



# OXTALES

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

## August 1997

Compiled by VK2TT

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### President's Report

Well it seems ages since I put pen to paper, sorry I mean finger to key board. I have been informed by our Editor that it is time to do so again now that he has finished his lightning (sorry TT) trip around the out back.

Not a great lot has happened apart from the following:-

1. I, like many others, followed the travels of Trevor and his wife on the mobile dxpedition to central Australia.

2. The two meter nets on Sunday and especially the Wednesday night net are most pleasing with numbers up from 3 or 4 to an average of 9 or 10. Keep coming up and let's be heard.

3. Social events are planned in the summer months to great locations less than an hour's drive from Port.

4. Pleased to see new members at the meetings as well as on the nets.

5. Congratulations to Jason on passing the full call so keep a listen out for VK2FT on 2 meters at this stage but soon to appear on the HF bands.

6. The club's involvement for the World Amateur Radio Day will take the form of a BBQ at the Ellenborough Reserve with the co-ordinator (VK2XU) assisting with HF gear and others with other equipment. Who is the archer, Ian?

7. I will be away from the 2nd of September to about the 15th of September. Going OS to Vanuatu and New Caledonia on the "Fair Princess". Bill, VK2ZCV, will be in control until I return.

That's all folks,  
Cheers.

Bruce. VK2HOT  
President O.R.A.R.C. Inc.

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## UP & COMING Or DOWN THE COAX

6th September  
Meeting at SES Building at 1Pm

20th September  
BBQ at Ellenborough Reserve 12pm onwards  
(BYO food and some liquid refreshments.)

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### The Origin of "73"

The traditional expression "73" goes right back to the beginning of the landline telegraph days. It is found in some of the earliest editions of the numerical codes, each with a different definition, but each with the same idea in mind -it indicated that the end or signature, was coming up. But there are no data to prove that any of these were used.

The first authentic use of 73 is in the publication The National Telegraph Review and Operators Guide, first published in April 1857. At that time, 73 meant "My Love to you!" Succeeding issues of this publication continued to use this definition of the term. Curiously enough, some of the other numerals used then had the same definition as they have now, but within a short time, the use of 73 began to change.

In the National Telegraph Convention, the numeral was changed from the Valentine-type sentiment to a vague sign of fraternalism Here, 73 was a greeting, a friendly "word" between operators and it was so used on all wires.

In 1859, the Western Union Company set up the standard "92 Code". A list of numerals from one to 92 was compiled to indicate a series of prepared phrases for use by the operators on the wires. Here, in the 92 Code, 73 changes from a fraternal sign to a very flowery "accept my compliments", which was in keeping with the florid language of the era.

Over the years from 1850 to 1900, the many

manuals of telegraphy show variations of this meaning. Dodge's The Telegraph Instructor shows it merely as "compliment". The Twentieth Century Manual of Railway and Commercial Telegraphy defines it two ways, one listing as "my compliments to you;" but in the glossary of abbreviations it is merely "compliments." Theodore A. Edison's Telegraphs Self-Taught, shows a return to "accept my compliments". By 1908, however, a backward look at the older meaning, in another part of the work, where it also lists it as "compliments".

"Best regards" has remained ever since as the "put-it-down-in-black-and-white" meaning of 73 but it has acquired over-tones of the much warmer meaning. Today, amateurs use it more in the manner that James Reid had intended that it be used -"a friendly word between operators."

(Taken from The Amateur Radio World, Dec 1983 issue.)

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### VALE KEN BECK - VK4WKB

Amateur Radio lost another of its "old timers" with the sudden passing of Ken Beck on 30th of May, 1997. Ken was spending a short holiday in Beijing, in the company of his brother, where he suffered a fatal heart attack.

Many members will recall that Ken, when he moved to Port Macquarie in 1988, that he joined ORARC, and became an active member who regularly attended meetings and held the office of Secretary in 1990-1991. During that period, Ken officiated as Chief Chef for the 1991 Field Day Weekend taking on the role of "Poppa Guiseppa" to produce a massive Spaghetti Bolognese to serve the multitudes attending the Saturday evening social dinner at Tacking Point Surf Club Pavillion.

Ken & XYL Lois, came to settle in Port Macquarie when he retired from a career, that over 40 years, took him to distant islands in

the Pacific region. He served in Nauru, Canton Island, Christmas Island, Fiji, and Papua-New Guinea, involved primarily in fuelling operations for the air transport industry.

Many of the locations where Ken was stationed had poor, unreliable, and sometimes non-existent public communications services, with the result that Amateur Radio played a major part in his life in "out of the way" places. There were occasions where use of his amateur equipment was required for official communications to the outside world.

It is not widely known, but quite true, that amateur radio played an important role during his courtship with Lois, when work demands took Ken from Melbourne to far away places. Through the help of a neighbouring Amateur Bill Wells (then a VK3, but now an active VK4), Lois, was able to keep in regular touch with Ken at his remote locations

Ken held many call signs which included VR2KW, 3D2KW, T31KW, and more recently VK2WKB & VK4WKB

He was a great achiever, with immense energy, drive and wide ranging interests. Ostensibly retired, Ken was seldom idle and he maintained his strong business interests and ties with his Pacific Island and mainland partners and friends. Despite his business activities in Australia and the Pacific, Ken always managed to devote plenty of time to regular schedules and amateur activities

Ken is sadly missed by many close friends throughout Australia and the Pacific Region.

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### CALL SIGN REGAINED.

Discerning readers of the Membership List on Page 8 (and elsewhere) in this erudite publication, may have noticed that John Jones is no longer VK2DX. A tri-lateral agreement was reached recently between John, the (then) SMA, and the recent holder of call sign VK2JJ, to do a mutually satisfactory and official swap.

John now holds the call sign VK2JJ, the call he originally held some 26 years ago, while the call VK2DX, is now emblazoned over the shack of John Thurston who most recently "baby-sat" the call, VK2JJ, for so long. The call had a couple of other holders over the years, but we are told that it is pleased to be back in the warmth of the John Jones QTH. Welcome home VK2JJ!!

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### A "Returning" Packeteer

David (VK2DAL) has commenced his return to the packet scene! After a short sharp jab at the mode just a few years back, followed by a period of temporary abandonment of all things packet, David reclaimed his old 386 which contained a HAPN TNC & mated it up with a cast-aside (but now rejuvenated) VHF Transceiver. He is now just about ready to start making those familiar BR-RRRRATTTTTT! noises on 144.875MHz. Welcome back to the tumescent packet stream Dave. It is still tumescent!

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### Congrats. To Jason Maris.

As foreshadowed in the last issue of "Oxtales", Jason was successful in his recent assault upon the AOCP examinations. Jason now holds call sign VK2FT, and should very soon be heard on the HF bands when his antenna installation is completed.

Jason is something of a natural for Morse Telegraphy. He "fist" has all the hallmarks of a top class brass-pounder, and he will be a great asset to the dwindling group of telegraph operators who are trying to keep the dream alive. We must ensure that Jason further develops his natural expertise in this mode, so all you CW buffs out there should nudge him along with some regular CW QSO's.

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### "DIDJANO"

#### ACA

Effective July 1 a new regulator for telecommunication and radio communications was

formed. Called the Australian Communications Authority (ACA). It encompasses the former Australian Telecommunications Authority (AUSTEL) and the Spectrum Management Agency (SMA). According to the press release they are encouraging industrial bodies and Associations (such as the WIA) to develop voluntary codes of practice rather than have these imposed by government regulations. Now we shall be able to measure the effectiveness of the WIA.

### Dick Smith Electronics

Is now back in Port Macquarie. Located in Clarence Street at the entrance to Port Central Shopping Mall. They are very interested in supporting our Club and although at the moment they have little Amateur equipment on display, they would be pleased to keep stocks if they knew what we wanted.

### AR Lectures

Over the past 18 months David VK2AYD, has given over 12 lectures and talks on Amateur Radio to various service clubs around the Hastings. These have been to Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, Probus Clubs and Masonic Fellowship meetings. In August he gave a talk and demonstrated equipment to the Lions Club of Wauchope and South West Rocks. If you know of Clubs wanting speakers, you have a good volunteer here.

### Antenna crunch

Didja hear about the 2AYD adventure dropping his tower? The beam needed servicing so with the help of 2DAL he decided to drop the tower. When it passed the 45 deg angle the cable broke and it descended to earth rather rapidly. There will be some delay before AYD returns to the HF bands with a big signal !!!

### VK2TT and the Lurgie

Following his sojourn around the out-back of Australia he acquired (at no charge) a dose of the dreaded lurgie. This has put him in a horizontal plane for a while. Mail-drops have

had to be arranged to keep the contamination contained. Regular disinfection and spraying of his packet keyboard has also been necessary to ensure the virus was not transmitted via the digipeater to other users. He has promised to write a specific programme that we can use to ensure our computers have not been contaminated.

### Satellite Receivers

A company called Worldspace, in conjunction with Panasonic, Sanyo and JVC are about to launch a new generation of radio receivers designed to receive broadcast programmes direct from satellites.

### ATV

Bill, VK2WST, is now active with ATV, transmitting in the 70 cm band which is Channel 16 (Band 4) on the older TV sets. (Most modern TV sets in Australia don't start their UHF range until Channel 20 or 28). A few of the portable sets cover Channel 16. Bill is keen to hear from anyone interested in exploiting ATV.

### Amateur Radio Day

September 20 is Amateur Radio Day. We were originally going to install a station at the Port Post Office, but at the August club meeting it was decided not to. Instead it is now proposed to hold a picnic at Ellenborough Reserve. From 12 noon onward. BYO. The BBQ will be there for cooking. To get to the Reserve, take the first turning on the right after you pass over the bridge at Ellenborough. (The next turning right is to the Police Station).

### G5RV

Lester, VK2BFP, put up a G5RV antenna and from the reports he is getting it seems to be doing very well. Welcome back to the world of HF Lester - could we get you on CW ?

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### THANKS FOR THE COMPANY!

During our recent trip through the Red Centre,

it was great to have the regular daily company of so many members from the Hastings Valley & environs. VK2DAL, VK2AYD, VK2BFP, & VK2WST all put in an appearance on either 40MX, 20MX or both, and signals, both ways, were usually astoundingly good.

While there is plenty of motor traffic flowing to and fro on the Stuart & Lassiter Highways to remove the feeling of isolation, it still gives one a nice warm feeling to hear familiar friendly voices right bang on sked each day.

The trip, which was targetted on Ayres Rock and environs, was most enjoyable. Fine weather (but Oh! was it it cold!) prevailed throughout, and no transport problems arose. The round trip of just on 9,000 KM was done in 20 days. Shortens the time between 10,000KM services on the car, doesn't it?

Thanks again, to those who kept watch and dropped in, and those who were interested and did a bit of SWL'ing.

de VK2TT and XYL, Phyllis.

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#### **The VK2PA-Estate.**

The Amateur equipment Peter had, is now with Mark, VK2XFK, Telephone 015401508. This includes 2M equipment, antenna's etc.

One special rig is the FT767GX that Peter had. It covers all the HF bands plus 6M plus 2M plus 70cm. The ultimate in rigs. Asking price is around \$2900. VK2XFK has a list.

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#### **ENCROACHMENT ON 70cm.**

According to the WIA Amateur Radio magazine, the commercials have horned in on our 70cm band with LIPD's (Low Interference Potential Devices).

These are typically door openers, radio key

rings, wire-less stereo headphones, etc.. Their range is supposed to be limited to about 10 metres as the power permitted is only 215mW. Frequencies used are between 433.05 and 434.79 MHz.

It was brought into Australia from the European continent where certain expensive cars (which shall be nameless, but we know of one of our members who drives one) use them for door and security systems.

Most LIPD's here seem to be in the 300 MHz band, but it seems the Euro's have big power over our authorities here. So if you are on 70cm and find some one's garage door opening, or their car flashing lights, don't be surprised.

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#### **PAGERS.**

The UK now have a system there that, providing you have the correct modem, you can send messages, via your telephone to a pager transmitter that will provide the receiver with up to 160 characters. Basically - Packet Radio (or e-mail) on your belt.

#### **MEMBERSHIP SUBS.**

Membership Subscriptions are not being renewed as promptly as could be reasonably expected. Examination of the membership list on page 8 will show you the extent of renewals received up to the date of going to press. If your name is not on that list, and you have not recently forwarded your membership subscriptions, then it is highly likely that this will be the last "OXTALES" that you will receive until membership is renewed. All must surely appreciate, that it costs money to produce and deliver "OXTALES". Further, the running costs of our club, when licence fees, insurance and other regular recurring expenses are considered, require a strong and enduring membership. So please examine the membership list, and if you are not there, poke your \$15 membership along to the Treasurer as soon as possible.

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### SPUTNIK 1997

It's now 40 years since the first artificial satellite was launched by the Russians. Known as Sputnik-1. It transmitted a bleep signal on 20 MHz and nearly every Amateur in the world tuned into it.

Now 40 years later, a replica in being made by the Russians and France. The Russians are building the body and the French, the transmitter. It will be HAND launched by the MIR cosmonaut and like the original it will transmit a bleep signal on 20 MHz. It should commence orbit around October 4 and last for about a month.

It has been suggested that we contact our local schools during this period and take along a 20 MHz receiver so that they can listen to it. With this, you could include some history on satellites and Amateur Radio. Let the young people know about our hobby.

- David - VK2AYD

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### SOFTWARE SAGA.

Last November I purchased a flat-bed scanner. Following the advice of a professional, I paid bulk dollars for bundled software to go with it. The number-one, it seems, is Adobe Photoshop, at that time V3.05. After loading this programme, I was amazed at its power to do just about anything with images.

About six weeks later while browsing through a computer magazine, there it was - a full page ad. by Adobe Systems - Photoshop V4 !!! - but if you had an early version, you could get an upgrade for a mere \$360. At this, my anguish was unbounded. As in the *Book of Job*, I fell upon my knees, threw ashes over myself,

and rent my mantle.

After calming down, I phoned their free-call number, and was told that if I had purchased my version after September last, I would be entitled to a free upgrade. All that was necessary was to provide proof of purchase and serial number.

This I did with alacrity, and after some weeks, a box - too large for a CD ROM - was handed to me by courier at the door. It contained a 6-page fold-out "Quick Reference Card", a small book "Getting Started", a very well presented 400 page "User Guide" and TWO CD ROM's. One contained numerous tutorials and interactive demo's and the other, the upgrade to version 4, with all the bells and whistles.

So I ask you gentle reader, if this had been a Microsoft programme, would Bill Gates have done the same ?

Full marks to Adobe Systems. May their image never grow less.

Yours pictorially,

John Jones (VK2JJ)

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Worth Pondering.

*How disgustingly I'd dribble,  
If at the Lord's behest  
My open mouth  
Ran north and south  
Instead of east and west.*

- Roslyn Taylor (S.M.H. 26-8-96)

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## FOR SALE

Sam Griffiths (VK2LSG) has the following items of amateur equipment for sale. Best time to contact him is after 5.00pm daily, on 0265523149.

1. Kenwood TS.440s, C/W Built-in ATU, Voice Processor (home fitted), MC80 Power Mic. \$1200.
2. Kenwood TM-241A 2-Metre Radio, C/W "Brainer" 2M/70cm Antenna . \$500
3. Diamond SX400 SWR/Power Meter, 140-525 MHz Bands. \$165.
4. Revex SWR/Power Meter. Covers 1.8 to 60 MHz \$150
5. VK Power Mate Power supply, C/W meter, 35 Amp Peak, 25 Amp continuous \$450.

Contact Sam direct, as above.

## Telephone Numbering Scheme Changes.

The scheduled changes to the national telephone numbering scheme are *not* reflected in the membership list on page 8. Whilst not a major task to bring about the changes in our club's data base, it was of sufficient magnitude to warrant deferring the changes until next issue of "OXTALES".

Please!!! Be gentle with your Editor... he is still rather fragile after 'flu!!

## Stiff Luck Segment.

This last column of the newsletter was held open until the very last minute with a view to including some details of a potential scoop of some surplus VHF Transceivers. Sadly, despite several attempt to make contact with our Agent, it was not to be. However, there may be near future developments, news of which may come to hand after publication. Should this eventuate, the information will be propagated through the weekly nets. Keep an ear out.

Let's use up the space with a little bit of terse verse, picked up with the help of VK2JJ.

### *Speculations From the Bus.*

*A church and pub stand side by side  
And questions tease me as I ride.  
Does good or evil triumph here  
The wrath of God or froth of beer?  
Are the faithful roundly cursed  
As roistering drunkards slake their thirst?  
Do worshippers indulge their whims  
By sneaking pints between the Hymns?*

- Roslyn Taylor  
(SMH 26.8.96)

## Contributions to OXTALES

The quality and content of your newsletter will be greatly enhanced if we can obtain more membership input. So what about scribbling a few lines of interesting snippets to share with the readership? All contributions appreciated.

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

(As at 18th August, 1997)

FIRST NAME	SURNAME	CALL SIGN	TOWN/CITY	TPH. NO.	
1	H. J.	BAILEY	VK2KHB	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.2192
2	COLIN	BELLENGER	VK2AF	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.3803
3	DEANNA	CAMERON	-	PORT MACQUARIE	-
4	IAN	DALRYMPLE	VK2XU	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.9922
5	CHARLES	EDMONDSON	VK2FSH	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.0495
6	SAM	GRIFFITHS	VK2LSG	TAREE	065 52.3149
7	KEITH	HANLON	-	PORT MACQUARIE	-
8	PETER	HILL	VK2BZA	LAKE CATHIE	065 85.5349
9	DON	JONES	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.5084
10	JOHN	JONES	VK2JJ	LAKE CATHIE	065 85.4522
11	LARRY	LINDSAY	VK2CLL	WAUCHOPE	065 87.1155
12	HENRY	LUNDELL	VK2ZHE	PORT MACQUARIE	065 -
13	KEITH	LUTTON	VK2KDL	TELEGRAPH POINT	065 85.0321
14	ALLAN	MADIGAN	-	WAUCHOPE	065 85.2043
15	JOHN	MCDONAGH	VK2VY	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.0020
16	ARTHUR	MONCK	VK2ATM	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.1311
17	ALLAN D	NUTT	VK2GD	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.3557
18	LESTER	O'CONNELL	VK2BFP	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.4274
19	DAVID A	PILLEY	VK2AYD	KING CREEK	065 85 2647
20	PAUL	ROMAINE	VK2UPR	PORT MACQUARIE	065 84.1830
21	BILL	SINCLAIR	VK2ZCV	PORT MACQUARIE	065 82.0329
22	DAVID	SMITH	VK2DAL	WAUCHOPE NSW	065 85.1004
23	WILLIAM	STOFMEEL	VK2WST	BONNY HILLS NSW	065 84.8104
24	DAVID	TARRANT	VK2HBC	WAUCHOPE	065 85.6381
25	TREVOR	THATCHER	VK2TT	WAUCHOPE	065 85.2278
26	BRUCE	WALKER	VK2HOT	PORT MACQUARIE	065 83.8360
27	RONALD W	WYLES	-	PORT MACQUARIE	065 81.1085

If your name is not on the above list, then your memberships Subs have not been received at the time of going to press. Please Consider.