



OXTALES

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

October 1996

Compiled by VK2TT

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President's Report

"Don't be afraid to take small steps. You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps." (David Lloyd George)

Did you hear the one about the elderly oyster farmer and his son who lived for many years by just scratching a living from their holding in the increasingly polluted estuary.

One day the son drew a lucky number in the lottery and won \$20,000. Overjoyed, he picked out a dollar coin and handed it to his father. The old fisherman gazed at it for some time and then said dryly, "I hope son, that you won't go throwing the rest of your money away like this." "When I was young," he continued, "I was always careful. I never drank or gambled, and I was especially wary of women. As a matter of fact, I never even married."

"Well, that's lovely, that is!" protested the son. "You know what that makes me, don't you?"

"Yes" replied the father, "and you're a greedy one too!"

Well, by the time you get this there will only be about 8 weeks to Christmas, and even less time until the Club BBQ which is to be held on Saturday 7th December at Pilot Beach

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commencing after 10.30am.
Approximate numbers by the
November meeting would be
appreciated.

For this occasion I think that the Club
will supply sausages, some wine
(Chateau Cardboard) and some orange
juice. Bring your own salads,
anything else you want to eat, hard
drink if required and eating gear. A
card table and chairs may not go
astray.

Some members have not at this stage
renewed their membership, so don't be
shy, either renew with a cheque or
bring \$15 to our November meeting
which will be held on Saturday the 2nd
November at the SES building at 1pm.

*"Men always want to be a woman's
first love; women have a more subtle
instinct: what they like is to be a man's
last romance." (Unknown)*

73's de VK2DAL

NO DECEMBER MEETING

Members please note that there will be
NO MONTHLY MEETING for the
month of December. The Annual Club
Barbecue is scheduled for Saturday 7th
December, the normal meeting date,
and it is hoped that as many members
as possible will come along to
participate in this social event.
Remember... the venue is Pilot Beach
on the southern shores of the entrance
to the mighty Camdenhaven River at
Dunbogan, so come along, bring the

kids, grandkids (don't think pets are
allowed on beach?). Use the
President's report as a check list. See
you there!... after 10.30am

OXTALES IS LATE !!!

Apologies from Editorial Staff to the
readership. OXTALES for October
has hit the streets late. Pressure of
work, personal commitments, and
plain old mismanagement of time all
combined and took their toll on your
ageing editor. Perhaps this is an
indication that some new blood should
be injected into the editorial stream for
the coming year? How about a new
Editor? It is good fun, and any retiring
Editor would be happy to provide
some assistance to anyone wishing to
have a go and provide some fresh
approach to these pages.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Jason Maris and Mario Bagnaschi
joined us at the October meeting and
we look forward to their participation
in the future of the Club.

Jason is studying for his licence and
Mario is the Manager of Tandy
Electronics in Horton Street, Port
Macquarie. Mario is very interested in
ex World War II radio equipment, so if
any of you old timers have any ex
WW II equipment hidden away, now
is the time to send it to a happy resting
place that will make Mario very
happy.

Tandy Electronics is at 113 Horton Street and if you see Mario and you are a current financial member of the club, you could get a 10% discount on your purchases from the shop. Is your name on the current financial list on the back of this edition of Oxtales ?



Batteries

Do we really get our moneys worth out of them, and what will eventually replace the NiCd?

Nickel Cadmium (NiCd) is the most commonly used battery today. It is the most economically priced battery, but unless properly managed can be quite a problem. It requires monthly exercise to prevent memory freeze (as in crystalline formation). With proper care it will produce 1500 successful discharge-charge cycles and costs about \$0.04 per cycle.

Nickel Metal Hydride (NiMH) offers 30% higher energy density than the NiCd. Memory is not as prevalent as the NiCd but it still needs exercising at least every 3 months. Expected life is 500 cycles making the cost around \$0.16 per cycle. Good for computers but not so good for the /m rig.

Sealed Lead Acid (SLA). A little too bulky for the hand-held, but very useful for larger applications. It must be kept in a charged condition. It has

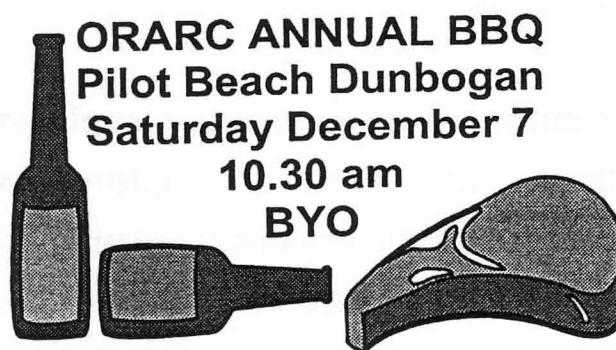
no memory effect, but needs regular checking. The cycle life is reckoned to be around 200 to 300 cycles at a cost of \$0.10 per cycle.

Lithium Ion (Li-Ion). New to the market, its energy density is twice that of the NiCd. The Li-Ion has no memory and the expected life cycle is estimated at between 300 and 500 cycles and the cost around \$0.25 per cycle. They are beginning to be regular power packs for cell phones, laptops and video camera's. Currently expensive but prices are expected to half by the year 2000.

Pure Lead Batteries are also becoming popular. This is a thin-plate technology that uses pure lead with a tin additive. It is said to operate far better than conventional lead-acid batteries, especially in high variable temperatures.

In conclusion, the NiCd still reigns supreme because of its low operating cost. It just needs good management and exercising regularly. Don't we all?

de VK2AYD



BILLYCART DERBY CLASSIC

This annual event, organised each year at Beechwood by the combined services clubs, took place this year on 13th October. In addition to this main event, a 5KM Fun-Run, and four junior Billy-cart races were contested throughout the morning.

ORARC members, John (VK2VY), Ian (VK2XU), and Trevor (VK2TT) provided the necessary communication facilities between check points and the finishing point. Kevin (VK2KCE) came to the team's assistance at short notice when illness prevented a team member from attending. Kevin provided the vehicle and coms facilities for the mobile commentary covering the main event. As a result of undertaking this unenviable task, Kevin experienced some adrenaline pumping moments while being chased down-hill by the speedy, gravity powered "machine" of the leading contestants.

The entire programme was completed without accidents or unforeseen incidents and the organisers expressed their appreciation of the communication team's contribution, which was provided without charge to this community fund raising event.

JOTA

The ORARC club members again participated in this annual Scouting/Guiding activity on the weekend of 19th/20th October.

At Wauchope, David (VK2AYD), David (VK2DAL), Charles (VK2FSH), and Trevor (VK2TT) set up an HF and a VHF installation at the Wauchope Rotarian Youth Centre, operating under call sign VK2GHT (a special call sign allocated by SMA for the JOTA event).

Sixty-eight Guides and Brownies from surrounding districts (Laurieton, Kempsey, Crescent Head, Comboyne and other local communities) descended upon the centre on the Saturday to take part on this increasingly popular event. Despite less than ideal radio propagation conditions, a pleasing number of lengthy contacts were made with JOTA stations in Tasmania, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, New Zealand, and Papua-New Guinea, as well as NSW (which included local contacts through the VK2RPM to Taree, Kempsey, and of course, Port Macquarie).

At Port Macquarie, another group of ORARC members attended the Sea Scouts Hall in Buller Street, and operated a JOTA station under the call sign of VK2SPM, the newly acquired callsign of the Port Macquarie Sea

Scouts. John, VK2VY, provided the following report of the activities there:

We Kicked off at 08:00 Sat morning. Colin, VK2AF, was on 2 meters using the local and not so local repeaters where he stayed all day and night.

HF conditions were good so we stayed on 20 meters all Saturday using SSB. Bill, VK2WST, was running SSTV (Very interesting. I'm now hooked on SSTV). Saturday night found us tuning around 40 and 80 meters and a few contacts were made there, but due to the storms in the area, there was lots of noise on the lower bands.

While all above was going on, my packet station was running, and a few of the kids asked to talk to someone via the keys but seems I had the only "live" station running, so they just logged onto the VK2ATM BBS.

Col Terry had the Internet set up and that was a BIG hit with the kids (and me) it was running all day Saturday and Sunday (I hope I don't get the bill!).

We also had 2WAY FM set-up a studio in the hall and found the main control unit picked up our HF RF very well, so we had to close down for the 2 hours it was on air on Saturday afternoon.

Bill, VK2ZCV, was interviewed on 2WAY FM and he gave the club a very good plug.

Sunday morning started out much the same but due to the rather windy

weather and cold rain, most of the kids headed for home and we closed down around lunch time.

Thanks go to all who attended.....*Cheers John - VK2VY.*

MICROPROCESSOR EVOLUTION

I guess a lot of you have been watching QUANTUM on the ABC-TV on Thursday evenings with the wonderful history of how some made their millions from computer software. The Intel press room had a very interesting story on the evolution of their microprocessors.

It appears it all started with them back in November 1971 when their 4004 was born. It had a clock speed of 108 kHz ! By April 1974 the 8080 was in circulation with a clock speed of 2 MHz and comprised some 6,000 transistors. It was June 1978 before the 8086 hit the market with a clock speed of 10MHz and 29,000 transistors.

The Intel 80286 appeared in February 1982 and started a new revolution with a clock speed of 12 MHz, 134,000 transistors. It could scan the Encyclopaedia Britannica in 45 seconds. It was three years later, October 1985, before the 80386 was introduced offering clock speeds of 33MHz, had 275,000 transistors and could scan the Encyclopaedia Britannica in 12.5 seconds and good for 32 bit bus. First there was the

NEW RULES ON EXAMINATION RESULTS.

"DX", then the "SX" and in March 1992 (just 4 years ago) the "DX2" appeared. Capable of 66 MHz, it had 1.4 million transistors and a virtual memory of 64 terabytes.

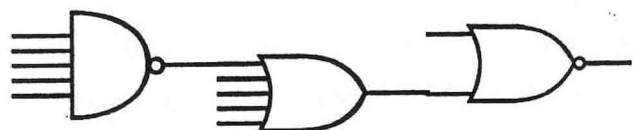
How time flies. Two years later (1994) the "DX4" was in production. However the revolution called the Pentium Processor was already being used in PC's and the Pentium 100 was already the popular CPU for desktops and notebooks. Its clock speed was 100MHz plus, was 5cm square, had 296 pins and 3.2 million transistors.

At the time of writing this the Pentium Pro 200 was the latest, being introduced just one year ago in November '95, mostly for use in high-end desktops, workstations and servers. Its speed? Well I've seen figures around 1500 MHz. It has 5.5 million transistors and there are 387 connector pins. (Just think if one goes o/c)!

Isn't it an unbelievable evolution over the past 25 years. (I remember my first TRS-80 back in 1978 - dream on....)

-VK2AYD.

(Note DX2, DX4 and Pentium are Trademarks of Intel).



As one of the ORARC's Accredited Examiners (now called "Invigilators", I am told), I have not yet received formal notification of a reported change in the procedure for marking examination papers for the various Amateur Examinations set by the WIA. However, in the latest issue of the Westlakes Amateur Radio Club's Newsletter it has been reported that as from September 6th, 1996, no answer sheets will be forwarded with future examinations. The marking is ALL to be done in Melbourne, including assessment of Morse Sending and Receiving results

This means that the "provisional" result always previously given to candidates by Examiners (Invigilators) immediately after completion of the examination marking, will no longer apply. Candidates will now need to await advice from Melbourne, as to their success or failure.

The reasons given in the Westlakes Newsletter were as follows "These changes have been made following an audit of the exam process by the SMA and WIA and have come about after a direction from the SMA! It is stated that the audit revealed instances where answers by candidates had been altered after the event and to maintain the integrity of the examination process, these changes have been introduced."

- VK2TT (Trevor).

KAMAKAZI HEADPHONES

Have you ever experienced the sudden strangulation by the headphones cord when you've got up from your rig, or you find you are pulling the receiver across the desk with you when you move.

As you know, I'm a lover of contests and find the headphone cord is a nuisance. It sometimes gets under the key (that's a telegraphy type key), covers the call you are after on your note pad and when the XYL brings you that much needed coffee you turn around to thank her and do yourself a mischief!

Solved. First I borrowed an Infrared transmitter and headphones from Bill VK2ZCV. They were great, but I wanted to extend the range from not just inside the shack, but further afield. The second solution is the one I use now.

I had a pair of light-weight headphones that had a built-in FM receiver. A check through the various catalogues found that Jaycar had a miniature FM transmitter kit (KE-4711) for \$10.95. It took about an hour to build, the only changes were the input to the transmitter which was no problem. It worked first time.

I can now wander around the house with headphones on (looking equal to my Grand children with their Walkmans) and can hear what is going on at 14.025kHz or 7.025kHz. Of

course I could rig speakers all around the house, that's going a bit too far.

Before someone says you can't do that with a boom-mike, they should be aware I am not into CB.....! Just an old fashion telegraphist that enjoys good Morse code.....73's

- VK2AYD.

U.H.F. REPEATER

John, VK2KCE, kindly donated a UHF repeater and 3 mobile stations to the club. These are currently set for 455/465 MHz, however, they could easily be re-crystalled for the 70 cm Amateur band.

At the October meeting of the club it was proposed that, as we already have a 70cm repeater (VK2RPM), that we offer the equipment to members of the club to purchase. Anyone interested please contact the Secretary. Failing any offers, we will donate the equipment to AAPRA or WICEN.

WIA SUPPORTING YOU. (Are you supporting them?)

The WIA recently made a full submission to the Department of Communications and Arts on the Radiocommunications Amendment Bill 1996.

They have proposed a once-only licence fee for life or, alternatively a 5 year licence duration.

OXLEY REGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB Inc.

MEMBERSHIP REGISTER OCTOBER 1996

	FIRST NAME	SURNAME	CALL SIGN	TOWN/CITY	TPH. NO.
1	PETER	ALEXANDER	VK2PA	ROLLANDS PLAINS	065 85.8254
2	MARIO	BAGNASCHI	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.1874
3	KEN	BECK	VK4WKB	CALOUNDRA	074 91.5798
4	COLIN	BELLENGER	VK2AF	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.3803
5	W. L. (B0B)	BLYTH	VK2XIQ	PORT MACQUARIE	-
6	KEVIN	COULTER	VK2MAM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.8325
7	PETER	COX	VK2IPC	PORT MACQUARIE	065 81.1236
8	IAN	DALRYMPLE	VK2XU	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.9922
9	CHARLES	EDMONDSON	VK2FSH	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.0495
10	PETER	GAVIN	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.6854
11	BADEN	GLEESON	VK2MOQ	HELENSVALE	-
12	LEWIS	GREEN	VK2AG	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.9162
13	GRAEME	GREENWOOD	VK2ZIS	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.4684
14	SAM	GRIFFITHS	VK2LSG	TAREE	065 52.3149
15	KEITH	HANLON	-	PORT MACQUARIE	-
16	PETER	HILL	VK2BZA	LAKE CATHIE	065 85.5349
17	SNOW	HODDER	VK2DV	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.7095
18	JOHN	JONES	VK2DX	LAKE CATHIE	065 85.4522
19	JACK	LEEDS	VK2KN	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.1206
20	LARRY	LINDSAY	VK2CLL	BAGNOO	065 87.1155
21	TONY	LONSDALE	VK2DHU	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.0345
22	HENRY	LUNDELL	VK2ZHE	PORT MACQUARIE	065 -
23	KEITH	LUTTON	VK2KDL	TELEGRAPH POINT	065 85.0321
24	ALLAN	MADIGAN	-	WAUCHOPE	065 85.2043
25	JASON	MARIS	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 85.0426
26	JOHN	MCDONAGH	VK2VY	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.0020
27	DOUG	MCDONALD	VK2EUM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.6157
28	JIM	MCINTYRE	VK2CJM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.5696
29	JOHN	MCLEAN	VK2KCE	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.1998
30	LEO	MCPHERSON	VK2CLM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.3183
31	ARTHUR	MONCK	VK2ATM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.1311
32	RAY	MULLINS	VK2WRM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 81.0685
33	LESTER	O'CONNELL	VK2BFP	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.4274
34	DAVID A	PILLEY	VK2AYD	KING CREEK	065 85 2647
35	PAUL	ROMAINE	VK2UPR	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.1830
36	BILL	SINCLAIR	VK2ZCV	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.0329
37	DAVID	SMITH	VK2DAL	WAUCHOPE NSW	065 85.1004
38	DAVID	TARRANT	VK2HBC	WAUCHOPE	065 85.6381
39	TREVOR	THATCHER	VK2TT	WAUCHOPE	065 85.2278
40	NEIL	TROTTER	VK2NNT	LAKE CATHIE	065 85.4430
41	BRUCE	WALKER	VK2HOT	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.8360
42	PAUL	WEBSTER	VK2BZC	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.3377
43	RONALD W	WYLES		PORT MACQUARIE	065 81.1085