



# OXTALES

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

## June 1997

Compiled by VK2TT

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### *President's Report*

Well, it's been and gone for another year. The field day that is. What a day! With the man up above giving us a beautiful weekend, Saturday saw a lot of activity at the Sea Scouts Hall with the set up and pre-registrations. I was pleased to see a lot of the members in attendance (many hands make light work).

The dinner was well attended but I was not real impressed with the food or lack thereof, or the service provided by the club, so we must think of some other system of feeding ourselves and our visitors next year.

The 2-Metre talk-in Fox Hunt went well. It was my first taste of amateur radio fox hunting as I went along with Henry VK2ZHE. It took them about one hour to find us which surprised me. Larger scale maps are a must for next year.

Sunday was an early start for most of us so we could get things ready for the expected crowds which I was surprised only totalled about the 105 mark. Down on

last year by about 30 or 40.

I think things went OK. What I mean is that I did not receive any complaints... sorry, there was one from the fox hunt, but only on the placement of the fox. It was not one of our members who hid the fox, so we will not be taken to court by the local land council, but he sure put the skids under the hounds!

The number of hounds was disappointing, averaging only 3 or 4 in each event. We must address this problem next year.

VK2BYY (Jeff) is a regular at our field days and he was given a run for his money, so to speak, with only one point between himself, Tony (VK2WY) and

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Ken (VK2DGT) prior to the last event, but even without joggers, he still came through.

The raffles went well and I must thank all the sponsors and donors of prizes for their support. We will have a postage bill to VK4UB in winning the lucky door prize and leaving before it was drawn, but that is the way it goes.

Apart from the regular members who assisted on the day, I sighted a lot of other club members in attendance, but they must not have realised who was co-ordinating the event, because not one came and asked if they could assist in any way. It's a shame really, because the field day is to help promote this club.

Whoever takes on the position of co-ordinator for the 1998 field day, then I wish you good luck and you will have my support 100% , not 0% as applied to some members.

At this stage just about everybody disappeared and went their merry way, but to those members who did stay behind and assist, a big thank you. The door was shut at 5.15pm on what I think was a great 1997 field day.

Please note that club dues of \$15 will be payable at the July meeting and only paid up members will be able to vote, so please pay them promptly to avoid embarrassment.

Cheers

Bruce (VK2HOT)  
President ORARC Inc.

## **UP AND COMING**

( OR DOWN THE COAX)

**FRIDAY 20TH JUNE**

COMMITTEE MEETING AT S.E.S BUILDING AT  
7.00PM

**FRIDAY 27TH JUNE**

SOCIAL NIGHT AT THE S.E.S BUILDING AT 7.00PM

**SATURDAY 5TH JULY**

GENERAL MEETING AT S.E.S BUILDING AT 1 PM.

**FRIDAY 18TH JULY**

SOCIAL NIGHT AT A VENUE TO BE DECIDED.

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### **Membership Subscriptions.**

Members are reminded that Subscriptions for the year 1997/1998 fall due on 1st July 1997. Please ensure that your fees (\$15 for the year) are paid promptly, and help in the continuance of the club.

### **Field Day Financial Outcome.**

Our Treasurer reports that the financial outcome of the 1997 Field was favourable, with an interim analysis showing a balance of \$687.50 after meeting a total expenditure of \$1154.00.

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### **Resignation of Peter (VK2IPC)**

Members will regret to learn that Peter Cox (VK2IPC) has resigned his membership of this club. Unfortunately for the club, Peter's chieftains needed him elsewhere, and he was transferred to the Newcastle district. Peter served as Publicity Officer for the Club for some time, and was an active member of the repeater committee, performing regular routine maintenance on our Middle Brother Repeater site. Thanks Peter! and best wishes for success in your new posting.

## SILENT KEYS

It is with sadness that OXTALES has to report the passing of two of our respected members during the month of May.

Peter Alexander (VK2PA) became a silent Key on 13th of June, passing away quietly at his home, "Nandari" Rollands Plains.

An Historical Summary of Peter's Amateur and community life appears elsewhere in this Newsletter.

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Ken Beck (VK4WKB, ex-VK2WKB), whilst holidaying in Beijing, passed away suddenly on Thursday 22nd May.

Ken lived in Port Macquarie for several years, serving a term as Secretary of ORARC Inc., before moving to and settling in Caloundra, Qld.

At the time of going to press, we did not have the complete details of Ken's Amateur history to hand, but this will appear in the next issue of OXTALES.

Sincere sympathy is extended to the families of these two highly esteemed amateurs,  
from the membership.

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### Vale Peter Alexander -VK2PA

The Amateur Radio fraternity recently learned, with sorrow, of the passing of one of its widely known and highly respected members, Peter Alfred Hunt Alexander (VK2PA).

Peter, aged 74 years, became a silent key on 14th May, 1997, passing away quietly at his home, "Nandari" at Rollands Plains, near Port Macquarie, NSW.

Peter was born in Chatswood, NSW, and spent his childhood in Sydney and environs. He was the youngest, and only son, in a fam-

ily of six. His father, Alfred Alexander, an operator with the Pacific Cable Board, taught Peter the art of Morse Telegraphy, which rapidly became Peter's second language.

Gaining his A.O.C.P with call sign VK2PA, at the age of 16, Peter began a long career in communications and electronics. Commencing an apprenticeship with AWA, he left this for strategic reasons to ensure a smooth entry into the armed services

Joining the R.A.A.F. in 1941, at the age of 18, Peter saw active service in Papua-New Guinea in the Milne Bay Area, and on Groote Island. His specialities were telegraph operating, HF-DF, VHF-DF, and Radar.

During his Groote Island service he was involved in aerial surveillance work, radioing valuable information on enemy aircraft movements back to allied headquarters in Darwin. Here he lived with the local Aboriginal people gaining tolerance and respect for indigenous people of Australia and the Pacific Region.

During the war years he met and married Ina Green. Ina was a serving member of the WRANS at the time.

On discharge from the RAAF in 1945, as a Sergeant, Peter remained in the RAAF reserve for the next 8 years. He and Ina moved to Port Macquarie NSW, where he established a radio repair business serving the surrounding area with general repairs and battery charging facilities for the non-electrified rural communities.

He was very active in community affairs, being a foundation member of the re-formed Port Macquarie RSL (of which he was later to become a director), a foundation member of the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club and office bearer for many years. He was also an office-bearer in the local branch of the Air Force Association

In 1949, along with other well known ama-

teurs of the day (Col Fletcher - VKA2SF, Crieff Retallic - VK2XO, & Doug Gill - VK2SH ), Peter formed the nucleus of the original group who first organised the famous Urunga Convention. As is well known this is the longest running annual amateur event in VK land.

His other interests included astronomy. As a foundation member of the Port Macquarie Astronomical Association ( & its Secretary over several years beginning in 1961-1962), he was directly involved in the establishment of the still- functioning Observatory on the hill overlooking Town Beach and the breakwater at Port Macquarie.

One of Peter's outstanding community efforts was witnessed in the early 50's when disastrous floods in the region severed public communications links with the area. Peter established and controlled an emergency radio communications network through his amateur station at 97 Hill Street, Port Macquarie to link Sydney, Brisbane, and west to Narrabri and Forbes, and carry public messages.

In 1956, Peter and his family moved to Fiji where Peter initially worked in Suva, but some months later moved to Vatukoula where he worked for the next 4 years in the Emperor Gold Mine. He was an active amateur throughout this period under call sign VR2CD.

A DX-pedition to the Tokelau Island Group, on board "*Maroro*" (the refitted and renamed private yacht of the late Queen Salote of Tonga), saw Peter as part of the crew and operating team. The team headed up by "Doc" Meredith, W5PQA, (ENT Specialist to the first US Astronauts), spent a week in the Tokelaus providing more than 3000 DX hunters with rare contacts.

On his return to Port Macquarie, Peter established Alexander's TV, a business which he successfully operated until his retirement in 1976. The business operates to this day, un-

der its original name, but with new owners.

Peter and Ina retired to a rural life style, first in nearby Ballengarra, and later to their current property "Nandari", at Rollo's Plains. Peter's amateur activities at "Nandari" involved an extensive "antenna farm" with modern equipment, working various modes, but predominately his first love, CW. He would sometimes stoop to "lip-flapping" (as he dubbed voice communication) but most amateurs remember Peter for his dedication to, and superior expertise in, Morse telegraphy.

Within the amateur fraternity, Peter was well known for his Morse Telegraphy operating skills.. He won many trophies at Field Day contests in both Morse receiving and sending. He won the Golden Key Award, sponsored by the ORARC. The trophy for that award is soon to become the centre piece for a VK2PA Memorial Award being sponsored by this club. (see elsewhere in this Newsletter).

Peter also held other calls throughout the years. Whilst always holding VK2PA, he held VR2DA, ZM7DA, & G3OCM

Peter's passing brought to a close, his 58 years of progressive communications activity. His contribution to this nation's security, its communities in which he lived and served, and the fraternity we all enjoy, has been most noteworthy. His dedication and steadfast approach to the preservation of Amateur standards and his vigilance in helping keep the bands free of interlopers and sloppy operating practices were well known. Over the years he encouraged and assisted many other aspiring amateurs to gain the knowledge and expertise required to qualify for an amateur licence. Amateur radio has lost another one of its champions.

### **Affiliated Clubs Report**

On May 10th, David, K2AYD, attended the WIA Affiliated Clubs Conference at Sydney, on behalf of the ORARC. Twenty-two

delegates from nineteen clubs were in attendance as well as eleven WIA Officers. The object of the meeting was to exchange ideas and discuss WIA business effecting clubs.

Some of the interesting subjects were a proposal to have a complete voice repeater coverage from Melbourne to Brisbane, similar to that being used in New Zealand. It was also proposed this would be based on the number of WIA members in the club. Your representative made two proposals. (a) That the WIA seek, through the Minister of Tourism to the Minister of Communications, that Australia have a "no fee" licence for visiting Amateurs similar to New Zealand. This has a time period of 28 days. It was also proposed by our Rep., that the WIA consider the insurance scheme to protect members and their equipment at a cost of \$10 per year. This will take some time for them to digest!

A lot of discussion was given to promotion and the WIA asked clubs to provide more information on their activities so that it could be included in the weekly broadcasts, Amateur Radio Magazine and on their Internet Web site.

VK2AGW runs a club net on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month on 3595KHz and asks that club members join in.

The next Conference of Clubs is scheduled for November 15, and we should again have a member present.

- dz VK2AYD (David)

### VK2PA Memorial.

It has been suggested that a trophy be given every year for the top VK CW station in the Commonwealth Contest each year. To be known as the "Peter Alexander Memorial Trophy". It would be in the form of a perpetual trophy that each year would have the winner's name

and call engraved on it. The winner would also receive a small plaque. Ina, wife of Peter, is in full agreement with the proposal. Details are currently being finalised and members will be advised. The ORARC would be the sponsor of this Trophy and would support it each year at their expense.

- dz VK2AYD (David)

### Contests

I know most of you don't involve yourselves with contests, but I'm sure you must hear them in progress on the HF bands each month. In May there were only 4 major contests of which the CQ Magazine WPX CW was by far the most active, being world wide.

This contest is based on the number of prefixes that you QSO and with the Japanese and USA having so many new combination call signs, it doesn't take long to rack up a big score. The contest lasts for 48 hours, but operating time is restricted to 36 hours for single ops.

I operated for 26 hours, worked 1025 stations, 378 prefixes and scored 1.23 million points. Unfortunately, my 80/40M dipole shorted out on my new shed, so most of my scoring had to be done on 20/15/10. Yes 10 does open and I worked both Japan and a number of USA stations.

June is a big month with nine or more contests, including the VK Novice Contest. Unfortunately, the All Asia DX Contest is on the same day (June 21/22), but this shouldn't interfere with the Novice Contest, although the overall QRM will be quite high.

July has the world wide IARU HF Championship test (SSB/CW) on July 12/13.

That will be a big one. SO you don't like CW? Then try some SSB and work DX that you wouldn't normally hear on the bands.

dε VK2AYD (David)

### Thanks to the Ladies

The committee and membership wishes to express a sincere "Thank You" to the Ladies who contributed to the success of the Field Day.

The Kitchen workers who slaved all day Sunday to prepare and serve the eats and drinks were Aileen (XYL of VK2HBC), Phyllis (XYL of VK2TT), Toni (XYL of VK2WST), Gwen (XYL of VK2HOT), and Ruth (XYL of ZCV). A tiring job, well done. On their feet all day, and still smiling at the end of it.

Gwen was also heavily involved in acquisition and preparation of eats on the days leading up to the event.

The assembly, and attractive presentation of the Lucky Door Prizes was again done as only Wendy (XYL of VK2ATM) can do it. Greatly appreciated Wendy! Thank You!

### The Night of the BIG BANG

Many of us learn from the experience of others. *Some* of us wait until it "happens to us" before committing the lesson to memory. Such was the case on the Night of the Big Bang at the shack of VK2TT.

At 12.30am on Tuesday 6th May, the serenity of dreamland was shattered by an ear-splitting bang that resulted from a lightning strike on a tree outside my QTH. When the Doona and its two occupants came down from the bedroom ceiling, we realised that we were luckily the physically unscathed victims of what could be claimed to be a "direct hit"

from Mother Nature at play.

Whilst it was the tree that copped the front end of the strike, the tail (or some cranky part of it) found its way along house wiring, and went looking for buried treasure in the cement slab. Sadly, for much of the gear in the shack, and some of the domestic appliances that happened to be in the way, the energy in the strike wreaked havoc. It mattered not whether devices were ON or OFF ... the fact that they were plugged in to the power outlets put them at high risk.

Cheap, unimportant appliances fared best. The more expensive devices paid the supreme sacrifice. The most common damage to electronic devices occurred to earth tracks... vaporised, gone, and of course, chips... some blown to smithereens... nay! micro-smithereens!

The lesson learned: Do not leave electronic devices plugged into the power-points even if the point is switched off. In fact, perhaps, NEVER plug electronic devices into a power-point if you want to be REALLY sure... use battery powered gear! OR use abacus instead of PC, Semaphore Flags instead of Txcvrs, Quill and parchment instead of Wordprocessors. Play it safe. Lightning is spectacular at a distance.. Up close, it is nightmarish!

-dε VK2TT (Trevor)

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### Gossip From Around the Traps.

Bill (VK2ZCV) is back on deck again recuperating rapidly after some surgery during May. Well done Bill!

Bill,, VK2WST is progressing with his ATV experiments, getting some help from Henry (VK2ZH) who had some R&R after the Field Day.

David (VK2AYD) is overseas AGAIN! Who does the "contesting" when he's away?

Jason Maris recently undertook to sit for ALL papers associated with the AOCP, and NAOCP. Flies on the wall have reported that a high level of optimism would be in order!

An unnamed contributor, reported that an unnamed member of this club who is travelling around this continent by caravan has had his enjoyment marred a little by having forgotten to take the remote control unit for his portable TV. It has been dispatched Post-Haste, by snail-mail. "Crikey!" says the contributor, "Does one need those things on a sight-seeing tour?? There can't be much to look at, around Oz!"

### Yes! It's That Time Again

Yes! It's that time again.  
 When men - young and old "Fox Hunt"  
 - And buy or sell their junk.  
 Those gone - are sadly missed.  
 So - come on you young blokes.  
 Put your shoulders to the tasks.  
 Help we "oldies", to keep our club go-  
 ing!  
 Because - one day - you too - will be  
 sadly missed.  
 Sooner than you think - Before you  
 can Blink.  
 Yes! It'll be that time again.

Contributed by Gwen -  
 XYL of VK2KDL

### Dot 'n Dash

Wot's The  
 Heaviside Layer?



It's one of CLL's  
 obese Chooks!  
 (I think?)



## Results of 1997 Field Day Events and Raffles.

### Fox Hunts

#### 2-Metre Talk-In

- 1st: VK2BYY - (Jeff)
- 2nd: VK2ADA - (Arnold)
- 3rd: VK2WY - (Tony)

#### 40-METRE (1 Transmitter)

- 1st: VK2WY - (Tony)
- 2nd: VK2DGT - (Ken)
- 3rd: VK2BYY - (Jeff)

#### 2-METRE (2 Transmitters)

- 1st: VK2DGT - (Ken)
- 2nd: VK2WY - (Tony)
- 3rd: VK2BYY - (Jeff)

#### 10-METRE (1 Transmitter)

- 1st: VK2YMW - (Chris)
- 2nd: VK2BYY - (Jeff)
- 3rd: VK2WY - (Tony)

#### 2-METRE (Pedestrian)

- 1st: VK2BYY - (Jeff)
- 2nd: VK2WY - (Tony)
- 3rd: VK2YMW - (Chris)

FOX HUNT CHAMPION  
 VK2BYY-JEFF

FOX HUNT VEHICLE  
 VK2WY--TONY

### MAJOR RAFFLE

- 1ST: (SCANNER): VK2YMW - (Chris)
- 2ND: (DRILL): Jim Daniel
- 3rd: (SILICON CHIP): VK2TT - (Trevor)

LUCKY DOOR  
 PICNIC BASKET---VK4UB

LADIES RAFFLE  
 TWO CUSHIONS-----JOAN HARWOOD VIA  
 VK2KAY

CROSS WORD  
 TORCH-----NGAIRE



**OXLEY REGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB Inc.  
MEMBERSHIP REGISTER.**

	FIRST NAME	SURNAME	CALL SIGN	TOWN/CITY	TPH. NO.
1	MARIO	BAGNASCHI	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.1874
2	COLIN	BELLENGER	VK2HF	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.3803
3	W. L. (BOB)	BLYTH	VK2XIQ	PORT MACQUARIE	-
4	DEANNA	CAMERON	-	PORT MACQUARIE	-
5	KEVIN	COULTER	VK2MAM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.8325
6	RICHARD	COURT	VK2CHC	WAUCHOPE	065 85.2379
7	IAN	DALRYMPLE	VK2XU	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.9922
8	JIM	DANIELS	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.1933
9	CHARLES	EDMONDSON	VK2FSH	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.0495
10	PETER	GAVIN	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.6854
11	BADEN	GLEESON	VK2MOQ	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.2018
12	LEWIS	GREEN	VK2AG	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.9182
13	GRAEME	GREENWOOD	VK2ZIS	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.4684
14	SAM	GRIFFITHS	VK2LSC	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	PETER	KUCERA	VK2MPK	WAUCHOPE	065 85.3406
20	JACK	LEEDS	VK2KN	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.1206
21	GARY	LEEDS	VK2NOV	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.3978
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 83.3931
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