



OXTALES

Newsletter of the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club Inc.
PO Box 712 Port Macquarie 2444

[<http://portmacquarie.yourguide.com.au/viewclub.asp?clubid=1044&pageid=2012>]

January 2005

Compiled by VK2TT

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VICE PRES: Bill Brooke VK2ZCW 6581.0547
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President's Report

The sheer magnitude of the tsunami disaster makes it difficult to get our minds around it and certainly none of us would have experienced anything on this scale before.



We had some close personal friends who were picnicking on an isolated beach just north of Phuket with their three children when they noticed the tide suddenly go out, leaving fish floundering on the shore. As the kids rushed to grab them, their father saw the incoming wall of water, shouted a warning and they all fled from the beach into shelter, just in time to escape the incoming surge. At that point, they had no idea of the extent of the disaster from which they had just escaped and it was only as they hiked back to Phuket and saw the devastation along the way that they realised how fortunate they had been.

Once again local amateur operators have and still are playing a vital role in assisting relief efforts by providing communications into otherwise isolated areas. Dave, 2AYD has provided some interesting details of emergency operations which have taken place in virtually every affected country, co-ordinated in some instances by operators here in VK land.

The other night we had a simple blackout. Totally unexpected as usual but I was surprised how long it took me, after floundering around in the dark in my very cluttered garage, to actually find a torch and shed some light on the scene. Which brings me to my main point - while we aren't ex-

pecting a tsunami to come roaring ashore in the immediate future, just how prepared are we, individually and as a club, to swing into action in the event of the unthinkable actually happening? Perhaps we should a little more deliberate in our preparation for emergencies since emergencies seldom, if ever, flag their intention of happening. I know many of us have alternate power sources of one sort or another and portable gear that we can put our hands on but could we really be operational within a realistic time span if we were called on right at this moment? Or would you be like me, stumbling around in the dark looking for a torch? And I really did mean to charge the battery after I last used it. Just didn't get 'round twit'

These are practical questions that we might need to pay attention to if we want to demonstrate our readiness in an emergency. A little forethought and preparation can go a long way when the chips are down.

Alan Nutt VK2GD
El Presidente

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Down The Coax

Friday Night Get-togethers
Fri. January 14th and 28th
7.00pm

February Monthly Meeting
Sat. 5th Feb.
2.00pm

Friday Night Get-togethers
February 11th & 25th
7.00pm

March Montly Meeting
Saturday 5th Feb.
2.00pm

Net Controllers' Roster

Sundays		Wednesdays	
January 2005			
VK2OA	Jan-02	VK2GD	Jan-05
VK2AIF	Jan-09	VK2AYD	Jan-12
VK2BZD	Jan-16	VK2HOT	Jan-19
VK2TT	Jan-23	VK2ZHE	Jan-26
VK2FSH	Jan-30		
February			
VK2OA	Feb-06	VK2ZCM	Feb-02
VK2AIF	Feb-13	VK2GD	Feb-09
VK2BZD	Feb-20	VK2EI	Feb-16
VK2TT	Feb-27	VK2ATM	Feb-23
March 2005			
VK2FSH	Mar-06	VK2GD	Mar-02
VK2OA	Mar-13	VK2AYD	Mar-09
VK2AIF	Mar-20	VK2ZCM	Mar-16
VK2BZD	Mar-27	VK2HOT	Mar-23
		VK2ZHE	Mar-30
April 2005			
VK2TT	Apr-03	VK2GD	Apr-06
VK2FSH	Apr-10	VK2EI	Apr-13
VK2OA	Apr-17	VK2HOT	Apr-20
VK2AIF	Apr-24	VK2ATM	Apr-27
May			
VK2BZD	May-01	VK2ZHE	May-04
VK2TT	May-08	VK2AYD	May-11
VK2FSH	May-15	VK2EI	May-18
VK22OA	May-29	VK2HOT	May-25
June			
VK2AIF	Jun-05	VK2ZHE	Jun-01
VK2BZD	Jun-12	VK2GD	Jun-08
VK2TT	Jun-19	VK2ZCM	Jun-15
VK2FSH	Jun-26	VK2EI	Jun-22
		VK2ATM	Jun-29

ANALYSING TELEGRAPHY

A few lines about the recent articles in OXTALES. (By Allan - VK2OA)

Most PMG Morse telegraphists used a brass key until the Simplex Auto (a semi-automatic device) was invented by Leo Cohen a Melbourne telegraphist in 1923. Costing about three pounds ten shillings, it made Morse working a lot easier

for telegraph operators.

Morse code was always an art and one of its beauties was the timing of dots, dashes, and spaces. There was no technology that measured variations in the length of signals and spaces, and telegraphists did an excellent job when assessing these important aspects, that made their Morse signals almost perfect.

When I was a 14-year-old telegraph messenger, I began learning Morse, and five nights a week I listened to my first Postmaster sending beautiful signals on the key. As I learnt to read these signals on the " clacker " I became very interested, but it was not until my reception speed reached 10 or 12 words, some months later, that I was allowed to touch a Morse key.

The night eventually arrived when Mr. Smith said: "Tonight you are going to send to me. Posture is very important - sit up straight and hold the key in same way you have watched me holding it - plant both your feet on the floor and relax your whole body. Extend your right arm straight back from the Morse key." At first I sent groups of letters and figures and about a week later I was allowed to send an actual telegram.

It felt and it sounded good, and I was excited. At the end of my first session of sending he commented, "They were good signals Snow." He added: "And who else sends signals like you just sent." I said, quite proudly, "You do." I had listened to his Morse signals for so long that when my turn came to send, I parroted his excellent Morse signals. He was about 60-years and I was 14-years, and he had showed me how to form good Morse signals by listening. (Proper teaching methods get results.)

Telegraphists-in-training (I became one in 1946) were taught all about the code and the formation of signals. They were taught that accuracy was the thing and that speed would soon follow. They were taught to respect the operator at the other end of the Morse line, to be responsible in the way they worked a Morse line and most importantly they were constantly reminded to be rational in their behaviour on a Morse line. (No arguing, etc.) Isn't it a pity these three R's are not added to the existing three R's that children are taught at school (Reading, riting, rithmetic. Respect, responsibility, rationality.)

My philosophy about CW is the same I had in my Morse code days, on country Morse lines and in the CTO Sydney. Always do your best - don't be in a mad hurry - have brief overs not more than 2 minutes, (as VK2CLL Larry taught, don't waffle) and have a good sense of humour. Even if signals are not perfect when analysed by these damned new-fangled inventions, don't worry. Any CW operator today who learnt to communicate by a

proper teaching method should be efficient at the art, however, if some signals are not "spot on" it's not the end of the world. I say, "enjoy yourself."

ONE OF LIFE'S EXPERIENCES

A boy who was partially deaf was sent home from school with a note for his mother. She was informed that her son was too dull to learn, he was holding back the class and should be taken away from the school.

She felt awful and humiliated. She took him away with the comment: "My son is not dull. I will teach him myself."

And that is how Tom Edison, the great inventor, came to be educated.

Among other things he invented the electric light, the movie projector and the record player. When he died, all the lights in the United States, were turned off for one minute as a mark of respect.

Allan (VK2OA)

Did You Know That:

1. Mt. Isa is technically the largest city in the world by area.
2. Australia has more beaches than any other country—about 7,000
3. Mines make up 0.02% of Australia's landmass... less than pubs!
4. The Refrigerator's cooling system was invented in Australia in the 1850's.
5. Australia's dingo fence is twice the length of the Great Wall of China.

(More facts from VK2ZCV's "Tally-Ho" booklets)

Welcome to New Members

A warm welcome is extended to two new members who have joined our ranks over the recent months. They are Neil Blake (VK2PV) of Comboyne, and John Marriot (VK2CIF) of North Haven. The membership looks forward to meeting with Neil and John at our monthly meetings and on their air. Don't forget our weekly nets on Sundays and Wednesdays on VK2RPM, at 8.30am and 7.00pm respectively. These nets provide a convenient means for new and existing members to become acquainted.

If You Can't Beat 'em Join 'em!

Readers may be interested in this recent article from the UK Microwave group magazine Scatterpoint (formerly RSGB Microwave Newsletter) 73 de VK2EI

You live in a hole in the ground?

THEN REMOTE CONTROL YOUR MICROWAVE STATION THE 21st CENTURY WAY!

With the advent of Wireless LAN technology it's now even easier than ever before to have a remote transceiver and antenna system located on a high spot and operate it from below. We've not yet explored the restrictions set by the UK amateur radio licence in this respect but the idea is interesting anyway! With modern WLANs you can remote control over several kilometres, never mind hundreds of metres. We already know of at least one UK microwaver who has such a link back home from his portable site so he can access the www.on4kst.com microwave chat room and thereby have this additional "talkback" facility for arranging contacts on the microwave bands during contests. While this may not "go down" well with the purists among us, it is still worth exploring the way in which it's being done. Who knows, maybe all of use will be using www.on4kst.com for "talkback" one of these days! We'd like to hear from readers who have or who are doing similar things.

*The following is an email sent to the USA Microwave reflector run by Tom Williams, WA1MBA...
Wireless station W0OHU*

We moved to a condo in May 2003 and by June, I was operational from the condo to my nearby wood private garage - using Wireless LAN as the connection between the condo and garage. I set up a Point-Point wireless LAN, and had PSK31 running on 20m in no time - then I added NetMeeting to bring the audio from the radio into the condo.

Since I needed internet access at the remote computer (to synchronize the clock for WSJT weak signal digital work) I activated ICS (internet connection sharing). So, at that point in time (Aug 2003), I had all working using a dial-up ISP connection from the condo computer. I use VNC to drive the remote computer desktop and I use TRX-mgr to drive the remote radio (was originally a Kenwood TS-690s), and now is a Yaesu FT-857.

Two weeks ago I switched from dialup to cable modem ISP and so now I am getting things going again - Have all working ex-

cept the remote internet.

I mostly operate on 144MHz and 50MHz and 20m on digital modes. As for controlling antennas, I used X10 to control different power things in the garage (power supplies and blowers for summer in MN). I am too "cheap" to purchase a computer controlled rotator - but one could easily be added.

I am also working on sending CW via my setup - I have the basic parts and know-how I just need time, etc!

(Page 16 Scatterpoint July/August 2004)

Stirrer's Award 2004

Well, The Stirrer's Award for 2004 has been "conferred in absentia". This is the first occasion that the recipient's absence has made this form of presentation necessary. Other commitments intervened and this year's recipient of this prestigious artefact was unable to be present and receive this honour at our 2004 BBQ at the popular QTH of Keith (VK2KDL) and Gwen.

This year marks the seventh "awarding" of this coveted trophy since it all began back in 1998... last century, last millennium, in fact. Thus, it appears, that it is with us for years to come.

It is worth recording that this prestigious award was conceived, constructed and implemented by Bruce (VK2HOT).

Bruce became aware of the value and need for some "stirring" to take place in order to get things moving in the club.

Pictured to the left, this impressive (yet totally impracticable!) item of head-wear was first awarded to our popular late member David (VK2DAL). Dave was a "mover & shaker" who showed that things needed to be kept on the move to prevent stagnation. As a result of Dave's active "stirring", Bruce was prompted to produce and formally award the "trophy".

Receipt of the award places an obligation upon the recipient to introduce a modification/addition to the adornment of the helmet, and then at the close of a year's "ownership", choose a new recipient upon whom to confer the honour for the ensuing year. The helmet cannot be awarded to the same member over two consecutive years regardless of the level of magnificence of their "stirring".

Be ready, Bob! It's yours for the club's 2005 Stirrer's year. Wear, and use it with pride!



The Helmet!

[In all its gladiatorial splendour]

FOR SALE

Ultimate antenna system.
Ex-VK2DAL, comprising
15 mtr rail track, Tram,
Solar electric winch,
Rotator. Tri-band 4el ant.
Buyer disassembles. \$1,000.
Could sell separate.
Contact VK2AYD 6585 2647
or e-mail.

Net Controllers

Anybody wish to be included on
the Net Controller's Roster ?
Share the fun. Let your
OXTALES Editor know, and he
will gladly slot you in !

Silent Key - Geoff Hunziker VK2BGF

It is with deep regret that we record the passing of Geoff Hunziker VK2BGF of Old Bar. Geoff passed away on Sunday 12 December 2004 in hospital in Sydney.

Geoff was raised in Moorland near Taree. His PMG career made him a familiar figure in Post Offices along the north coast and eventually brought him back close to home at Taree.

Geoff was one of the foundation members of the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club. He is well remembered for his infectious enthusiasm for the hobby and his strong support for our club during its formative years. Although he had further to travel than most members Geoff attended almost every meeting and club activity for many years. Geoff also saw the need for a club to nurture the hobby in the Taree area. He was instrumental in establishing the Taree and District Amateur Radio Club where he served as president for many years. He was a much respected Life Member of the Taree club.

As well as Amateur Radio, Geoff had many interests and gave freely of his time and energy to the community. He is particularly remembered for his contribution to marine safety through his radio facilities at Old Bar where he built his family home prior to his retirement as assistant Postmaster at Taree. His interest in technology was legendary and his interests in things mechanical ranged from cars to trains. Geoff was also a member of the Morsecodians Fraternity.

Geoff's funeral was held on Saturday 18th December 2004 with the service at the Taree Uniting Church followed by a burial service at the Moorland Cemetery. His esteemed standing in the community was recognized by the very large attendance at both the church, and at the grave side. There were two eulogies at the church service, one from the family and one by John Farley VK2KHZ the president of the Taree and District Amateur Radio Club.

Deepest sympathy is extended to Geoff's wife and family in their sad loss. Geoff's key may be silent but his contributions to both amateur radio and the community continue to live on.

Vale: Geoff Hunziker VK2BGF

Submitted by Henry Lundell VK2ZHE

Hudson Avenue Lit Up!

Congratulations to Barry and Fay Gilson for their annual Christmas light display. Their contribution to the Christmas spirit moved some of the local residents to send them letters of thanks.

The story, complete with a photograph of Barry and Fay, made the Monday 10 January 2005 edition of the "Port Macquarie News". It was nice to read some good news in the local paper for a change.

No doubt the traffic in Hudson Avenue will now be even heavier next Christmas in anticipation of seeing another spectacular display, so spare a thought for Barry next December. Barry did mention at one of our Friday night get togethers prior to last Christmas, that his greatest fear is hail when he has all those thousands of lights up.

Oxtales Handicap 2004

At the conclusion of business at the November monthly general meeting, the 2004 Oxtales Handicap was "run". This inaugural event was inspired by the spring racing carnival, but unlike the Melbourne Cup, every horse was a winner. Entrants even got to keep their horses as a unique souvenir, and what a diverse range of equine likenesses they were too, the horses, not the entrants!

Before the race was run, the prize for the "Best Dressed Gentleman" was awarded to Will VK2XXU for his outstanding sartorial splendor. No doubt his well earned framed certificate has taken pride of place in a prominent location on Will's wall.

Form played no part in the outcome of the race, despite the well known names of the horses in the field. Arthur VK2ATM scientifically drew each placegetter from the namecards in the ORARC vessel of chance. Arthur regaled the assembled multitude with

a particularly clever commentary on each place-getter. Our hard working Honorary Member, Wendy Monck, who wrote the commentary as well as organizing the race and supplying the prizes, received a spirited round of applause from the meeting in thanks for her efforts. Everyone enjoyed the fun and their novelty prizes, which included genuine aluminium racing horseshoes (used), down to useful Chux Superwipes horses whose "legs were just two little pegs". It was noted that Treasurer John VK2KHB was particularly pleased with the contribution to the club's finances.

Bob VK2EJK surprised everyone by taking home the 2004 Oxtales Cup. It is rumoured that Bob was only slightly disappointed when he discovered that the many gold coins in the cup were chocolate filled! Second was Henry VK2ZHE. As Chief Steward he had to withstand an inquiry into the eligibility of a steward's horses to run in a race at which he was officiating. Needless to say, everything was declared to be "above board". After all, the Chief Steward was wearing an Akubra! Larry VK2CLL came in third. Officially fourth was Bill VK2ZCV, followed by Jim Daniel in fifth with Keith VK2KDL and Lew VK2AG in sixth and seventh respectively. Jim VK2BZD took out the honour of last place in the large field of 40 horses.

Note that Larry VK2CLL was not present to accept his prize so he missed out on being photographed.



Bob (VK2EJK) the winner, with Cup & frisky mount



Above:
Henry (VK2ZHE) complete with "Akubra" and 2nd placed steed.



Left:
Will (VK2XXU) receiving his "Best Dressed Gentleman" Award from Arthur (VK2ATM)

[Wot? No Boutonniere? Ed.]

Christmas BBQ and Meeting at QTH of Keith (VK2KDL) and Gwen

On Saturday, 4th December 2004, the ORARC Inc., held its annual Christmas party and an abbreviated monthly meeting. Despite a lightly overcast day, no rain fell, and the well attended function proceeded in very mild and pleasant conditions. It would have mattered little had there been some rain, because Keith and Gwen have a spacious under-cover area that provided excellent shelter for the attendees had the weather turned moist, or had there been a hot sun. (Our thanks go to Keith and Gwen for this excellent venue!)

In all, we had a head count of with the massive array of raffle prizes, and prepared by Wendy and Arthur, loser.

Lots of pictures were taken by brought cameras, and it became quite choose a selection for publication the easy way out. lot of the images that fell on in this

twenty-nine, and once again provided nobody went home a

those attendees who a difficult task to tion. Your editor and threw the whole into the air and those the available space newsletter were printed where they fell. The fact that they got in amongst the text didn't hoots, be- good



Microsoft Publisher took it upon



matter two cause cold Mi-



itself tread carefully and not obliterate anything from view. It just created a challenge to sort themselves. To help you identify



to the readers out for



those people in the pictures we give you and call-order. fie, Roma, Gwen, Verena, Carol & Elaine. And a (VK2CZW), Bill (VK2ZCV) and sausages were prepared with an impeccable manner. Another enjoyable club's social events for 2004 to a close.



ple shall their names signs in random VK2GD, Isabella, El- Phyllis, VK2AIF, Dee, Pamela, Pat, VK2KDL, VK2XXU, big Thank You to the BBQ cooks Bill and El Presidente, himself. The Stakes superior skills, great care and presented in Christmas barbie brought our





OXLEY REGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB Inc.
MEMBERSHIP REGISTER.
 (As at 1st January, 2005)

	Cat.	Surname	Given	XYL Name	Call	Location	Tph
1	O	BAILLY	JOHN	(FLORENCE)	VK2KHB	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.2192
2	L	BAYLIS	JOHN	(MARY)	VK2JB	LAKE CATHIE	02 6585.5703
3	D	BELL	ALAN		VK2BEL	COOLONGLOOK	02 6554.1689
4	O	BLAKE	NEIL		VK2PV	COMBOYNE	-
5	L	BLYTH	BOB		VK2XIQ	PORT MACQUARIE	-
6	O	BRODIE	BOB	(JO)	VK2EJK	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.0592
7	O	BROOKE	BILL	(AILSA)	VK2ZCW	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6581.0547
8	O	BURGES	ROY W	(JUNE)	VK2YOR	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.9349
9	O	COULTER	KEVIN	(JUNE)	VK2MAM	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.8325
10	A	DANIEL	JIM		-	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.1933
11	O	EDMONDSON	CHARLES	(PAT)	VK2FSH	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.0495
12	D	ELLIS	STAN	(BETTY)	VK2DDL	TUNCURRY	02 6554.7996
13	A	GILSON	BARRY	(FAY)	-	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.8814
14	O	GLEESON	BADEN	(VALERY)	VK2MOQ	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.2018
15	O	GREEN	LEWIS	(PAMELA)	VK2AG	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.9162
16	O	GREENWOOD	GRAEME		VK2ZIS	MCMAHONS POINT	02 6559.4836
17	L	HANLON	KEITH		-	PORT MACQUARIE	-
18	O	HANSEN	JOHN		VK2AYQ	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.7932
19	O	HARDING	DAVID	(ISABELLA)	VK2AIF	WAUCHOPE	02 6586.4980
20	O	JAMIESON	WILL	(CAROL)	VK2XXU	DUNBOGAN	02 6559.8622
21	L	LINDSAY	LARRY		VK2CLL	WAUCHOPE	02 6587.1155
22	L	LUNDELL	HENRY		VK2ZHE	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.0534
23	O	LUTTON	KEITH	(GWEN)	VK2KDL	TELEGRAPH POINT	02 6585.0321
24	O	MADIGAN	ALLAN	(DAWN)	VK2OA	WAUCHOPE	02 6585.2043
25	O	MARRIOT	JOHN	(ROSE)	VK2CIF	NORTH HAVEN	02 6559.9245
26	O	MARTIN	CRAIG		VK2ZCM	SANCROX	02 6585.3452
27	O	MCLEAN	JOHN		VK2KCE	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.7400
28	O	MEEHAN	TERRY		VK2KL	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.2997
29	H	MONCK	WENDY	(ARTHUR)	-	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.1311
30	L	MONCK	ARTHUR	(WENDY)	VK2ATM	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.1311
31	O	NEWHAM	LAURIE	(ROBIN)	VK2ELN	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.5387
32	O	NUTT	ALLAN	(ELAINE)	VK2GD	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.3557
33	O	PILLEY	DAVID A	(DEE)	VK2AYD	KING CREEK	02 6585.2647
34	O	ROTH	BILL		VK2CNR	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6581.1776
35	O	SANDFORD	NEIL	(VERENA)	VK2EI	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.5830
36	O	SINCLAIR	BILL		VK2ZCV	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.9302
37	O	TARRANT	DAVID	(AILEEN)	VK2TBC	SARATOGA	02 4369.8738
38	O	THATCHER	TREVOR	(PHYLLIS)	VK2TT	WAUCHOPE	02 6585.2278
39	O	WALKE	GARY		VK2UHF	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.4714
40	O	WALKER	BRUCE	(GWEN)	VK2HOT	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.8360
41	O	WEBSTER	JIM		VK2BZD	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.4037

Category Key: O = ORDINARY A = ASSOCIATE D = DISTANT H = HONORARY L = LIFE