OXTALES

February 1997

Compiled by VK2TT

PRESIDENT: Bruce Walker   VK2HOT   838360
VICE PRES.: Bill Sinclair   VK2ZCV   820329
TREASURER: John McDonagh VK2VY   820020
SECRETARY: David Tarrant   VK2HBC 856338

President's Report

If I were asked 12 months ago, or even 6 months ago, if I would be president of the ORARC. I would have laughed and replied "There are quite a few retired members who would have more time than me and who could do a great job as President".

I had better stay in the work force as there is apparently more time to spare than when you retire.

Well the first meeting has been and gone and it was a great day. What about KDL eating 12 snags ... Don't you feed him, Gwen?

Thanks must go to DAL and AYD for the time that they put into their positions over the last 3 years or so. Well done! No doubt HBC and myself will be looking to you both for guidance in the very near future.

Do not forget the two 2-metre nets, one on Sunday mornings at 8.00am, and the other on Wednesday nights at 7.30pm, followed by the 80-metre net on 3579.5 KHz at 8.00pm.

The third Friday night at 7.00pm is a social night only (no business at all). The March social night will be held at the Hot Wok at 7.00pm. The date for that is Friday 21st. Numbers will be required, and it will be a mixed night. So bring the XYL, Girlfriend and kids.

I am looking forward to my first trip to the Wyong Field Day, on the 23rd February, and also being taken by Jason. 4am start, he tells me.

Well that's all folks and I hope all members and families are fit and well. Good to see Lester (BFP) back from the christening that should be put in the Guinness Book of Records as the longest christening and celebration. Hi Hi. Hope all goes well, Lester.

Cheers all.   Bruce (VK2HOT)

In This Issue:

DOWN THE TRACK (OR COAX)

FEBRUARY EVENTS :-
FRIDAY 21st
SOCIAL NIGHT AT SES BUILDING -7.00PM

SUNDAY 23rd
WYONG FIELD DAY STARTS AT ABOUT 8.30AM

MARCH EVENTS:-
SATURDAY 1st
GENERAL MEETING AT SES BUILDING - 1.00PM

FRIDAY 21st
SOCIAL NIGHT AT HOT WOK. 7PM - WILL BE A FAMILY NIGHT. - NUMBERS REQUIRED.

APRIL EVENTS:-
SATURDAY 5th
GENERAL MEETING AT SES BUILDING - 1.00PM

FRIDAY 18th
SOCIAL NIGHT SES BUILDING AT 7.00PM

MAY EVENTS:-
SATURDAY 3rd
GENERAL MEETING AT SES BUILDING - 1.00PM

FRIDAY 16th
SOCIAL NIGHT-VENUE TO BE DECIDED

SATURDAY 31st
GENERAL MEETING AT SES BUILDING - 1.00PM
THIS IS DUE TO THE FIELD DAY SET UP ON THE 7th JUNE AND ALSO THE FIELD DAY DINNER ON THE SATURDAY NIGHT.

CLUB NETS

2 METRE
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS 7.30 TO 8.00
SUNDAY MORNINGS 8.00AM

80 METRE
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS   AT 8.00PM ON 3597.5

CONTRIBUTIONS TO OXTALES

The Editorial Staff wish to thank the contributors who came forth in encouraging numbers with items for this issue. OXTALES could well flourish this year, if the pace is maintained. Keep it coming, PLEASE!

SUMMARY OF 1997 A.G.M.

The 1997 Annual General Meeting of ORARC was held on Saturday, February 1st, at the Gordon Street S.E.S. Headquarters. There was a roll-up of 22 members, and three visitors. Apologies were received from eight members.

The retiring President, David (VK2DAL), and the retiring Secretary, David (VK2AYD) were given a sincere vote of thanks from all those present for their 3-year period as members of the executive of O.R.A.R.C. Inc.

Visitors who attended the meeting were: Stan Ellis (VK2DDL - President of the Great Lakes ARC), Paul Graham, and Bill Barendsen.

The election of officers for 1997, brought two new faces to the executive. Bruce Walker (VK2HOT) was elected President, and David Tarrant (VK2HBC) was elected Secretary.

A collection of familiar faces were elected to the following remaining positions:

Vice President: Bill Sinclair (VK2ZCV)
Treasurer: John McDonagh (VK2VY)
Auditor: Kevin Coulter, (VK2MAM)
Committee: David Smith (VK2DAL)
Publicity Officer: Currently vacant

Education Officer: Larry Lindsay (VK2CLL)

Repeater Officer: Bill Sinclair (VK2ZCV)

Historian: Charles Edmondson (VK2FSH)

Equipment Officer: Charles Edmondson (VK2FSH)

Oxtales Editor: Trevor (VK2TT) assisted by John Jones, (VK2DX)

Field Day Co-Ordinator: Bruce Walker (VK2HOT)

The main issues that were resolved at the AGM were:-

(i) Membership subscriptions will remain at $15 per annum for 1997

(ii) The Membership Year and Financial year will now run from July 1st to June 30th of each year. (Notice of motion had been given in accordance with the rules, and the motion was carried). Rules of the club will be amended accordingly.

(iii) The Rules of Incorporation will be reviewed and changes recommended where necessary, for submission to the Committee before the next AGM.

The club's financial statement shows cash assets of $8,061. A surplus of $254.23 over 1995.

Following the closing of the formal proceedings for the day, which included an ordinary general meeting for the month of February, a barbecue was held at the club rooms. Several kilos of sausages (snorkers, snags, mysteries, call them what you will), the residue of our Pilot Beach Barbie which had been stored in deep freeze, were sizzled to perfection (well... pretty close to perfection). They were consumed along with quantities of fresh bread, tomato sauce, and were washed down with soft-drink, tea, or coffee.

A barbie after an AGM is something of a break with tradition, and the mingling during and after the eats, gave many members a chance to discharge a plethora of profound knowledge, and accounts of magnificent achievements that had been acquired and stored up during the passage of the months since last AGM. Perhaps such events should be considered for future AGM's ?

THANKS TO OUR RETIRING EXECUTIVE AND WELCOME TO THE NEW.

David Smith (VK2DAL) and David Pilley (VK2AYD), after having served for three consecutive years as President and Secretary, respectively, stood down after a difficult job well done.

Their period in office saw some difficult times. Typical was the flagging membership enthusiasm that brought about the cancellation of our Field Day Weekend in 1995. Their subsequent efforts in motivating, cajoling, begging, threatening, and just plain old common garden grovelling, eventually paid off. The dividend was seen when a small group, ably headed up by Bruce (VK2HOT) as an overall co-ordinator, pushed ahead an succeeded in running a Field Day event in 1996, albeit a single day event. The combined efforts of an executive that did not give up, and some much needed membership support, brought back from the brink of extinction, the Port Macquarie Field Day. So, through the pages of our newsletter, to the two Daves (they come in matched pairs, you know) a genuine thank you from the membership, for three continuous years of service to O.R.A.R.C.

Welcome to Bruce Walker (VK2HOT) & David Tarrant (VK2HBC) who have enthusiastically donned the mantles of responsibility of President and Secretary, respectively. Let us hope that those mantles will not weigh too heavily on their

shoulders alone. Active, strong, and reliable support must be forthcoming from the membership in the tasks that need to be undertaken for the 1997 Field Day, and the other activities that go towards ensuring the clubs's well-being and longevity.

BADEN DOES A MACARTHUR

Baden Gleeson has returned! It has got to be either "the best climate in NSW" or the best radio club, that drew him back to the mid-North Coast. Baden (VK2MOQ) who, a few years ago, moved to the far north of this state, remained a club member throughout his absence from the region. But... he appeared, large as life, at the AGM and tells us that he has returned to live at Port Macquarie. Welcome Home Baden!

ROSE

Have you noticed that the ROSE network is none too healthy lately? I won't bore you with herbaceous metaphors or puns, but yes, there is a problem.

Actually, ROSE "surfers", Wauchope and elsewhere, have long known the network to be a cranky beast at best. If you follow the bulletin traffic, you will see battles raging both in VK and overseas about maintaining a radio network in the face of the all-encompassing Internet. Well, one problem with our Amateur network is indeed that it is ultra-low cost and I mean ULTRA! Naturally, its performance matches this.

It is tempting to think of this as a baud rate problem, that we need to "go 9600" and everything will be better. This is NOT the case. A higher baud rate is simply a means to allow more retries to occur in a given time. The real problem is that our present "backbone" consists of a string of nodes all hogging the one frequency, and all trying to chip in at once. The performance of this is appalling, and the effect of increasing, as is presently "in the pipeline", to 4800 baud, will be minimal.

The proposition agreed to by a consensus(!) of VK2 repeater managers North of Gosford is to upgrade to a 4800 baud full-duplex link system. 4800 baud appears to be at present a happy balance between performance and economy. Not only do higher speeds require more expensive modems, but higher performance radios, and this is the answer to "why are we putting up with 1200/ 4800 baud when they are using upwards of 28.8 kilobaud on the Internet?"

But I have said that the baud rate is not so important. The "full-duplex link system" is the part that needs to be developed before we will get anywhere. A link *system* is needed to overcome all the problems of hidden transmitters, simultaneous transmissions and retries. This means that every link from site to site must have its own frequency pair (one frequency in each direction) just as every link in the telephone system has two ends. Party lines are out!

The link from VK2RND (Newcastle) to VK2RGL has already been upgraded to 4800 baud but VK2RPM has not yet followed. Consequently, Great Lakes and Taree South (notable Karl's BBS) are enjoying a comparatively private link to Newcastle which is performing superbly. When we too go to 4800 baud, that link will actually slow down again until the second stage of the plan is implemented and individual links for each step are installed. THEN it will be possible to connect to Sydney within seconds and converse at a comfortable speed.

In the meantime our link south is "broken" unless you know how to use VK2DYX-1's "node" functions (Karl is accessible at present using VK2RPM-1 as a digipeater, and that is how we are getting much of our BBS traffic). But only when we make the necessary upgrades will Packet "come alive".

- Paul (VK2BZC)

MEGAVISION

Another recent overseas development was the Combo MegaVision T3 DIGITAL BACK, an evolution from its successful T2 digital cameras system.

Unlike the T2, which is designed for multi pass image capture, the T3 BACK is designed for use as a single shot image capture device for medium format cameras (such as 6x6cm Hasselblad, Rolleiflex, etc.).

Amongst its many features are: rapid single shot capture of 2048x2048 pixel colour images at a rate of up to one frame per second, an advanced colour dye array, uses strobe or continuous light sources, PCI bus interface for which speed direct connect to Power Mac of PC systems and an optional belt-mounted power pack with removable disk drive for continuous shooting and large picture storage capabilities.

Sales of the Cambo Megavision T2 system have already topped the 300 mark in the States (at around US25,000 a pop) so expect this newer and more portable device to make a similar impact at the high end of the market.

Both models use the same chip which captures a 12MB file in 36 bit colour. Megavision claims that as it chips operate at room temperature, there is little need for expensive cooling systems which makes them more economical, smaller and lighter. Contact Megavision (with your Megabucks card ready) e-mail: ken@megavision.com

(The above extract taken from "Digital Photography & Design" Australia)

- John (VK2DX)

THE PACKET SCENE

Meeting one of the members the other day at the local Fruit Market, the ensuing half-hour discussion touched on the fact that he had "given up" on Packet Radio although he thanked me for my efforts in getting his system operating (a long time ago). He mentioned that he had turned it on from time to time but "all he had seen was the BBS forwarding".

In various provocative bulletins on, surprise surprise!, the BBS; Stan VK2DDL from the Great Lakes club has likewise suggested that amateurs from that area have "given up" on the mode as they feel the BBS forwarding forever "occupies" the local channel.

It seems we have here a "mind-set" problem. The funny thing is of course that I recall exactly the **opposite** complaint about our Voice repeater(s), "there's never anyone on"!

Well, Packet is simply **different** to other modes, and you need to get that different mind-set. When you do, things fall in to place rather well.

On other modes, you wait until the station occupying the channel stops. On packet you **do not**. This is **most important!** Almost the very opposite is the case. If you see someone you wish to "speak" to (type to!) on the monitor screen, jump in and connect to them. You completely **forget** about the radio link, transmitting and receiving

simply make a connection and type on. Nor do you wait for the other person to complete a sentence or even a line. **There are no "overs".** You will be busy enough typing in the meantime.

There are **NO CQs** on Packet! If you really must, the closest equivalent is a "Beacon". This does not have to be very often, no more than every half-hour if that. It then appears in other stations monitor screens or MHeard lists and if they want to have a chat, they will. This idea (no "CQs") might seem strange, but is explained by the following points.

If the activity you see on the monitor screen (that is the "non-connected" screen, not just the computer screen) puts you off, simply **turn the monitor function off!** (command: MON OFF) Then it won't put you off anymore; you won't worry about whether you are "competing" with the BBSs or my huge file transfers! It's OK, you don't need it! It's there for you to satisfy your curiosity, **not** to direct what you do. The MHeard command (paKet: alt-H) will tell you who's been around lately which is all you need to know to guess whether there is anyone to talk to.

Disconnect the speaker. You don't need it and you don't want it! Anyone who can decode 1200 baud packets by ear is in line for a big prize (don't ask me who's offering it though) and a job with the circus. You may listen to the audio for testing purposes, but if you do it for longer than that, you either do or will need your head read.

Set your system up properly. John VK2VY and myself are happy to help you do this (unless you own a KAM). We seem to manage to do things, use the BBS and have conversations despite BBS forwarding, so we must be doing

something right. Talk to us and find out how!

Run a decent program such as **paKet** or **BayCom** if you are a beginner, with USERS 3, **not** 1. This allows other people to connect to you when they see you on the BBS or talking to another "live" operator as I have just suggested. USERS 1 operators who switch on, search the BBS for messages, disconnect and "pull the plug" are really unfriendly. From this comes the point:
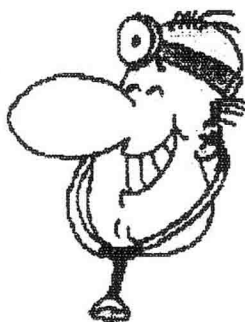
Leave the system running. I'm sure you can afford the electricity! And unless you really are into Heath-Robinson shack wiring, you shouldn't burn the house down. It should be stunningly obvious, but no-one can "talk" to you unless you are "on-air". This is the same as any other mode with one big exception: You now have a "robot butler" (the "man's man") to answer for you, either your TNC PMS, paKet if you leave your computer running or BayCom if you've gone for the "poor man's" option (an excellent way to "get your feet wet" by the way). Your computer (or TNC) is keeping watch on everything for you. You can even ask paKet to report (beep you) on a particular callsign, topic or any particular word going past on the screen, and you just "scroll" the screen back to find whatever you want.

You use the BBS by connecting to it (there are alternate tricks to this, but I am referring to the simple details). **Do so!** Connect regularly and do a listing with LR which lists everything since you last connected and did a "LR". If this is the first time, or you haven't connected regularly, you will get an ENORMOUS list but don't panic! You aren't going to be charged for it! Just look through the list

and select the bulletins that sound interesting (again, we can show you the "power user" tricks to do this) and use the R command to read those (you can put a whole list of numbers on the line after the "R", and those bulletins are read out in the order you specify) that look interesting. you soon learn that messages addressed to "ALL" are sent by people who can't think of a better "target" and correspondingly, aren't worth reading. You will find by reading the "TO" fields and the subjects that you can find things of interest and avoid the trivia. "Surf" the BBS.

I would like to say that you can "dial up" someone in Sydney, or even in Melbourne, Perth, Chicago (via an Internet "wormhole") and so on, via the **ROSE Network** but it is still under development. Only when there are many operators in **this area** using Packet and the demand is there can we proceed to get decent equipment put into service for the network repeaters or "nodes" and do those things easily. I hope to set up a "conference" server in the foreseeable future so that however many stations connect can operate an impromptu "chat net" with whatever they type distributed with identification to all other stations connected and vice-versa. How does that sound?

- Paul, VK2BZC.

OXLEY REGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB Inc.
MEMBERSHIP REGISTER

	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. (BOB)	BLYTH	VK2XIQ	PORT MACQUARIE	-
6	KEVIN	COULTER	VK2MAM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.8325
7	RICHARD	COURT	VK2CHC	WAUCHOPE	065 85.2379
8	PETER	COX	VK2IPC	PORT MACQUARIE	065 81.1236
9	IAN	DALRYMPLE	VK2XU	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.9922
10	JIM	DANIELS	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.1933
11	CHARLES	EDMONDSON	VK2FSH	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.0495
12	PETER	GAVIN	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.6854
13	BADEN	GLEESON	VK2MOQ	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.2018
14	LEWIS	GREEN	VK2AG	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.9162
15	GRAEME	GREENWOOD	VK2ZIS	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.4684
16	SAM	GRIFFITHS	VK2LSG	TAREE	065 52.3149
17	KEITH	HANLON	-	PORT MACQUARIE	-
18	PETER	HILL	VK2BZA	LAKE CATHIE	065 85.5349
19	SNOW	HODDER	VK2DV	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.7095
20	JOHN	JONES	VK2DX	LAKE CATHIE	065 85.4522
21	JACK	LEEDS	VK2KN	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.1206
22	LARRY	LINDSAY	VK2CLL	WAUCHOPE	065 87.1155
23	TONY	LONSDALE	VK2DHU	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.0345
24	HENRY	LUNDELL	VK2ZHE	PORT MACQUARIE	065 -
25	KEITH	LUTTON	VK2KDL	TELEGRAPH POINT	065 85.0321
26	ALLAN	MADIGAN		WAUCHOPE	065 85.2043
27	JASON	MARIS		TELEGRAPH POINT	065 85.0426
28	JOHN	MCDONAGH	VK2VY	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.0020
29	DOUG	MCDONALD	VK2EUM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.6157
30	JIM	MCINTYRE	VK2CJM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.5696
31	JOHN	MCLEAN	VK2KCE	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.1998
32	LEO	MCPHERSON	VK2CLM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.3183
33	TERRY	MEEHAN	VK2KL	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.2997
34	ARTHUR	MONCK	VK2ATM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.1311
35	RAY	MULLINS	VK2WRM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 81.0685
36	LAURIE	NEWHAM	VK2ELN	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.3981
37	LESTER	O'CONNELL	VK2BFP	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.4274
38	DAVID A	PILLEY	VK2AYD	KING CREEK	065 85 2647
39	PAUL	ROMAINE	VK2UPR	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.1830
40	BILL	ROTH	VK2CWR	PORT MACQUARIE	065 81 1776
41	BILL	SINCLAIR	VK2ZCV	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.0329
42	DAVID	SMITH	VK2DAL	WAUCHOPE NSW	065 85.1004
43	WILLIAM	STOFMEEL	VK2WST	BONNY HILLS NSW	065 84.8104
44	DAVID	TARRANT	VK2HBC	WAUCHOPE	065 85.6381
45	COL	TERRY	VK2VQT	PORT MACQUAIRE	065 83.5268
46	TREVOR	THATCHER	VK2TT	WAUCHOPE	065 85.2278
47	NEIL	TROTTER	VK2NNT	LAKE CATHIE	065 85.4430
48	BRUCE	WALKER	VK2HOT	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.8360
49	PAUL	WEBSTER	VK2BZC	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.3377
50	RONALD W	WYLES		PORT MACQUARIE	065 81.1085