Station. The base was closed in 1995, only to reopen a couple of years later staffed by approximately 200 personnel.

Several abandoned three-story-high dormitories and other derelict buildings remain as silent vigils of a once bustling military post. Supplies and personnel are air lifted from Anchorage via C-130 Hercules cargo planes, while bulkier equipment is barged 3000 miles from Seattle. Weather permitting, a cargo plane comes in twice a week and there's one unscheduled Military Airlift Command transport flight. It's a real treat getting newspapers that are only three days old, a major link to the outside world. The word "remote" takes on a whole new meaning on Shemya.

The average daily temperature is around 40°F, with extremes of 30°F in January and 50°F in August. Most days are breezy, but every now and then a calm sunny day with blue sky is enjoyed. The International Date Line is bent around us, and on a clear day we can see "tomorrow"! Daylight in December is from 11 AM to about 5 PM, plus or minus storms. There are no trees, but wildflowers, grasses and sedges are abundant. Arctic foxes, introduced by the Russians over 200 years ago, proliferate on Shemya. The island is now a strategic refueling stop for military aircraft as well as a link in the United States' long-range early warning radar system.

Back to the Mic

Two days later I was able to slip away from work again. I parked the truck near our mess hall overlooking the Bering Sea's Shemya Pass. Twenty meters was full of weak signals so I moved down to a wide-open 10 meter band to work JH1RFZ, DU6BG, LU9HZM, WA6GFE, UA0FPL, DU1MEF and several more Japanese hams. Soon, I saw another weather front brewing. Like a giant curtain closing in front of me, the blue sky gave way to an ominous greyness that hurled snow and rain sideways. Clearly, it was time to head back to work. The blips, beeps and pops often heard on 10 meters are more pronounced out in the Arctic just before and shortly after a storm subsides.

A few days later I was back at it again, but from a much better location closer to the water, with four more new countries worked and another 300 contacts made, mostly on 10 meters. Amateur Radioing doesn't get much better than this for a "little gun" station. My operating position was near a concrete pillbox, a relic of World War II that reminded me of the freedom I was now enjoying, made possible by soldiers who fought out in the Aleutians. Unexploded weapons are scattered about the island and you have to be careful where you trek. Not far away rests a fuel barge that came to its demise in 1958 when it broke loose from its tug boat...another rusting monument adding to the island's history.

Shemya has hundreds of tall towers--mostly rusted relics--various antennas of all sizes and shapes and acres of radar buildings. While the bands were dead I enjoyed the great photo opportunities. I even spotted a brand new log periodic antenna atop a 50 foot hydraulic mast on a big trailer. Later, I found out this was a Navy listening post and here's where Murphy gets involved: the Navy demanded I stop operating as they did not recognize a previous agreement made by the Air Force for Amateur Radio operating. Shemya Island is used by the Air Force, but shared with the Army and Navy.

But thanks to John Wolfe, who is a member of the US Air Force, we cut through the military red tape and I was cleared to operate again. In whiteout conditions December 15, during the ARRL 10 Meter Contest, I worked LT5H, LU1HF, DU1MTZ, VE4MM, HL2DBP, JA3BKP, JA6XFT, JH3LSS and many others while parked near Shemya's cargo dock. I was enjoying a terrific opening on 10 meters during and after the contest. Later, I worked my Alaskan buddies KL7D, KL1V, and Frank, KL7FH, who last operated from this island. Frank and I chatted about the best spots in the island for operating and our jobs. By now I had already experienced two different weather fronts with 10 foot swells and high winds off the Bering Sea. What a wild afternoon of DX and weather! Battered by wind-driven waves and blowing snow, an icy-white mantle encased the high cliffs of Alaid Island across the bay from me. Last in the log were VE7SMP, HL5BLI, LU7DWF, DS1PCF, WA7TRC and AA7CQ.



One of the many rusting tower farms on Shemya Island. The sky bears witness to Bering Sea and Pacific Ocean storm fronts moving in.

Closing up Shop

Years ago, Shemya AFB ARC station KL7FBI was quite active out here on The Rock. John is the trustee for KL7FBI and I even have their QSL from a 1994 contact. I also have Frank's KL7FH QSL from out here in 1997. I was honored to add KL7JR to the operator list at Shemya. With my month-long tour up, I was both happy and sad to leave. Stepping back in time on Shemya Island allowed me a rare opportunity to experience World War II history, further strengthening my American pride. I thoroughly enjoyed operating Amateur Radio from such a historic place. By sharing my adventure, it is my hope to give something back to our servicemen and servicewomen, past and present, who protect our freedom. Thank you for the privileges we all enjoy as Americans! I also dedicate this story to my friend Dan, KL7Y (SK).



The sun rises in the southeast sky. Shemya enjoys as little as six hours of sunlight in the depths of winter.

CLASSIFIED ADS

This section is for members who would like to sell, swap, or purchase ham gear. If you would like to list your equipment here, please send the information to k7qhu@outlook.com. The deadline for ads is the 25th of the month.

KL7JR has the following gear for sale:

Heil Pro Set with Kenwood cord...new price \$150...ship for \$100. About 10 years old.

Astron SS 30 amp power supply...new price \$180...ship for \$100. Also 10 years old.

MFJ 434B voice keyer (never used), works on all rigs...new price \$230...ship for \$175.

John KL7JR@gmail.com



Lisa KC1YL has the following gear for sale:

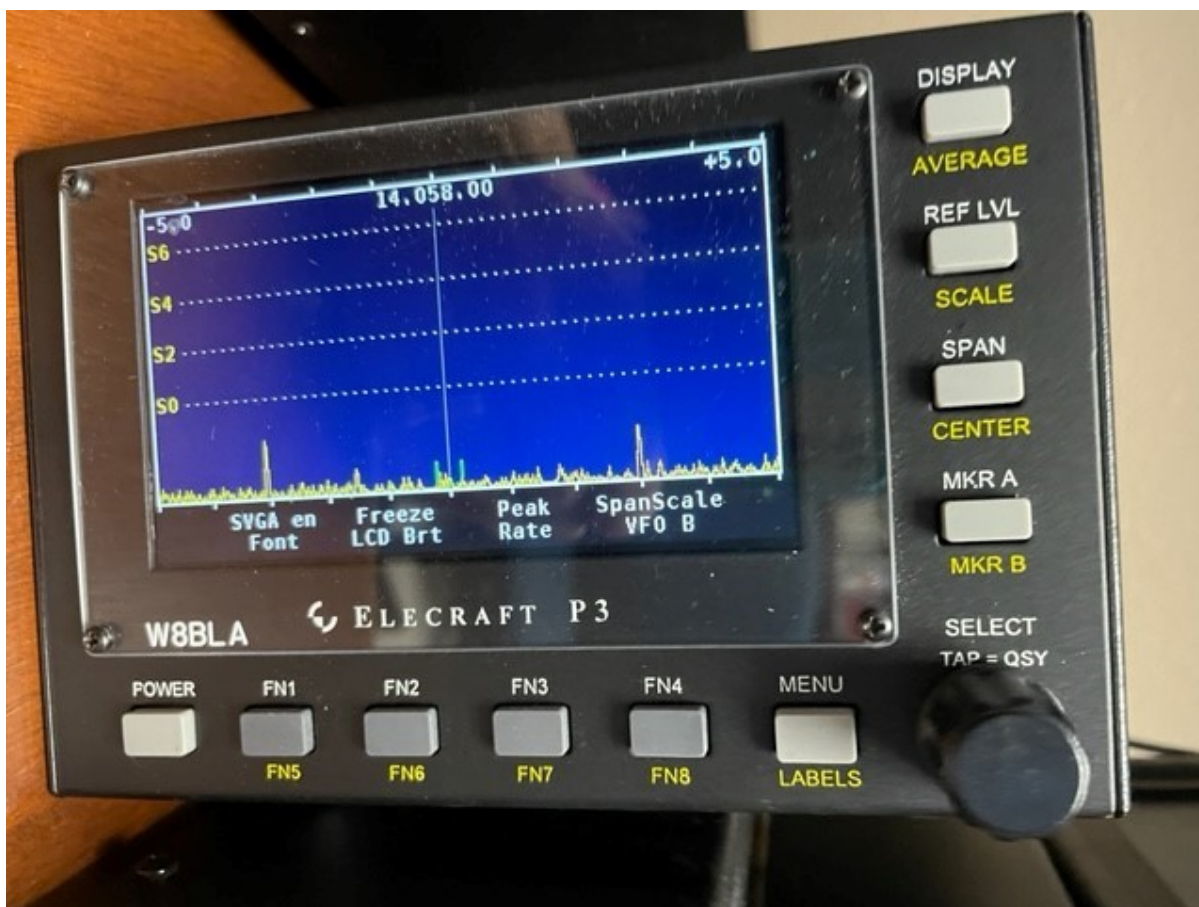
Palstar HF-Auto Antenna Tuner 1500 watt. Works as expected. I don't have the original box. \$1,200 plus shipping. Or pick up in the Tampa area. Lisa KC1YL



ICOM 718 with Z-100 Automatic Antenna Tuner, Ampkeyer and SignalLink USB. I have all cables for the Ampkeyer and SignalLink. The radio and tuner work perfectly. I don't have the original boxes. I've used this radio for years at home before I got the IC-7300. Asking 500.00 for all of it. Buyer pays shipping costs. Lisa KC1YL

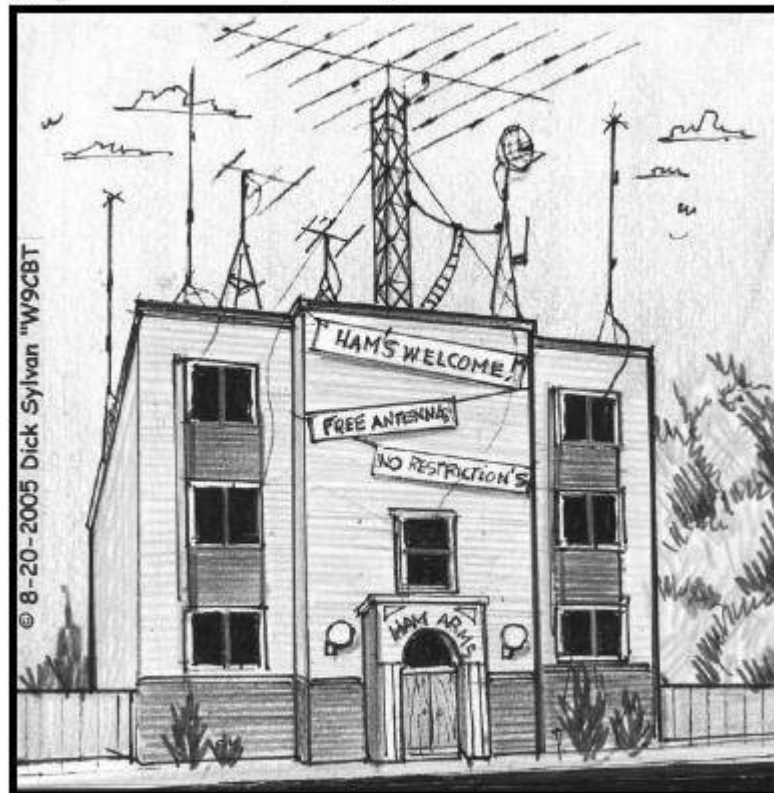


This is a K3S with P3 100W, E850323 Standard 5PPM Oscillator, Filters: KFL3A-400-IR, 400Hz CW Data, and KFL3A 2.7 . The radio and the panadapter work as expected. Sold as a set only. I have all the cables and manuals. I do not have the original boxes. \$2,800 plus shipping. - Lisa kc1yl



The End - Exit with a Smile!

Apartments For Rent



"Looking For an Apartment Where You Can Put Up an Antenna? — Dream On!"

Thanks and a tip of the Telegraph hat to W9CBT for the cartoon above.

