



OXTALES

Oxley Amateur Radio
P.O. Box 712
Port Macquarie 2444

Secretary: Alan Nutt Ph# 6582.3557

Lunar Eclipse

The skies on the night of Sunday, 16th July, 2000 were kind enough to show most of us on the mid north coast some glimpses of the Lunar Eclipse. There were generous breaks in cloud cover for viewing, and only the most critical amongst us would have complained above visibility. I hope those of you who took time to look, soaked it up, because unless some super-longevity arrangements come into effect in the coming years, none of us are likely to see an event of similar magnitude in this neck of the woods during our currently expected life-span. An amateur friend, Al Hennessey (VK2RX), dabbles in the science of astronomy as a periodic diversion from AR, and he sent me a series of photographs that he took through his 10" reflector 'scope, from his home "observatory" in River-

wood, NSW. The accompanying shot was picked out

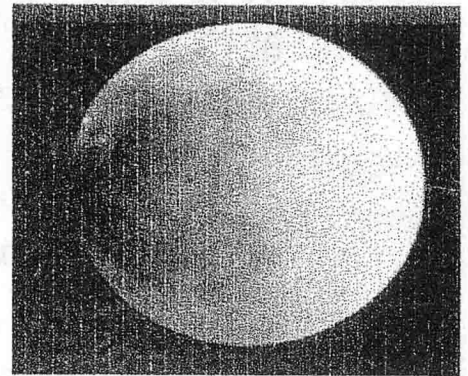


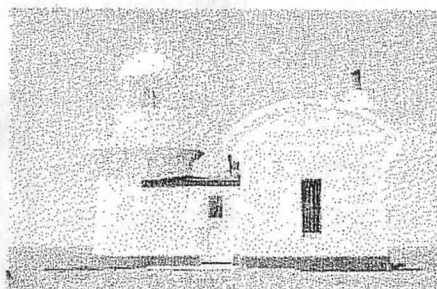
Photo by Al Hennessey (VK2RX)

as being one that showed fair coverage by the earth's umbra, along with some of the detail visible in the darkened area. Al used an ordinary 35mm SLR camera attached via an adaptor to his 'scope that runs on a tracking mount. The only other specialised equipment required to obtain the shot were some fleecy-lined Long-Johns, and a duffle coat with which to keep out the cold. (Sorry! Just a figure of speech... we all know that cold doesn't get kept out... it is warmth that gets kept in!)

Submitted by VK2TT

Lighthouse Event

This is to inform everyone of the upcoming Amateur Radio event at Tacking Point Lighthouse in Port Macquarie on the 19th and 20th of August. There was a favourable response to this outing at the ORARC club meeting when it was brought up.



Tacking Point Lighthouse

Lots of the members indicated that they would be there. And when it was mentioned the Barbie would be there with snags on tap, everyone was convinced! We will be QRV on 20 mtrs. With some possible specially made up QSL cards to send for the qso's.

11 Metre Report

You may or may not of heard, as of 21st of august (Monday) there will be a "CB NET" which will operate twice a month (1st and 3rd monday of each month) at 7pm on 27.305MHz (ch30) USB. Jason VK2FT (a keen cb'er) has informed local and surrounding cb operators that a net was in the pipe line, and many are keen to participate or listen (sand bag) on the events. Jason says "A CB net is just what the club

needs" to gain new members and possibly recruit new and young blood into the system, and has offered full encouragement to the cb operators to steer them into the right direction. "REMEMBER" Free to air radio has a maximum power limit of 12watts SSB and 4watts AM, so any stock CB radio will do. Hope to see you there.

Jason (VK2FT)

ORARC Minutes of August 5, 2000

The meeting was delayed when it was found that the usual Club rooms were being occupied by the SES for a first-aid course. The members adjourned to the home of Bill, 2ZCV, where the meeting was opened at 1335 hours by the President, Charles Edmondson, who extended a welcome to all present, including visitors Craig Martin, VK2HBM and Graham Palmer, VK2TRM. Twenty one members were present and their names were entered in the Attendance Book. Apologies were received from VK2's JB, DAL, AYD, KCE, FT and TRK.

The minutes of the July meeting were read and confirmed. Moved by the Secretary that the minutes be received, Seconded by Bruce, 2HOT. Carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes:

- Due to an oversight in failing to advise all Club members by mail of the forthcoming AGM, it was agreed that the AGM would have to be postponed until the 2nd September.
- The Secretary read our letter

to Council expressing our interest in any proposed changes to the SES premises.

- Agreed that we do not become associated with WICEN.
- No further developments as yet on a CB net.
- The Secretary has contacted Department of Lands and Water Conservation who are responsible for all lighthouse installations in the State. They have requested a formal letter from the Club before giving approval to use the site. Following discussion, eight members indicated their interest in the exercise and it was therefore agreed to formally request permission from the Department to use the site on the proposed dates of August 19th and 20th. Bob, 2EJK offered to act as publicity officer for the occasion in the absence of the Secretary in Sydney.

Correspondence in:

- “AR” July issue
- WIA May Council minutes
- WIA Conference of Clubs
- K. Coulter - membership subs.
- WICEN - missing repeater

(Continued from page 3)

equipment

Will Jamieson - announcement re equipment store room for "Oxtails"

Moved by the Secretary and seconded by Bill, 2ZCV that the correspondence be received and dealt with as necessary by the Secretary and Treasurer. Carried.

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer reported that the bank balance as at 31st July was \$1987 and no accounts were outstanding. A written financial report was submitted.

Moved by the Treasurer and seconded by Bill, 2ZCV that the report be received. Carried.

Committee reports:

Repeater: Trevor, 2TT submitted a written report on the repeater site working bee.

Equipment: Will, 2XXU reported that he was still processing the trustee's recommendations.

Social: A sausage sizzle was suggested for the Lighthouse exercise and agreed to with enthusiasm.

General Business:

Sked Time: It was agreed that from next Wednesday, the evening

net would commence at 1900 hours on 147.00/146.40Mhz instead of 1930 hours.

Constitution: It was agreed that the President, Secretary, 2DAL and 2AYD consider the final Constitution draft before the AGM next month.

The matters for consideration by them as follows:

Ordinary Membership - definition and deletion of "mature age" clause.

Honorary Membership definition.

Life Membership definition.

Distant Membership definition.

The Secretary agreed to draft a clause for inclusion relating to the establishment of By-Laws. It was then moved by Arthur, 2ATM and seconded by Bruce, 2HOT that we accept the Constitution with the inclusion of the BY-Law provision clause. Carried.

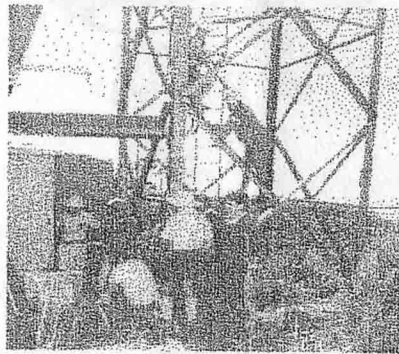
Next Meeting:

The next general meeting was scheduled for 1300 hours on Saturday, 2nd September, 2000 to be followed by the AGM.

VK2RPM DIGIPEATER SITE

Here's a blast from the past mates! If anyone recognizes anybody in this picture please let me know.

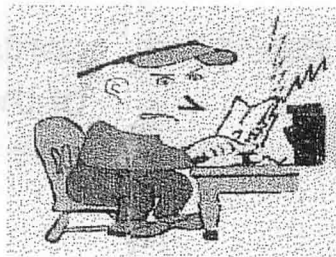
Anyway, Trevor, VK2TT and Bill, VK2ZCV made a run up to the site recently to determine if there was something affecting the



VK2RPM Middle Brother Site

strength of the transmitter to Port. And, indeed they located the problem. Looks like with the ongoing erection of new antennas on the tower, one had been installed in the path to Port of the Digi antenna. New hardware to extend our antenna is in the works at this stage.

EDITOR'S



CORNER

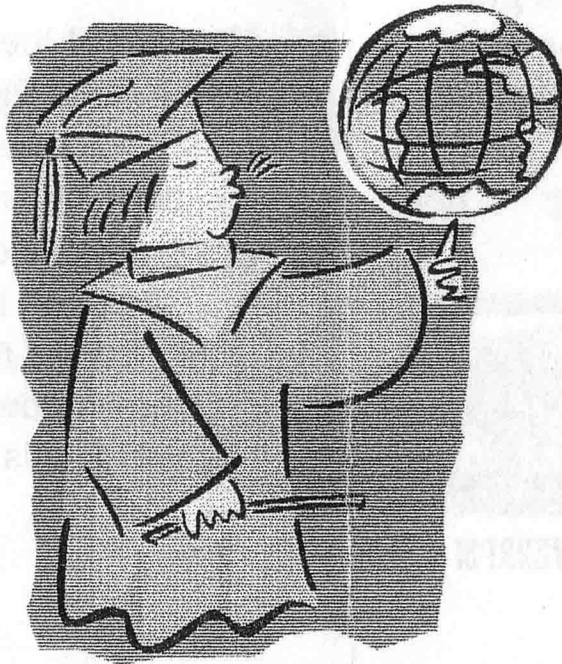
G'day all out there in newsletter land. It's been busy here lately with the upcoming Lighthouse day and the early newsletter and all. I want to welcome all the new members, and all the old officers that will be replaced at the upcoming AGM. They have served us well, and are to be commended! Nothing ever stays the same it seems in this life. Sometimes you really wish that it could. But, I guess if it did, then life wouldn't be what it was meant to be.

It seems like we get used to things and the icons that we appreciate and love. Then all changes, and we have to get used to the new. I guess I am not afraid of the new. Afterall, I came down to a new country and sure am enjoying making this newsletter to a bunch of people that I really love.

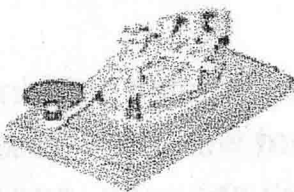
So mates, here's to the ORARC and all it stands for, and all the wonderful people that make it what it is today!!!!!! Larry VK2IPO

Congratulations Are in Order

Following recent examinations for Amateur qualifications, we are happy to report the following achievements. Gary Lawer & Graham Palmer were successful in gaining their Full Call Theory, along with Regulations. Gary has been allocated the call sign VK2TRK. Craig Martin was another success-



ful candidate, obtaining passes in Novice Theory and Regulations examinations. Craig is now sporting the call sign VK2HBM. Craig is also a new member to the ORARC Inc. Welcome aboard Craig. A round of applause for the above, and of course, to our education officer, Larry (VK2CLL) for his major contribution towards the success of the candidates candidate. - de Trevor (VK2TT)



Tried half a CW Keyer?

Most of us who have attempted to exploit the CW segments of the Amateur bands have probably tried various keying devices as an aid to sending Morse Code, the Gentleman's Mode.

The devices have ranged from the humble standard Morse Key (affectionately known as the "Brass Pump") through the various

mechanical semi-auto keys (affectionately called "Jiggers" or "Bugs") up to fully automatic electronic keyers of varying designs that often sport varying levels of sophistry. Some dedicated cheats, particularly in the ranks of testers, even stoop to using PC's!

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

I have an amateur friend who has been through all the mechanical devices that have appeared over the last 50 years. For reasons of modesty he would wish to remain anonymous, but his experience has been interesting. This gent operated manual Morse telegraphy systems professionally for many years, and in retirement took up amateur radio. Although still happily proficient in the use of a mechanical "Jigger", he felt as though he would like to try out the fully electronic variety that could produce delightful music on the CW segments of our bands. An Accu-Keyer, of ARRL design, recently came up for sale and this was duly acquired.

At this point, my friend found that this new device was rather strange to handle, and wondered if there was any simple way of "sneaking up" on it to make friends a little more easily and quickly. His major difficulty was in coming to terms with the lighter paddle usually fitted to such keyers, plus the unfamiliar automatic "dash" facility. (He was used to the "Jigger's" heavier mechanical levers and springs, plus the requirement to "roll his own 'dashes'" by manually timing them on the "dash" lever). How much nicer it would be for him if

he could use his beloved "Jigger" to key the wretched electronic device?

Some collective thought was applied and we came up with the idea of initially using "half of it"... i.e. just the automatic "dot" sending facility, and somehow leave the tailoring of the "dashes" to the operator's adroit fingers. That would be stage one. Then, when familiarity had triumphed over the marginally different "feel" of sending electronically timed (and self-completing) "dot" elements, he could move on to mastering the electronically timed (and self-completing) "dash" elements. All of this could be achieved with minimal "doctoring" of his "Jigger", without any more than the temporary removal of a wire link, and some non-destructive modification to the "Jigger's" vibrating reed's adjustment.

It was a simple matter to remove one electrical connection link from the "Jigger" such that the mechanical "dot" contact was no longer linked in parallel with the "Jigger's" "dash" contact. Having done that, the now isolated "dot" contact of the "Jigger" was wired (through a shielded pair) to the "dot" input of the electronic keyer, along with a frame earth

(Continued from page 7)

from the "Jigger" to the electronic keyer's frame. Next, the vibrating reed of the "Jigger" was adjusted such that it could no longer vibrate when the "dot" lever was pressed to "dot", but instead, would make a permanent "dot" contact while ever the lever was held hard over. That worked beautifully. Hold the lever to "dot" and lovely timed "dots" (all self-completing... right up to, and including, the last one) would stream out of the electronic keyer until the cows came home, or more likely, until the user allowed the lever to return to its position of rest. That took care of the "dots".

The "dash" production was a piece of cake now. All we had to do was wire the now isolated "dash" contact of the "Jigger" to an appropriate plug, and shove that plug into the jack on the keyer that was already provided to accept an ordinary old Morse Key of the "brass pump" type. Operating the "dash" lever of the "Jigger" now produced man-made, and man-timed, "dashes". Our hero was now able to use "half the keyer" by driving it with his old faithful, and familiar, "Jigger".

This arrangement, naturally, has a slightly different "feel" but much, much closer to that of a fully

mechanical "Jigger". After a familiarisation period, we will relocate the "dash" wire that currently allows the production of manual "dashes", to the electronic keyer's "dash" input. Our hero will then be able to adapt to lazing around while the electronic keyer sends automatically timed (and self-completing!) "dash" elements... until the cows come home, if required... and also take advantage of the automatic word spacing that the Accu-Keyer supports. The music will be sweet!

The foregoing is *not* presented as a novel approach that has never been made before. I am sure others have done things similarly. It is presented mainly as a local "member interest" story because it happened right here in the Oxley Region. Local stories give a bit of "presence" to our newsletter, I think. Oh! Yes... the herb of the story was not named, but some people call him "Possum"!

Submitted by VK2TT (Trev)

FOX-HUNTING FEARS

Some possible reasons for lack of response:

1. Inertia
2. Afraid they won't be good at it
3. They don't know how
4. They don't have the specialised equipment
5. They don't know how much fun it is

The best way I've found to overcome this is to put on a hunt during another ham event. A summer picnic in the park is a great opportunity. Here is what worked for us.

First, use a low power transmitter. Something around 10 to 20 mW can be heard for a couple hundred metres, but won't overload a hand-held when body shielding, even at three metres. Put it (with legal Ider, of course) in a suitable container to make it reasonably foolproof. I used an old paint can, with a rubber duckie on the lid (if you put the duckie off-centre, you can hold the can by the handle). An Off/On switch on the outside is helpful, but not mandatory.

Now you have a transmitter that anyone can go place in the park, and which is reasonably easy to hunt using body shielding. Get a few people to look for it --don't worry about

making a fool of yourself. And have some kids try it; you don't need a license, after all. And don't limit yourself to just one hunt - whoever gets there first gets to hide it next. This way everyone gets a chance to give it a try.

The best recruitment moment for most people is when they find their first transmitter. "Oh! I can do it!" So make it easy, and give them plenty of opportunities. We often had between 10 and 20 hunts in an afternoon, including the participation by kids from an adjacent picnic.

If you are trying to get a mobile hunt going, the first problem is lack of equipment. Without the first problem is lack of equipment. Without a good attenuator, it can get very frustrating. Joe Moell just published a simple attenuator design in his column in 73 Magazine, and I have a similar design (the "Ultimate Attenuator") which has enabled a lot of folks to get started with little investment. I have done club projects for four clubs, with around 100 built so far. The companion antenna doesn't have to be fancy, either. I use a two element quad made from PVC pipe and wire. Total cost is around \$2 or so, and you can transmit through it

(Continued on page 10)

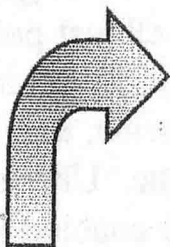
(Continued from page 9)

for portable operation as well.

The best way for most folks to start is to ride along with someone else who is more experienced. This brings us to the "chicken and egg" problem of how do you bootstrap participation. Get three or four people willing to put together the minimum equipment and do it. Talk about all the fun you are having on the repeater. Write hunt reports for the club newsletters. Invite likely prospects to ride along with you. Build extra equipment to loan out. As Nike used to say, "Just Do It".

Once you get started, probably the easiest way to kill interest is to make the hunts too difficult. Sure, you will hear stories about the transmitter encased in the retaining wall in the free-way divider, and other classic hiding

REMINDER



**ORARC 147.00 RPTR NET
MEETS ON THE TELE-
REPEATER EVERY WEDS.
NIGHT NOW AT 7 P.M.**

places, but that is NOT appropriate for beginners. Reflections, unfamiliarity with the equipment, putting the antenna on backwards, there are enough problems to make even the simplest hunt challenging when you are getting started.

And, do it often. Once a month barely keeps the interest up if a hunter has had a couple of bad hunts. We used to do a "leapfrog" hunt; the first hunter to find the transmitter went and hid, and when all the hunters got there, they went looking for the next one. You can have four hunts in an evening without being out very late, and everyone gets a chance to find it several times (make sure you congratulate folks on finding it, even if they were not the first ones there!)

Dale WB6BYU e-mail
kuon@onlinemac.com

The first net meeting on the repeater I think may have caught everybody by surprise as it was 30 minutes earlier. We only had about 4 people to check in at the designated time. But at the normal time of 7:30 seemed like everybody started coming out of the woodwork! I wonder how many got caught with tea or tele? Let us know if this new time is a good idea? We will be going to daylight savings time shortly too.

GENERAL NOTICE

After our AGM and the close of afternoon tea it has been suggested that the members reassemble for the purpose of viewing the contents of the equipment room.

The Club Committee have expressed a desire to have the equipment room books, periodicals together with ham hardware equipment collated, classified and assessed into various categories for appraisal.

Under the terms of the constitution our two club trustees are namely:

Bill Sinclair VK2ZCV

Arthur Monk VK2ATM respectively,

Who are empowered to act as the watch-dogs of club property and who have spoken at some length concerning the disposal of club equipment during our May meeting and should they so desire they may care to make further address for the benefit of the members.

It has been suggested that the equipment may fall into separate general classifications such as:

1. Equipment generally used by members be retained
2. Similarly this would apply to notes, guides, instruction manuals, and text books which would be of benefit to members
3. Particular items of the past that could be donated to

museums, teaching institutions or retained

4. Redundant items which members wish to purchase thereby assisting club funds
5. Items of doubtful worth which after due consideration may suggest that they could be disposed of entirely

It has been suggested by members that our teaching officer Larry Lindsay, VK2CLL, be invited to choose any items which he may require. He was presented with an itemised list of all equipment available and whilst he thanked the club for their generous offer, he has stated that he is fortunate to already have the teaching aids which the club could supply.

Typed in by Michelle Carle

Edited by VK2IPO

Submitted by: VK2XXU

Will – Equipment Officer ORARC

OXLEY REGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB Inc.
MEMBERSHIP REGISTER.

- 1 F JOHN (FLORENCE) BAILEY VK2KHB PORT MACQUARIE 02 6582.2192
- 2 F JOHN (MARY)) BAYLIS VK2JB LAKE CATHIE
- 3 D ALAN BELL VK2BEL WOOTTON 02 4997.7293
- 4 F COLIN (JAN)) BELLENGER VK2AF PORT MACQUARIE 02 6582.3803
- 5 F BOB BRODIE VK2EJK PORT MACQUARIE 02 6582.0592
- 6 F ROY W (JUNE)) BURGESS VK2YOR PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.9349
- 7 F BRUCE CLARK VK2MAZ PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.5245
- 8 F LARRY (SHIRLEY)) CONNER VK2IPO PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.6924
- 9 F KEVIN (JUNE)) COULTER VK2MAM PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.8325
- 10 F IAN DALRYMPLE VK2XU PORT MACQUARIE 02 6584.9922
- 11 F JIM DANIELS PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.1933
- 12 F TRACY (CINDY)) DIGNUM VK2GTM HERONS CREEK 02 65 85.7061
- 13 F CHARLES (PAT)) EDMONDSON VK2FSH PORT MACQUARIE 02 6584.0495
- 14 D STAN (BETTY)) ELLIS VK2DDL TUNCURRY 02 6554.7996
- 15 F BADEN (VALARIE)) GLEESON VK2MOQ PORT MACQUARIE 02 6582.2018
- 16 F LEWIS GREEN VK2AG PORT MACQUARIE 02 6584.9162
- 17 F KENNETH (-)) GWINNELL PORT MACQUARIE 02 6584.2860
- 18 F WARWICK HALL VK2WGH PORT MACQUARIE
- 19 L KEITH HANLON - PORT MACQUARIE -
- 20 L DAVID HARDING VK2AIF WAUCHOPE
- 21 L PETER HILL VK2BZA LAKE CATHIE 02 6585.5349
- 22 F SNOW HODDER VK2DV PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.7095
- 23 F WILL (CAROL)) JAMIESON VK2XXU DUNBOGAN 02 6559.8622
- 24 F JOHN (THEA)) JONES VK2JJ LAKE CATHIE 02 6585.4522
- 25 F DON JONES PORT MACQUARIE 02 6582.5084
- 26 D BRIAN KELLY VK2WBK TAMWORTH 02 6776.2004
- 27 F GARRY (LINDA)) LAWER - PORT MACQUARIE 02 6582.0597
- 28 F JACK LEEDS VK2KN PORT MACQUARIE 02 6582.5991
- 29 L LARRY LINDSAY VK2CLL WAUCHOPE 02 6587.1155
- 30 L HENRY LUNDELL VK2ZHE PORT MACQUARIE -
- 31 F KEITH (GWEN)) LUTTON VK2KDL TELEGRAPH POINT 02 6585.0321
- 32 F ALLAN (DAWN)) MADIGAN VK2OA WAUCHOPE 02 6585.2043
- 33 F JASON MARIS VK2FT TELEGRAPH POINT 02 6585.0426
- 34 F CRAIG MARTIN VK2HBM SANCROX
- 35 F JIM MCINTYRE VK2CJM PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.5696
- 36 F JOHN MCLEAN VK2KCE PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.7400
- 37 F TERRY MEEHAN VK2KL PORT MACQUARIE 02 6584.2997
- 38 L ARTHUR (WENDY)) MONCK VK2ATM PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.1311
- 39 F RAY MULLINS VK2WRM PORT MACQUARIE 02 6581.0685
- 40 F LAURIE (ROBIN)) NEWHAM VK2ELN PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.5387
- 41 F ALAN NUTT VK2GD PORT MACQUARIE 02 6582.3557
- 42 F DAVID A (DEE)) PILLEY VK2AYD KING CREEK 02 6585.2647
- 43 F BILL ROTH VK2CWR PORT MACQUARIE 02 6581.1776
- 44 F NEIL (VERENA)) SANDFORD VK2EI PORT MACQUARIE 02 6582.5830
- 45 F BILL (RUTH)) SINCLAIR VK2ZCV PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.9302
- 46 F DAVID (ROMA)) SMITH VK2DAL WAUCHOPE 02 6585.1004
- 47 F DAVID (AILEEN)) TARRANT VK2HBC SARATOGA 02 4369.8738
- 48 F TREVOR (PHYLLIS)) THATCHER VK2TT WAUCHOPE 02 6585.2278
- 49 F NEIL (WENDY)) TROTTER VK2NNT PORT MACQUARIE 02 6584.1940
- 50 F GRAEME VIRTUE VK2GJ BRUNSWICH HEADS
- 51 F BRUCE (GWEN)) WALKER VK2HOT PORT MACQUARIE 02 6583.8360
- 52 F JIM WEBSTER VK2BZD PORT MACQUARIE -

F = Full Member D = Distant Member L = Life Member