

K9YA Telegraph

Robert F. Heytow Memorial Radio Club

Volume 8 Issue 12 December 2011

happy
holidays



The Good News About Amateur Radio

K9YA Telegraph

Robert F. Heytow Memorial Radio Club

Volume 8, Issue 12, December 2011



SS-40 Receiver

4SQRP 40-Meter Receiver Kit

Philip Cala-Lazar, K9PL

Like all its offerings, the latest kit from the 4SQRP Group, the SS-40 40-meter receiver, designed by Jim Kortge, K8IQY, promises much and delivers the goods in full measure. I always look forward to building the Group's kits because I know that in addition

to adding a useful and high performance piece of gear to the shack I'll enjoy the hassle-free building process. Plus, the hams at 4SQRP stand behind their kits with prompt and courteous assistance; they make the kit building experience a happy one.

From the 4SQRP Group Website

The SS-40 high performance receiver is the latest design effort from Jim Kortge, K8IQY. SS stands for "Stable and Sensitive."

Intended as a companion receiver for the NS-40 transmitter, a Magic Box TR system between the SS-40 and NS-40 allows effortless transceiving, and RIT results since the receiver is independently tuned.

Specifications and Design Features

Sensitivity (MDS): -132 dBm.

Selectivity: 500 Hz IF Filter with great skirts.

Opposite Side band Rejection: Outstanding, greater than 50 dB!

Noise floor: Better than 30 dB below the 40M band noise average.

Audio stage: Drives speakers to undistorted, clean, room filling volume, or use earphones.

Tuning Range: 25-30 kHz of stable, smooth, and easy tuning.

Super VXO: Three crystals, NO DRIFT, not even from a cold start!

Audio Derived AGC: That is smooth, very effective, pleasant to hear, and easy on the ears.

Normally I inventory a newly received kit's parts and sort them into egg cartons. This time due to perceived time constraints and actual impatience I chose to forego this all-important step and commence building. Unfortunately, during the last few construction steps I found several capacitors and an inductor missing. Thanks to Terry, WAØITP, the absent components were quickly received and installed.

The well-written PDF construction manual is clear, comprehensive and thoroughly illustrated with color photographs and sharp line drawings. Addenda include a winding tutorial for T1, a binocular core transformer. The kit includes metal film, ¼ watt, 1% tolerance resistors "for their lower noise characteristics"—so, thoughtfully, you will find a table denoting metal film resistor color codes. Join the helpful SS-40 community at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SS-40/> for sharing, support and discussion.

All components but the mixer (ADE-1) are through-hole. For the winding averse, there are only two toroids and the binocular core transformer requiring your attention. Most anyone who has built a kit will find few, if any, hurdles constructing the SS-40. Test gear needs are minimal, requiring only a DVM and RF probe to run the basic smoke tests and final alignment and set up.

CONTINUED - SS-40 RECEIVER ON PAGE 8

*"...sharing,
support and
discussion."*

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Inside This Issue...

SS-40 Receiver	Page 1
A Bicycle Mobile Adventure - VIII	Page 2
The Highest Honor for a Ham	Page 4
...and the Winner is...	Page 6
Ham History	Page 7

A Bicycle Mobile Adventure

Part VIII

Scott B. Laughlin, N7NET



Synopsis of Part VII

The return trip from Grand Canyon to Williams is a rough adventure from the start. Threatening clouds produce wind-driven rain almost the entire sixty miles. Complicating matters, southbound tour buses creating giant rooster tails have soaked Riley and Alice to the skin. They tried the rain gear, but the temperature is such that it makes no difference. Wet is wet. Worse yet, midway on their return trip they encounter the road

repair area where the crews are using what must be some sort of red volcanic ash in their repaving blend. The rain, having mixed with the ash, has produced sticky, rust colored, slurry. Like glue, it sticks to everything it touches, the bike, the trailer, the captain and stoker, and even McBark. Everything takes on a rusty blush.

Neither one can recall the exact location of the StarMart they visited on their way to the Canyon. In a sense, they're lost. This sanctuary, of a sort, could easily come into view at the crest of the next grade, but their hopes are dashed when each summit offers only one more hill to pedal. By early afternoon, they are exhausted; their legs like rubber. They stop beneath a tree and sink onto a mound of marinated pine needles to rest.

"Is there any food left?"

"Some," says Alice, producing a half-pint jar of peanut butter of which only a quarter remains. Sharing a single, plastic spoon retrieved from her breast pocket, they devour it to the last morsel and wish for more. They would both quit if they could, but they would be empty words. There's no place to go after declaring they're whipped. After thirty minutes they muster the strength to continue their trek. In the beginning their goal was Williams, but now the illusive StarMart is their primary objective.

Someone once said that there is always a light at the end of each tunnel, and so it is with this journey. At last, the summit for which they've pined. At the bottom of the hill is the fabled StarMart. The rain has ceased, but they're still the same rusty cyclists. After seeing to McBark's needs, they head for the front door.

Two ladies working in the store take little notice as Riley and Alice push through the door. Evidently, cyclists returning from the South Rim often appear a bit run down at the heel.

An alcove, of sorts, displays donuts on both sides, while a table at the far wall accommodates a facility for self-serve cold drinks, tea, and coffee. In the space between stands a small picnic-like table on which these two employees are folding tee shirts and sweats bearing a silk-screen photo of the Grand Canyon. Gathering their busy work, they quickly provide a place for Alice and Riley.

*"...a mound of
marinated pine
needles..."*

"There's only five more miles to Williams. The last three are down hill," says Riley.

Alice is exhausted and only grunts in response.

After devouring a dozen donuts and a pot of hot coffee they leave their comfortable perch and continue toward Williams. They are on the verge of

coasting the downhill portion when the rear tire goes like a rifle shot.

Riley always carries an extra tube and a fistful of "boots" for such occasions. The blowout has torn a two-inch gash in the sidewall. In spite of his best efforts, a boot will not stay in place. Dusk is in the offing when he declares a repair is not possible. They need a new tire. With the new tube protruding from the long gash in the sidewall, they walk the bike the final distance to town and the comforts of civilization.

Part VIII

The motel's manager doesn't insist on another five-dollar dog fee. Alice concludes she probably figures the dog was the cleanest one of the lot. After checking in they sleep like cadavers.



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The plan is to be on the road by sunrise, but the return trip from Grand Canyon has depleted their energy. At dawn they realize they must remain in Williams long enough to purchase a new tire, so they declare it a rest day and stay in bed.

The following morning they roll out of Williams and follow the shoulder of I-40, staying clear of the rumble strips. Much of that segment is downgrade and within an hour they are in Ashfork, and the longest remaining section of Historic Route 66. Less than a mile from the Interstate they come upon a café whose parking lot is packed with more than a dozen gleaming, full dress, Harley-Davidsons. They swing in for a second breakfast and some conversation.

Riley finds only one person in the group who speaks English and learns they've flown from France to Los Angeles where they rented fourteen motorcycles. After touring much of the Colorado Rockies they are headed back to California and then home.

When asked, a waitress at the café tells Alice that Peach Springs is where the Hualapai Indian Reservation Tribal Council is located. It's the largest town they'll find on the Rez. She thinks there's one motel in town, but she's not sure. The only thing she's certain of is the sixty miles to get there. However, Grand Canyon Caverns is ten miles closer, and it has an RV park.

With a rare east to west tailwind fifty additional miles is a reasonable goal. McBark, even though he's already had breakfast, doesn't turn down the ice cream cone Alice brings him from the café.

No one is certain there is a grocery store on the Rez, so they stock up at the local market before continuing east.

"Riley, do you recall the large supermarket on the Navajo Reservation?"

"I guess so, why?"

"Well they had the department names in both Navajo and English. I asked one of the clerks to help me pronounce one, but there were too many syllables, and she gave up on me,"

"I had forgotten about that."

They ride on.

The sun is near the horizon when they roll into Grand Canyon Caverns. It's a resort. The lodge is built with a vaulted ceiling. From the rafters

hang dream catchers, hand woven blankets and Native American flutes. Perhaps they would have had dinner in the dining room, had the cook not already shut down the grill and gone home. However, the pretty Indian girl at the gift shop counter keeps the coffee going until closing time. That's when they head for the RV Park and find it nearly vacant. There will be no smoky fires or booze parties tonight. Using his 20-meter rig, Riley is able to contact an active member of the Eugene Amateur Radio Service (EARS) and leaves a message for the kids.

Leaving the RV park shortly before sunrise, they reach Peach Springs and stop at the Hualapai Lodge/Restaurant shortly after the doors are unlocked, and just in time to follow two reservation police officers through the front door. In a small alcove adjacent to the dining room stands a sign that states: PLEASE WAIT TO BE SEATED. Ordinarily, they would obey the warning, but since the cops ignored it, Alice and Riley followed suit. Bad move. There were served, but not without unfriendly glares from the waitress. No cigar here.

The wind comes with the sun, resuming its east to west direction, which will quarter them many of the fifty miles to Kingman. Replenishing their water and energy snacks, they strike out.

About two-thirds of the way they reach Hackberry. When John Steinbeck's Dust Bowl sojourners, the Joads, came this way Hackberry may have been a thriving community. Today, however, it is reduced to a single building, a rundown service station covered with galvanized corrugated siding. On the wall facing the highway is a flying red horse faded with age. Inside, however, are scores of photos, records, books, VHS tapes, mugs, belt buckles, and a host of additional items relating to Route 66 in some fashion.

A man and woman, hailing from Chicago's state, are bound for California, following the Mother Road, one segment at a time. Two leathered Harley riders in route to a HOG Rally in Nevada pause to



Navajo Grocery

"...gleaming full dress Harley-Davidsons."



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CONTINUED - BICYCLE MOBILE ON PAGE 8

The Highest Honor for a Ham

Part III in a Series on Honoring SKs and Vanity Callsigns

Cliff Cheng, Ph.D., AC6C



novicehistory.org

Last month I suggested that one of the highest honors one can do for an SK ham is to honor her/him by creating a memorial amateur radio club/station and applying for the SK's callsign. Establishing a club and getting the callsign is important but incomplete in and of itself. As a ham radio historian I observe the vanity callsign system and notice most memorial clubs using SKs' callsigns have little if any operating activities, meetings or events. No one but a small

group of hams knows they exist. Why not celebrate the SK's life by putting up a Webpage so anyone typing the SK's name and/or call into a search engine will find the Website? Show the ham community and beyond what a terrific ham and person he/she was.

A Website need not be elaborate or expensive. You can certainly hire a Web designer to design an elaborate Website with streaming video and dazzling graphics if you have the resources. Another option is to learn how to make a Webpage using one of the dozens of programs on the market. Web design classes are so common you will even find them as adult education courses provided by park and recreation departments and community colleges if you need college credits.

If the departed ham started off as a Novice, and you have his/her Novice callsign and the approximate year in which s/he started as a Novice, you can contact the Novice Historical Society www.novicehistory.org and request the departed ham be honorably mentioned. If you have more information on his/her Novice period write a short story and it will be posted. If you have a Novice photo, (please do not send photos that are obviously not Novice photos, i.e., shows their higher class callsign, while using a microphone, sitting in front of a linear amplifier) that, too, can be posted.

Most memorial clubs, including the ones I set up, have more modest Websites. *You can actually get a Website for free.* The URL will be a sub-domain of the Web-host's URL. If you want your own URL, which makes finding your Website easier, such as WB6JXY.org, you have to pay for it. Be aware free site Web-hosts will post advertising on your Website including pop-ups and flashing ads. If you have an often visited site, you might get complaints about these annoyances. The reality—free sites offer free content *and* ads—beggars can't be choosers.

Little technical skill is needed as these sites provide templates. First you will be prompted to select a style. Then, all you need do is add your content. You can put in both text and pictures. Some Web-hosts will let you put up videos or post files for visitors to download. If you do not need a particular content box or photograph box, delete it. These sites limit size, carefully manage what you upload. Cut photos down to less than 100kb to manage your allocation.

If you are using a dial-up connection, you should be able to use most features on free sites, but be prepared for problems concerning your slow speed.

I do not want to endorse one free Web-host over another. I will share my factual experiences. In the mid-2000s, it

was suggested I get a free ham radio Website on QSL.net. The condition from QSL.net is that content be ham radio-related. I wrote a Webpage to honor my elmer, Ted Ryan, WB6JXY; which is still up at http://www.qsl.net/ki6cm/Webpage_TedRyan.html. I had difficulties accessing, uploading files to the page and saving changes. There was no response to my requests for tech support. Free sites will not give you free technical support. Later I abandoned most of the free sites I set up due to technical problems. [Ed. QSL.NET is under new management as of January 2009]

For Ted's Website, I then tried another Web-host, Webspawner. Their ad showed a color page with photos. After I created the site, it turned out to be black and white, no pictures and no sub-pages. There

“...what a
terrific ham
and person...”



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was no capability to write sub-pages. It is important to show a picture of the SK if you have one.

I next tried a United Online free Webpage; they do business under dozens of names. Our current Ted Ryan Memorial Amateur Radio Club, WB6JXY, Website is under United Online's bappy.com name: <http://tedryan.bappy.com/>. Clicking on the link you will find not only is the page in color, we have sub-pages and photos.

However, I had a horrible experience with United Online's Bappy.com free Websites with the first few versions of Novice Historical Society Websites. Yes, we received and still get complaints about advertising, pop-ups and annoying flashing advertisements. The templates' limitations include poor contrast on URLs to the point they are not legible. The biggest problem? Somehow, United Online reset the file order of the Website to make sub-pages list by order file size. I set, in chronological order—as history usually is told, the 240 Novice stories hams all over the U.S. entrusted to me. But they scrambled the page making all 240 stories display by file size. Paula Keiser, K8PK, tried to fix the problem and manually reset the stories. Again, United Online reset the stories by file size. Following this experience, Paula refuses to work with free sites. United Online said if we wanted tech support we would have to “upgrade”—pay for tech support on a free site. It makes no sense to pay for this when the money is better spent on a new custom site, with our own URL and no advertising and pop-ups.

Our effort to preserve the history of the Novice era was stalled by problems on the United Online Website. For two years we had only a handful of new stories. It certainly is understandable hams do not want to write a Novice story only to see it on a Website that is a mess. United Online set back our efforts, which, frankly, are time sensitive. We are trying to collect Novice stories while hams are still available (more directly—before they SK).

I have several memorial pages celebrating Lenore Jensen, W6NAZ (SK), who was one of the most accomplished hams in the history of our hobby. Lenore, and her husband, Bob Jensen, W6VGQ (SK), were friends and my club mates at the San Fernando Valley ARC, W6SD. Lenore was a co-founder of Young Ladies Radio League and instrumental in promoting ham radio through TV, radio and newspapers. She is best known as a pioneer phone-patch

operator for the military before MARS, having passed an estimated 16,590 to 68,000; possibly as many as 196,996 messages. In 1961 she was honored on *This is Your Life*. She inspired many individuals to become hams and perform public service. I nominated her for the CQ Hall of Fame. She had already won the Dayton Hamvention's® Lifetime Achievement award. I plan to move this Website.

I also had bad experiences with webs.com and weebly.com, which appear to be the same company. I set-up free Websites to honor Tap, W6TDM (SK); my secondary elmers, Frank Leonard, W2NPT (SK); Big Frank Cuevas, W6AOA (SK); and Chuck Schmid, the original holder of AC6C. Those sites were up and running as recently as the first edit on this series of articles. I had trouble accessing webs.com and got errors messages from Weebly.com that service was denied. The weebly sites came back on-line but only after I switched them to another provider. Please visit my new sites honoring Tap, <http://sites.google.com/site/tapw6tdm/>; Frank, W2NPT (SK), <http://sites.google.com/site/frankw2npt/>; Big Frank, <http://sites.google.com/site/frankw6aoa/>; and Chuck, <http://sites.google.com/site/schmidac6c/>.

Before I go on to content, a caution about paid Website hosting. Paula selected startlogic.com, dba ipowerweb.com, a host she used for other sites. When it came time to renew, they doubled my rate. I canceled. They continued to solicit my renewal and told me they would bill my credit card. I complained to Visa, FTC and California and Massachusetts Attorneys General. The Phoenix Better Business Bureau received 133 complaints against them in the past three years and nine were resolved. How many hams launched as Novices have SK'd before I could find and interview them in the time spent fighting startlogic.com/ipowerweb.com? ■

[The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the author.]

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Big Frank Cuevas
W6AOA (sk)



W6AOA (SK)
Memorial Website

“...celebrating
Lenore Jensen,
W6NAZ (SK)...”



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...and the Winner is...

K9YA Telegraph Photo Contest Winner Announced

K9YA Telegraph Staff



It's the K9YA Telegraph Photo Contest winner. It's the 2012 Calendar. It's the K9YA Telegraph Photo Contest winner! It's the 2012 Calendar! Gentlemen, I implore you... why can't it be both?

The K9YA Telegraph staff is pleased to have received many excellent entries in its first photo contest. However, there can only be one winner and that winner is Maurice Charpentier, F5NQL,

of Moneteau, France. Maurice's entry titled, "It's Never Too Early to Become an Elmer," shows two children assembling a code practice oscillator. As the winner, Maurice will receive a copy of Dick Sylvan's hilarious cartoon book, *"HI HI—A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons."*

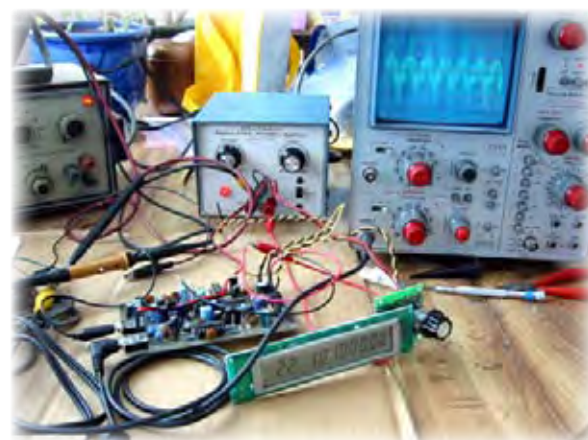
It was important for us to put the best photographs to good use, so we created the 2012 K9YA Telegraph calendar. Like everything we offer, the calendar is sold at our cost. Here, in no particular order, are the hams who earned honorable mentions and whose photographs are also included in the calendar: Bob Good, K4BG; Mac MacKaig, K6YS; Wayne Cheng, VA7AT; Tony Thorroid, VK4KKY; Rob Rey, HK3CW;



F5NQL's Winning Photograph
"It's Never Too Early to Become an Elmer."

Jerry Haigwood, W5JH; Hal Mandel, W4HBM; Paul Signorelli, WØRW; Bruce Phegley, W4OV; and Herb Mesler, W6SAW.

The photographs used in the calendar differ considerably and depict boatanchors, modern gear, homebrew, QRP, QRO, kits, fixed and portable operation; all reflecting our readers' varied interests.



VA7AT's Honorable Mention
Testing a YU1LM SDR Tranceiver



W6SAW's Honorable Mention
Herb's Ham Station after Leaving Navy (1968)

A preview of all 13 calendar images is available on our partner site, lulu.com, which is also where you can order a calendar for your own shack wall. While you're there, check out, *"The Rod Newkirk Collection, From the Pages of the K9YA Telegraph, 2004 - 2009,"* and *"Wired Love: A Romance of Dots and Dashes."* All would make excellent holiday gifts for yourself or a friend. ■

2012 K9YA Telegraph
Calendar



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About the Cover

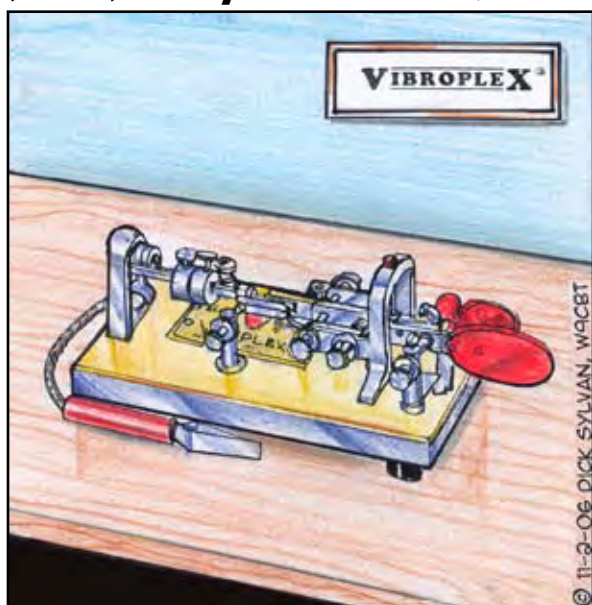
It's all about radio love, as Dash, the Dog-Faced Ham, embraces a Hallicrafters S-38—many a young ham's object of desire. What about those Brush headphones on his floppy ears—could they be Clevite—or maybe a pair of Trimm 'phones complete with tip plugs? All I know is that he can't wait to get that sweet, new, all-hearing receiver hooked up, antenna and ground, and on the air this morning—no delays—this morning.

Will there be a Dow-Key coax relay hidden among his other gifts or will he have to fall back on his tried and true fifty-cent Bakelite d.p.d.t. knife switch from the local Ace hardware store? Only Dash's best ham pal, Jeff Murray, K1NSS, knows for sure, and at this point he's not saying. So QRX.

The *K9YA Telegraph* is again pleased and privileged to star Jeff's buddy, Dash, on our holiday issue cover; that makes two annual collector's items. Craving more Dash? Then hop on your Whizzer (lucky boy) for a buzzy jaunt over to Jeff's Dashtoons Web site for an even wilder ride.

www.dashtoons.com

Ham History DICK SYLVAN, W9CBT



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Special Thanks to *K9YA Telegraph's* 2011 Authors

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Fred, KT5X	Rod, W9BRD	Denis, N2JJF
David, N1EA	Paul, W3FIS	Steve, N9WAT
Bill, KJ4EX	Fred Riley	

Mailbag

Your story about "radio row" brings back some great memories. Way back in 1959, I graduated from the Coast Guard radio school up in Groton, Conn. I was assigned to the USCGC *Mackinac*/NICC home-ported at St. George, Staten Island. She was a 311 ft. weather ship, assigned to Ocean Station duty in the North Atlantic. There were five like ships home-ported at the Coast Guard's base there.

We carried nine radiomen and stood a two-man watch while underway. One operator guarded 500 kHz and 8364 for distress or any calls, and the other was assigned to a ship to shore circuit. All circuits were CW, and I felt the need for a speed key. So another radioman and I set out to find one. We had to take a ferry to Manhattan and a short subway ride up to Cortlandt Street. Emerging from the subway, I could see store after store of radio parts. Bushel baskets of radio tubes and other radio parts as far as the eye could see.

We finally found an appropriate store. Harrison Radio (I think), and purchased two Vibroplex "Lightning Bug" speed keys, one for me, and one for the radio shack. I think they were about \$23.95 each, and for another \$5.00 or so I got a box for mine. They were really pretty, all chrome plated with a red jewel on top. I was not permitted to use my new key on the circuit until I could prove that I was proficient in its use, and had to be examined in its use. Once qualified I used that key throughout my 20-year Coast Guard career, and for another 15 years as a commercial operator at coast stations WSL and WSC.

Sincerely Yours,

Fred Riley
Retired Commercial Op



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CONTINUED - SS-40 FROM PAGE 1

The front panel comprises tuning and volume controls, antenna, headphones/speaker and muting jacks. A DC power jack is the back panel's sole occupant. About the muting jack: if you're not using the SS-40 with the Magic Box and its T/R switching and muting facilities then, "If the lead going to the tip of the mating connector for this jack is grounded, the muting circuitry is activated and the receiver audio will be greatly attenuated."



The completed PCB was mounted in the 4SQRP suggested Ten Tec TP-41 enclosure using the drilling template provided at <http://www.wa0itp.com/ss40.html>. All went well after enlarging the holes for the two potentiometer shafts from the indicated 1/4" to 5/16". I also enlarged the power jack opening to 1/2" to accommodate the power plug from the regulated wall wart used with the SS-40. The knobs are same used on my Ft. Tuthill 80 transceiver (see: *K9YA Telegraph*, June 2010), namely, Eagle knobs with these Mouser numbers: 450-2034-GRX .59" D x .55" H and 450-2039-GRX 1.39" D x .71" H.



I've been waiting for the front panel label—the Magic Box's (see: *K9YA Telegraph*, December 2010) label really enhanced its appearance and utility. When the

SS-40 label is available (currently there's a place holder link in its stead) it will be printed, laminated and mounted. The receiver has few controls and jacks so, aside from esthetics or to inform shack visiting ops, the label is not essential but would be a definite plus. The Ten Tec enclosure is simple and elegant in its design.

Monitoring 40-meters my SS-40 tunes from 7.014 MHz to 7.040 MHz, the receiver works flawlessly with sweet sounding signals popping out from the quiet front end. Quiet is an understatement; with no antenna connected there is no discernible circuit noise. Recently, after disconnecting my antennas for a passing thunderstorm, and forgetting to reconnect afterward, I hooked up the SS-40 to monitor the band. Hearing nothing whatever I checked the power supply and headphones only to find the HF antenna was still disconnected.

Selectivity is good; once a desired signal is peaked in the passband nearby signals fail to interfere, with no perceptible AGC pumping, during ragchews or low key operating events. Sensitivity is excellent, even with my low dipole; I easily copied European and South American stations on summer evenings when the flux was well below 100.

Unlike some QRP gear that fail to deliver on the promise to supply sufficient audio to drive a speaker, the SS-40 provides enough drive to comfortably power a four-inch speaker to shack-filling audio or push the QRP-assigned, RS Optimus NOVA 44 headphones to painful volume levels.

More great stuff from Jim and the 4SQRP Group! ■

CONTINUED - BICYCLE MOBILE FROM PAGE 3

study the bicycle and the ham radio antenna. After mounting up, they charge from the lot in a hail of grit and noise.

Riley and Alice press on and reach Kingman shortly before sunset. After finding a campsite and seeing to McBark's needs, they head for a nearby Cracker Barrel Restaurant. But the rocking chairs on the porch are filled with hungry, waiting patrons. They settle for a Smith's Supermarket that hosts a deli and a microwave.

This is the last town large enough to support a full-service bike shop. In the morning they'll get a checkup and have the wheels trued before heading into the desert. ■

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