



OXTALES

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

August 1996

Compiled by VK2TT

PRESIDENT: David Smith VK2DAL 85.1004
VICE PRES.: Arthur Monck VK2ATM 83.1311
TREASURER: John McDonagh VK2VY 82.0020
SECRETARY: David Pilley VK2AYD 85.2647

President's Report

*You see things that are and say, "why?"
But I dream things that never were and
say, "Why not." (George Bernard Shaw.)*

The Scout Jamboree on the Air is due to be held once again on the 19th and 20th October. As yet there has been one request from the Wauchope Guide Company for assistance and no doubt we will also receive one from the 1st Port Macquarie Scouts. If you haven't already done so and are willing to assist on that weekend, keep the date free and advise any member of the executive committee.

A date for your diary is the 7th December, 1996. The Club will be holding the Christmas BBQ on that day (Saturday) at Pilot Beach commencing at about 10.30am, Bring your own everything, the Club will be providing the BBQ apparatus. Members and their guests are invited.

The talk given by John Daniell at the August Meeting was evidently very well received and our thanks go to Wendy Monck who initiated the idea.

I have just been informed by the editor of Oxtales that I and many others are now unfinancial members. I had forgotten as no doubt the majority of you had also, that our membership dues now are payable as and from the 1st July each year, so do as I will do at the next meeting, PAY UP. If you can't be at the meeting, send a cheque for \$15 to the Secretary, Oxley Regional Radio Club, P.O. Box 712, Port Macquarie N.S.W. 2444.

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I hope that you are all considering what to do about a new executive for the coming year as the Club cannot exist without a President, Secretary and Treasurer.

"By all means marry; If you get a good wife, you'll become happy; If you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher" (Socrates.)

*73's to you all,
de VK2DAL.*

VALE KEN BROWN VK2AJJ

It is with regret that we have to advise the passing of Ken Brown (VK2AJJ), who, until his recent move to the Coffs Harbour area, was a member of ORARC. We have been advised by Ray (VK2WRM), that Ken passed away quietly on Tuesday 30th July, 1996 at the age of 81 years.

Spending most of his working life in communications, Ken served in the merchant navy as a Radio Officer for several years, followed by several more years as a telegraphist in the Coast Radio Service at Esperance W.A. and La Perouse (Sydney Radio, VIS).

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership dues for the financial year 1996-97 fell due on 1st July, 1996. At the time of OXTALES going to press, the arrival of renewals was quite disappointing, with only a total of 16 being received.

This will be the last issue of OXTALES to be posted to unfinancial members. To ensure that you (if you have not already paid your annual subscriptions) receive your October issue of this newsletter, steps

should be taken right now to get your subs to the Treasurer, through the Secretary as soon as possible.

Those members who do not wish to renew their membership, are reminded of the rules of incorporated organisations that require formal written notification of resignation to be forwarded to the Secretary. Unfinancial members who have not formally resigned their membership, still carry the obligations of membership as defined in the Club Rules.

AND THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER IS

Only one Bid was received by the due date, 31st July, 1996 for the Field Day Major Raffle prize that was donated back to the club by the original winner, Phil Bowman.

A bid of \$60 was received from David Smith (VK2DAL). The prize, 6 nights accommodation at various motels throughout Australia is now in the hands of David. Enjoy your trips Dave!

PRESSO'S HOSPITALISATION

Members will be pleased to learn that our President David (VK2DAL) is home again and recovering well after a short stint in Wauchope Hospital.



BEECHWOOD BILLYCART DERBY

This annual fund raising event held annually at Beechwood, is scheduled to be held on Sunday 13th October. Once again, our club has been approached to provide the communications for the event that will require 2 mobile operators from around 8.30am until approximately 11.00-11.30am, plus another 2 mobile operators from 8.30am until approximately 1.30pm.

The centre of the action will be in the environs of the Beechwood Hotel in the main street of Beechwood. We have given the Lions Club advice that we will have members available to undertake the tasks required to cover the three events, two fun-runs, and the Derby itself.

Thusfar, we have no firm commitment from any member to participate, but it is hoped that in the next few weeks we will hear many voices clamouring to be part of a team.

This is an unusual event, held on sealed roads, right in the centre of civilisation, and would be quite suitable for a family outing on what could otherwise be a Sunday morning of stultifying boredom at home. Any takers please let VK2TT (Trevor) of your availability to participate.

GUEST SPEAKER

Following our August monthly meeting, those present were treated to an interesting talk on the subject of Kites, by Mr. John Daniell of Superb Flying Devices. John covered some of the history of kite construction and discussed the intricacies of design data, and exposed some of the

practical uses to which these fascinating devices can be put.

It may come as a surprise to some to learn that large kites are quite capable of lifting the rear end of a Tarago van off the ground. Given the right circumstances, which, in addition to a good wind speed, must include an operator .. Pilot ?... who is unwise enough to tether a large kite to such an anchor, such a feat can be, and has been, achieved!. Certainly not the safest way to hoist a vehicle for a wheel change.. but it is ANOTHER WAY.

John expressed a genuine willingness to assist any club members who may be interested in carrying out some vertical antenna experiments... like with really tall vertical antennae.... hundreds of meters!! The conditions he placed upon his participation were rather tough though. He would need space... lots of it, such as an airfield that was closed to aircraft, plus departmental approval to fly his monsters above the normal permissible altitude of 300 feet. Oh yes, and the amateur radio participants would be required to arrange the site, the departmental approval, and of course, provide the necessary length of "sky-wire", and the wherewithal to match and excite it. John would take care of providing the necessary gear and expertise to perform the actual "lift" and the holding aloft, at what might turn out to be a record height for a vertical antenna. Any takers out there?

During his talk, John provided some excellent practical hints and advice on how kites (of practical sizes) could be used to lift and conveniently locate antenna halyards in tall trees. Some of the "bush boys", of which your editor is one, could

soon be making use of this technique to expand antenna facilities.

The talk was well received by the small gathering, and through the pages of OXTALES, let us thank John for his attendance, and a truly interesting lecture that was delivered in a most friendly and relaxed style.

FOR THE BIG KIDS

*Here's an easy game to play. Here's an
easy things to say;
If a packet hits a pocket on a socket on a
port
And the bus is interrupted as a very last
resort,
And the address of the memory makes
your floppy disk abort,
Then the socket packet pocket has an
error to report!*

*If your cursor finds a menu item followed
by a dash,
And the double-clicking icon puts your
window in the trash,
And your data is corrupted 'cause the
index doesn't hash,
Then your situation's hopeless, and your
system's gonna crash!*

WRTC-96 OLYMPIAN RETURNS

Our Olympian of the Brass Lever is home! Following a trip around the globe that took in a visit to UK, the WRTC-96 event in California, and amounted to several weeks away from home, OXTALES extracted the following from him.. in his own words:

de VK2AYD

It's over, but I will retain a wonderful memory and the experience of a life time.

Over the past 4 years the World Radiosport Team Championship Committee have been monitoring world contests and in July, top stations from each country were invited to participate in the Champion of Champions Contest, to be held in Silicon Valley, California. Martin, VK5GN, and myself were invited to represent Australia. It was the first time that Australia had been invited.

Fifty-two, two-person teams from around the world, were drawn together for this contest. We gathered at Motel 6, south of San Francisco airport, during the week of July 8. I was already in California, having arrived in from London the previous week and was staying with Tommy, WJ6O, out at Denair, which is about 100 km east of San Francisco. It was very hot there, with day temperatures around 38 to 40c. It was intended to be a relaxing week in readiness for the contest, but my host Tommy, had other ideas, especially as July 4 fell in that week. The highlight of this week was a visit to San Andreas (no, not the famous fault) where we went gold panning in an area that the Chinese had mined some 150 years ago. (yes we did find small flakes of gold and I have them in a vial if any one wants to check it out)!

As it was necessary for us to provide our own equipment for the WRTC Contest, Tommy offered me the loan of his OMNI-VI, and K6TS offered me his FT-1000, so I was well equipped.

I moved to the WRTC (Olympic) village on the Tuesday and Martin arrived from Australia the same day. Unfortunately he arrived with the dreaded lurgy (flu) which I soon inherited.

Wednesday and Thursday was a "get to know your competitor" time, and to ensure we were kept busy, the Organisers arranged visits to HRO (Ham Radio Outlet) and to Fry's, which must be the world's largest computer warehouse. I could have spent a fortune, but contented myself with a new 28,800 modem (\$50) for Internet, and a lot of other goodies that I needed. Tours of San Francisco were also arranged, and a boat trip across the bay, and a day in the Napa Valley, where they reckon they make the best wine. Of course they hadn't savoured Australian.

Friday was "C DAY", and the 102 competitors met in the motel conference room for the selection of stations. 52 stations had been selected by the committee, within a radius of 40 Km of the Motel, and each one had a 3 element tri-band beam at approximately 50 feet for 20/15/10, and a dipole for 40 metres ready for us to connect to. (There are 6,000 amateurs in the Silicon Valley area so selection was not difficult). As Australia is alphabetically near the top, we drew the second envelope and found we had drawn the QTH of W6NA at Palo Alto. Our Referee was to be Al, RU1AA.

At around mid-day Martin and I had packed our gear. Martin had brought a note-book (lap-top) computer and keying facilities. He also purchased band pass filters so that we could use the second receiver whilst the other rig was operating. AA6KX, Bruce, who was the

major mind behind the scenes, kindly drove us to our operating QTH. Fred, W6NA, had two complete Ten-Tec stations laid out on separate tables. The antenna was an HB9CV tri-band beam at 40 ft and a dipole for 40 metres had been specially erected.

As the contest didn't start until 5 a.m. Saturday morning, we had plenty of time to get to know our hosts, do some food shopping and dismantle Fred's equipment and install our own. Our Referee had brought a recorder, as every-thing we did from the start to finish of the contest was recorded. He also sat and monitored us throughout the contest. As Martin preferred the logging programme "TR" we decided to adopt this. ("CT" was the popular choice, but "TR" is just a two-key stroke system and somewhat faster).

Fred and his wife Rosemary, had provided us with beds so we had an early night and awoke at 0400 ready for the 0500 start. The contest was to be part of the IARU 24 contest of which we would take part for 18 hours with a different scoring system. At 0430 RU1AA opened the envelope and advised us our call sign was W6Z. I was "CW" and Martin was "SSB" and we decided to start with CW. At 0455 the bands were reasonably quiet. 40 and 20 were open. I selected a spot around 7010 and waited. As WWV said it was 1200 UTC (0500 local time) bedlam erupted.....the other 51 teams had also selected

the same spot..! Well that's how it looked to me! It took me a half hour to settle down to the new QRM and the hundreds of stations that wanted to work the 1x1 calls. Our CW rate averaged around the 120 per hour, peaking to 160. After about

2 hours my rate dropped to 90, so off I got and Martin took over. With SSB you can reach higher performance speeds and soon Martin was over the 200 and trying for the 300. - that's really steaming. Of course there were times when we were down very low when the bands died. But even 10 metres was open and it was go-go-go. At about 2100 we realised we did not have many multipliers so we gave up calling and went S and P'ing. (That's Search and Pouncing).

At 2300 we stopped. Our logging disc was removed from the lap top and we didn't even have time to correct the typing errors. The recorder was stopped and we dismantled our station and returned Fred's to its original state.

We had worked 1822 stations during the 18 hours but our multipliers were only 124 which was not very encouraging. We just didn't have the beam in the right direction at the right time. Bruce AA6KX met us at about 2330, we loaded our gear and went back to the motel. Our log and tape recording was passed to the Judges who spent all night on their computers filtering and checking every log for errors etc.. The exchange reports that were used were IARU zones which caused a lot of errors with W2's operating from W6 etc., the default on the computer had to constantly be corrected. Most of Sunday afternoon was spent around the Motel pool listening to the various gripes from operators who were not completely satisfied with the station they had drawn. A lot was to do with the fact that they were used to running KW's from home with 45 metre high antenna's. It's a little different when all you have is 100 watts, a 3 el-beam and lots and lots of QRM ! In the evening we

all met for dinner and the presentations at Stanford University. A magnificent evening, with half of the Amateurs from the San Francisco bay area there as well as all the Competitors, Judges, Referees and Staff Organisers. The winners were the team of KR0Y and K1TO who really did a remarkable job with some 2457 QSO's and 183 multipliers. K4BAI and KM9P were second with 2511 QSO's but only 162 multipliers. Third place was also a USA team, K6LL and N2IC. So it was a USA clean sweep. (Was it local knowledge - no, it was just excellent operating).

It was a great experience which will be recorded in the archives of Amateur Radio. Where the next WRTC will be held is unknown as there are not many places in the world that have 6,000

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

From the shack of VK2AYD, David, Telephone (065) 85.2647, the following items are for sale:-

Grandmaster Memory Keyer, MFJ484 \$60
C/W remote control iambic paddle' \$40
137 Mhz Weather Satellite receiver \$90.

From the shack of VK2DV, "Snow", Telephone (065) 83.7095 :-

Kenwood TS-50 Transceiver, 100W all mode. Complete in carton with Handbook and Microphone. \$1250

Yaesu FT-680 6-metre Transceiver, all mode, with built in 3-speed scanner in carton, with Handbook and Microphone. \$450

Amateurs in the small area that Silicon Valley does. I suggested the outback with everyone using pedal power, but it didn't go down too well. If you would like to get involved in contest working, either from home or as a team, I'd be delighted to hear from you.

Thanks to VK2XU and VK2BZA who kept me company on 14,240 during my travels with consistently strong signals. I'm sorry I couldn't read VK2DAL and VK2FSH who called in one evening but couldn't get above the S1 noise level - you need better antenna's guys!

AN EDITOR'S BEST FRIEND

The Spell Checker

Wee no they're know miss steaks in this newsletter cause we used special soft wear witch cheques yaw spelling. It Mower or lass a weigh to verify. How ever is can knot correct arrows in punctuation ore usage: an it will not fined words witch are miss used butt spelled rite. Four example: a paragraph could have mini flaws but wood bee past by the spell checker. And it won't catch the sentence fragment which you. Their fore, the massage is that proof-reading is knot eliminated, it is steel berry much reek wired.

HISTORIC DOCUMENTS

Whilst on a recent sojourn back in his beloved Pacific Islands, Ken (VK4WKB), our one and only VK4 member, had the privilege of being granted research rights to the archives of the long running Fiji Amateur Radio Club in Suva, Fiji. During his browsing through the well preserved copies of their newsletters of the 1950's, Ken stumbled across a couple of items that grabbed his evil eye as being ideal tools for "taking the Mickey" out some

unsuspecting, elderly ORARC member, who was once a FARC member. Ken copied the items and forwarded same to the "OXTALES" printery with the view to having them immediately published in our pages.

Editorial connivance has managed to keep the items under wraps so far, but Ken has now pointed out that the 40-year secrecy provisions have long expired, and has insisted that these documents be made public. Accordingly, work has begun to construct hand made plates of these historic technical documents, to enable "amateurish facsimiles" to be produced in the next issue of "OXTALES". Those of our members who are interested in early thermionic design techniques, and the cutting-edge laboratory testing methodology of the mid-50's, should make sure they pay their subs NOW, so as to ensure that "OXTALES" reaches their desk in October.

LEWIS SMITH - VK2LS

REMEMBERED

Not all members may be aware that the recently installed radio mast at the Volunteer Marine Radio base at Town Beach, Port Macquarie carries a memorial plaque in memory of our late member, Lewis Smith, VK2LS. The mast itself, originally part of Lew's antenna installation, was donated to the V.M.R. group by Lew's widow, Mae. It underwent extensive treatment by volunteers within the group, to provide it with the necessary coatings to protect it in the seaside atmosphere. Along with operational V.M.R antennae, the mast carries the suitably inscribed plaque in recognition of Lew's contribution to the early pioneering activities in radio communication.

OXLEY REGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB Inc
MEMBERSHIP REGISTER.
(As at 22nd August, 1996)

| FIRST NAME | SURNAME | CALL SIGN | TOWN/CITY | TPH. NO. | |
|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1 | KEN | BECK | VK4WKB | CALOUNDRA | 074 91.5798 |
| 2 | KEVIN | COULTER | VK2MAM | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 83.8325 |
| 3 | CHARLES | EDMONDSON | VK2FSH | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 84.0495 |
| 4 | PETER | GAVIN | - | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 83.6854 |
| 5 | LEWIS | GREEN | VK2AG | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 84.9162 |
| 6 | SAM | GRIFFITHS | VK2LSG | TAREE | 065 52.3149 |
| 7 | KEITH | HANLON | - | PORT MACQUARIE | - |
| 8 | PETER | HILL | VK2BZA | LAKE CATHIE | 065 85.5349 |
| 9 | JOHN | JONES | VK2DX | LAKE CATHIE | 065 85.4522 |
| 10 | LARRY | LINDSAY | VK2CLL | WAUCHOPE | 065 87.1155 |
| 11 | HENRY | LUNDELL | VK2ZHE | PORT MACQUARIE | |
| 12 | KEITH | LUTTON | VK2KDL | TELEGRAPH POINT | 065 85.0321 |
| 13 | ALLAN | MADIGAN | - | WAUCHOPE | 065 85.2043 |
| 14 | DOUG | MCDONALD | VK2EUM | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 83.6157 |
| 15 | JOHN | MCLEAN | VK2KCE | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 84.1998 |
| 16 | ARTHUR | MONCK | VK2ATM | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 83.1311 |
| 17 | RAY | MULLINS | VK2WRM | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 81.0685 |
| 18 | BILL | SINCLAIR | VK2ZCV | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 82.0329 |
| 19 | DAVID | TARRANT | VK2HBC | WAUCHOPE | 065 85.6381 |
| 20 | TREVOR | THATCHER | VK2TT | WAUCHOPE | 065 85.2278 |
| 21 | RONALD W | WYLES | - | PORT MACQUARIE | 065 81.1085 |

IT'S TRUE, YOU KNOW:

The trouble with life is, you're halfway through it before you realise that it's a do-it-yourself thing.

If you believe that there is good in everybody, then you haven't met everybody.

Things are more like they are to-day than they ever were before.

Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.