

OXTALES

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

December 1997

Compiled by VK2TT

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President's Report

The festive season is now upon us. The Club BBQ Christmas party at Diamond Head was a great day with plenty to eat and drink. The day started off a bit ordinary but that cleared. The only down side was having to wash the car and it stuck to the car like something on a blanket.

A few of us ventured onto the beach after lunch to walk it off, so to speak, and on our return, most had left. I must have had BO, or was it approaching siesta time for the older generation Hi Hi.

The attendance at the meetings and on the nets is most pleasing. Keep it up.

The Wyong Field Day is on in February and it has been put to the members that a mini-bus could be taken if we get a driver (20 seater licence) and members to fill the seats. Numbers required at January meeting, or phone me on 6583.8360 prior to the meeting.

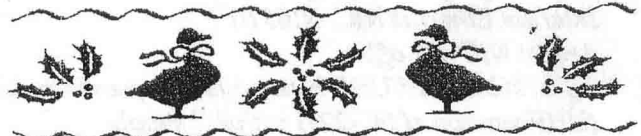
Thanks to those that put me back into the Field Day co-ordinators position again. I

KNOW WHO YOU ARE, so you will get special attention when I hand out the duties.

Thanks also to Jason (VK2FT) for filling the assistant position.

I would like to wish all members, and their families, a Merry Christmas, and I hope 1998 is kind to you.

Cheers VK2HOT-Bruce
President, ORARC Inc.



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DOWN THE COAX

3rd January 1998

General meeting at S.E.S. 1.00pm start.

13th January 1998

Field Day Committee meeting S.E.S. 7.00pm.

Some "Freebies".

The following interesting snippet was submitted by VK2AYD who received it off e-mail.

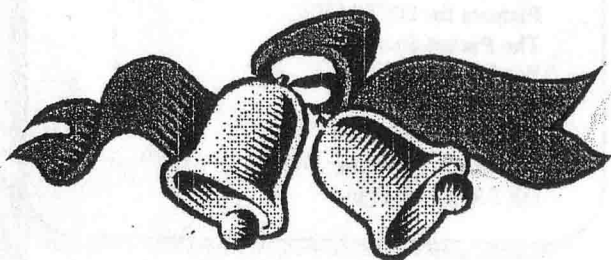
Herewith the list of sundry bits and pieces which can be listed in Oxtails as "freebies". As far as I know all items are operational but some will require adjustment. Unfortunately, no data books are available:

833 triodes (2 off)
4CX1000A UHF tetrodes (2 off)
Philips TMC 1200 Baud Leased Line Data Modem
Concord Data Systems V22/V24 Modem
Telcom Codex LSU 96/V24 Modem
Maestro 300 and 1200/75 baud Modem
Amiga/Commodore TV Modulator, A520
Creed high speed keying relay
Interlan Ethernet NIC, NI6510
Arcnet NIC's (3 off)
TS-175C/U VHF/UHF heterodyne frequency meter
(UHF version of BC-221) with AC supply
Moulded IEC mains leads (new), minus 3-pin plug
5-tube IC dispenser

There will probably be other items at a later date but I'll leave those for another issue or the next Field Day.

73's

Alan VK2GD
20 Amaroo Pde
Port Macquarie 2444
Phone 6582 3557



CONTESTS

Yes, I still enjoy them and wish a few more of you would join me. They can be great fun and you join in if only to see how many countries you can work in a given time.

For example, in the CQWW (CW) contest in November, I made 1,687 QSOs in 26 hrs (av 65/hr) in 85 countries. In the 10 metre contest in December (cw and ssb), I made 657 QSOs (527 cw and 130 ssb) in 17 hrs (av 39/hr) in 51 countries. That band really is a good band to use.

Don't think my scores were great, they were poor. I heard VK4EMM with a serial number of 1140 and ZL1DX at 1500 QSO's. The next big contest is in February - why not join me ? de VK2AYD.

ORARC MEMBERS ON E-MAIL.

There has been a suggestion from VK2YAD that OXTALES should, perhaps, carry a local e-mail directory... i.e. a list of ORARC members using the service, together with their e-mail addresses. Sounds like a timely, and beneficial addition to our humble newsletter.

David has submitted his e-mail address for publication, and hopefully other users in the membership will follow suit. One address is perhaps not enough at this stage to justify a separate text frame for a directory, so here is David's address as part of this item to act as bait, and hopefully get the ball rolling. If you are an e-mail user, let David know your address if you wish to have it appear in our OXTALES local directory. David will pass it to me via packet for compilation. (I am not an e-mail user. I refuse -point blank- to use a service that cannot justify the presence of a capital letter in its product name, hence the need for an intermediary station for address collection.)

David's (VK2AYD) e-mail address is:-
davpil@midcoast.com.au

de Trevor (VK2TT)

EQUIPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT.

Could all members that have club equipment (either working or not) and any reference books please return them at the January meeting so that I can start the new book.

Cheers VK2FT-Jason

What do You Reckon?

Is it really true that the year 2000 will be a Leap Year? If such will be the case, has there *ever* been a "Century Year" that was a Leap Year? If so, what year was it? If there *never* was such a "Century Year", is there a reason? Let's have some answers for publication in next OXTALES. The answer that is considered, by a panel of faceless judges, to be the "best" answer (and it doesn't have to be *correct*) will be published in February's issue. First prize will be a complementary autographed copy of OXTALES. Second prize will be TWO complementary autographed copies of OXTALES. (The honouring of these prizes is conditional on the Autographer being available on his return to Australia from holidays in Spain. He is a Mr. C. Skase.)

HARD LABOUR.

Member, Allan Madigan, dug this one up out of his scrap book of Telegraphist's Memorabilia. It is told by a Mr. Reg Walker:-

"A long time ago, I read something written by 'Spru' (I believe), which described the daily load carried by a Morse operator. As best I can recall, it ran like this :

A Morse key weights 4 ounces (approx.). Each letter necessitates 4 upward plus 4 downward movements = 8 x 4 = 32 ounces. On the average there are approximately 6 letters to each word = 6 x 32 ounces (2lb) = 192oz (12 lb). Each minute, a good operator sends at twenty seven words per minute = 27 x 12lb = 324lb. Each hour = 60 x 324lb = 19,440lb. For a six hour day = 6 x 19,440lb = 116,640lb. Divid-

ing 116,640lb by 2,240 (lbs in a ton) equals 52 tons 160lb EACH DAY... ON ONE HAND - Not a bad effort."

(Apologies to the younger generation for the imperial rendition, but metrification would have been something of an anachronism in such a story... Ed.)

Historic Snippets.

David (VK2HBC), has been gathering some interesting historic facts relating to communications over the years. He has provided some for presentation in OXTALES.

Here is the first, which David extracted from History of the RAN in 1914/1918 war. Pacific Zone. David has promised some more.

1. Wireless Equipment.

It must be realised that wireless equipment in the era of the years 1910-1914 was primitive to our enlightened knowledge of today. What is perhaps not so well known is that the UK factories and the local post office were very jealous of their inventions and guarded their rights with vigour, even when that knowledge was required for the protection of Australia.

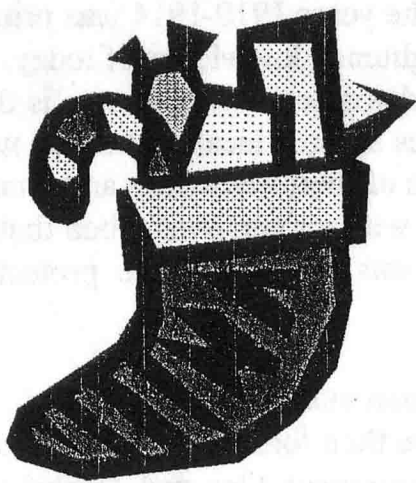
The Australian authorities, as war had started, were then forced to rely upon locally produced equipment. One such "technical" factory was at Randwick, in Sydney, and was directed by a religious clergyman. This factory made and repaired electrical machinery (Dynamos) and other electrical apparatus. This equipment was installed in the naval ships, HMAS's *HUON*, *TORRENS* and *SWAN*. Equipment was also supplied to Transport ships, Colliers, Patrol Boats and the Indian Government. A military type set was developed and placed in the Pacific zones. The reader is to be reminded that the German government had control, and stationed garrisons, on the islands to the north of Australia at this time.

Reception of war warnings received from naval stations were heard on receivers developed by the same factory. Developed and manufactured were five kilowatt (5kW) arc continuous wave transmitters which provided a greater range of operation than that which had previously been obtained. The design and construction of an oscillator (two coil type) for quick change in frequency was also carried out.

A new type of aerial tuning coil unit was also developed by this "factory".

The question now to be asked is....."Do we ever learn?".

It should be noted that the frequencies used at this time were in the range of 120kHz (2500 metres) to 1000kHz (300 metres).



CLUB'S HISTORY THROUGH OX-TALES.

Many of our current members, the young OM's, and even the OT's who joined within the last ten or so years, are probably unaware of the origins of this Newsletter, OXTALES, or the formation and early doings of this long standing club. Lester (VK2BFP) is doing some-

thing constructive about making this knowledge available to all.

Lester is a long standing member of the club, having held office for many years, and is currently engaged in a worthy attempt to gather together as many copies of the early issues of OXTALES as he can, for preservation, and research. Lester recognises the value in the Newsletter's content, as being a valuable source of reliable historical facts relating to the ORARC's activities over the years. To assist in a "hunter-gatherer" exercise, Lester is seeking the membership support and participation in dredging up the old copies of our newsletter.

For the historically minded, The first OXTALES was produced in 1980, by Lester... see elsewhere in this issue.

At our well attended monthly meeting (it was quite a surprise roll up!) in November, Lester gave a short address to those present, regarding his self initiated project aimed towards recovery of historic issues of OXTALES. For the benefit of the "Newcomers", Lester had produced some photocopies of early issues which he handed around to members who were "short on years of membership" and as a consequence, short on knowledge of our bygone years.

So, the word is, for the longer standing members particularly, dig into those old drawers, boxes, bookshelves, or whatever, chase out the silverfish, spiders, and dust and see if there are any old OXTALES hiding in there that will help fill in the gaps in the sequence, for Lester.

A special vote of thanks is due to Lester, who, over many years has been a continuous supporter of the club. In one or more

periods of time, he single-handedly produced OXTALES without the aid of modern techniques, and is now making this worthwhile contribution to the club's wellbeing, history and future. Thanks OM!

Pictures for OXTALES.

Seeing some of the pictures that were reproduced in some of Lester's copies of early OXTALES, prompted the thought that we should be doing just that sort of thing with our newsletter in the 90's. After all, it was done in earlier years with good clarity on the equipment that was then employing that era's leading edge technology, we should be doing it today, because we have the where-with-all to produce good pictures.

Unfortunately, my scanner became a casualty in my "Night of the Big Bang" event, way back in May, but I still have the necessary software with which to process graphics files. So if anybody out there with scanning facilities (and I know who some of them are.. eh John?) could assist by producing some appropriate .GIF, .BMP, or .WOTEVER graphics files (recognising the dimensional constraints imposed by our 8-page format), I would be eager to "plug them in" to our Newsletter.

It would be desirable to produce as our first photograph, on the occasion of our "re-entry" to the world of illustrations, one of general interest to all the members, with perhaps some historical significance... say a current photograph of our most senior (Anno Domini-wise) member.

Future possibilities are, of course, endless... a co-operative XYL or YL in a centre-fold, for a gala issue ? or perhaps a future Head of State opening our 2001 Field Day Weekend (be that whom, or what, it may).

Lampoonery aside, I believe it would be worthwhile to reintroduce some pix to liven up our pages, and I look forward to some views, and perhaps help with appropriate subject matter, and files with which to do it.

de VK2TT (Trevor)

The Packet Scene.

Decisions taken at the November meeting of ORARC, altered slightly the course on which it had earlier been agreed to proceed. It had been planned to first upgrade the current DR200 installation to ROSE Version 3.7 before embarking on the upgrade to 4800 bps on the backbone.

Following the November 1st decisions, moves have been set in place to proceed as soon as possible towards the decommissioning the DR200, and replacing it with a back-to-back TNC arrangement. This will facilitate a faster transition to 4800 bps on the backbone.

The above plan also includes moves to establish our VK2RCN digipeater, which has been pending for some time. Assistance was sought from A.A.P.R.A. in the acquisition of three Tiny-2 TNC's to bring the above decisions to fruition. A.A.P.R.A. has formally responded favourably, and we are awaiting the supply of the TNC's which are now on order by A.A.P.R.A. from USA.

- Trevor (VK2TT)

FOR SALE

**D.C.A. Tower, hot-dipped galvanised,
without diagonal braces. Seventy-five feet.
Dismantled.**

(See one at any airport)

\$175

Contact: John (VK2JJ) 02 6585.4522

STOP PRESS!!!!

20/12/1997. - The TNC's referred to in the above item were delivered to APPRA in recent weeks. Following testing by APPRA, they were handed over to VK2TT (who happened to be in Sydney) for transportation to the Club. By the time you read this item, work will have commenced on preparations for their installation.

- Trevor (VK2TT)

Cracking Computers

(Sing this to the tune of Waltzing Matilda)

Once a password hacker sat by a terminal
Under the shade of a binary tree
And he sang as he sat and waited 'til his code compiled

"You'll come a-cracking computers with me"

Chorus:

"Cracking computers, hacking computers
You'll come a-cracking computers with me"
And he sang as he sat and waited 'til his code compiled

"You'll come a-cracking computers with me"

Down came a user, to login to that terminal
Up sat the cracker, and watched him with glee
And he sang as he saved that password in a datafile
"You'll come a-cracking computers with me"

In came the sysop, watching on his monitor
In came a super-user or three
"Oh who's is that password you've got in your datafile?"

You've been a-cracking computers I see!"

Up jumped the cracker, turned off his terminal
"You'll never catch me online" said he!
But his code can be heard as you login to that terminal

"Who'll come a-cracking computers with me."
- Peter da Silva (apologies to Banjo Patterson)

- The AYD Heritage Collection



ORARC'S CHRISTMAS BBQ.

The Club BBQ, held on Sunday November, 30th at Diamond Head Picnic Grounds, saw an encouraging roll up from members and their XYL's. There were twenty-seven persons in attendance; made up of 25 members/partners, plus two visitors, (ex-member Will Jamieson and XYL Carol, who dropped in for a goodwill visit to extend wishes for the festive season).

The weather, unlike the very hot and debilitating previous two days, was overcast and mild, with just a few light sprinkles of rain. Nobody suffered sunburn, or heat discomfort.

The club's barbecue was pressed into service again, producing a delightful sausage sizzle (Butter-fly'ed and cooked to perfection by the usual expert chefs.)

The Diamond Head venue was very pleasing, with plenty of green grass, stacks of shade trees (had they been required), and with only a short walk to the beach. As far as can be ascertained, none of the XYL's or YL's brought their bikinis (well, if they did, your reporter missed them!) There was a rumour circulating that David (VK2DAL) brought his leopard skin Tarzan suit in readiness for impromptu "jungle games" which did not eventuate, but a rumour is all that it was. It is believed that he left it at home, really.

Those who turned up to enjoy the event were, Allan & Dawn Madigan, David (VK2HBC) & Aileen, Lewis (VK2AG) & Pamela, Bill (VK2ZCV) & Ruth, David (VK2DAL) & Roma, Bruce (VK2HOT) &

Gwen, Jason (VK2FT), John (VK2VY), "Snow" (VK2BVD), Keith (VK2KDL) & Gwen, John (VK2KHB) & Florence, John (VK2JJ), Lester (VK2BFP) & Het-tie, Trevor (VK2TT) & Phyllis.

The attendance was good, but there was plenty of room, and tucker, had there been more. Let us hope that we can beat that head count next year.

OXTALES ORIGINS

OXTALES began its illustrious life over seventeen years ago. It was initially ti-tled, simply, the Newsletter, when it hit the streets on 24th February, 1980, after emerging from the first production run in

the QTH of Lester, (VK2BFP).

It was clearly deserving of a more dis-tinctive name, and on 21st May 1980, after much discussion in Lester's family, it made its grand entry as OXTALES, which it has retained since then.

(Scholars believe the name is derived from the Latin, *Oxtallis*, liter-ally translated as The Newsletter of the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club Inc. - Ed)

LATE NEWS!!

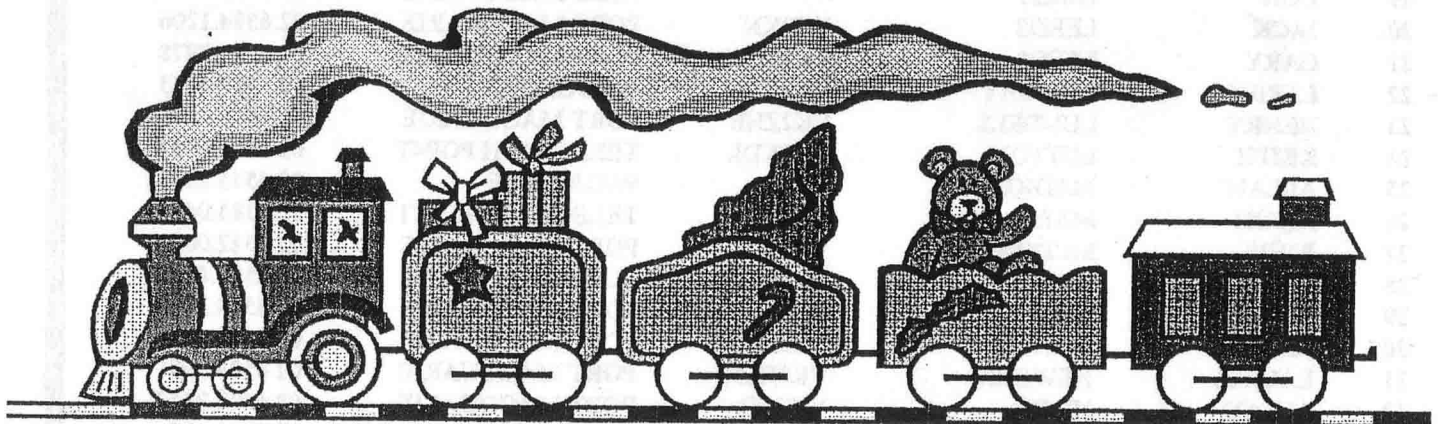
VK2HOT just telephoned to advise that the WYONG FIELD DAY

is scheduled for

SUNDAY 22nd February 1998.

Efforts are now being made to

organise a 'Bus for the occasion.



**A Merry Christmas
to all Members
and
Their Families.**



OXLEY REION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB Inc.
MEMBERSHIP REGISTER.

	FIRST NAME	SURNAME	CALL SIGN	TOWN/CITY	TPH. NO.
1	PETER	ALLAN	VK2GLJ	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.9150
2	JOHN	BAILEY	VK2KHB	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.2912
3	COLIN	BELLENGER	VK2AF	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.3803
4	BOB	BLYTH	VK2XIQ	PORT MACQUARIE	-
5	BOB	BRODIE	VK2EJK	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.0592
6	DEANNA	CAMERON	-	PORT MACQUARIE	-
7	KEVIN	COULTER	VK2MAM	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.8325
8	IAN	DALRYMPLE	VK2XU	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.9922
9	JIM	DANIELS	-	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.1933
10	CHARLES	EDMONDSON	VK2FSH	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.0495
11	BADEN	GLEESON	VK2MOQ	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.2018
12	LEWIS	GREEN	VK2AG	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.9162
13	GRAEME	GREENWOOD	VK2ZIS	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.4684
14	SAM	GRIFFITHS	VK2LSG	TAREE	02 6552.3149
15	KEITH	HANLON	-	PORT MACQUARIE	-
16	PETER	HILL	VK2BZA	LAKE CATHIE	02 6585.5449
17	SNOW	HODDER	VK2DV	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.7095
18	JOHN	JONES	VK2JJ	LAKE CATHIE	02 6585.4522
19	DON	JONES	-	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.5084
20	JACK	LEEDS	VK2KN	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.1206
21	GARY	LEEDS	VK2NOV	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.3978
22	LARRY	LINDSAY	VK2CLL	WAUCHOPE	02 6587.1155
23	HENRY	LUNDELL	VK2ZHE	PORT MACQUARIE	02 65 -
24	KEITH	LUTTON	VK2KDL	TELEGRAPH POINT	02 6585.0321
25	ALLAN	MADIGAN	-	WAUCHOPE	02 6585.2043
26	JASON	MARIS	VK2FT	TELEGRAPH POINT	02 6585.0426
27	JOHN	MCDONAGH	VK2VY	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.0020
28	DOUG	MCDONALD	VK2EUM	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.6157
29	TERRY	MEEHAN	VK2KL	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.2997
30	ARTHUR	MONCK	VK2ATM	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.1311
31	LAURIE	NEWHAM	VK2ELN	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.3981
32	ALLAN	NUTT	VK2GD	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.3557
33	LESTER	O'CONNELL	VK2BFP	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.4274
34	DAVID A	PILLEY	VK2AYD	KING CREEK	02 6585.2647
35	PAUL	ROMAINE	VK2UPR	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.1830
36	BILL	ROTH	VK2CWR	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6581.1776
37	BILL	SINCLAIR	VK2ZCV	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.0329
38	DAVID	SMITH	VK2DAL	WAUCHOPE NSW	02 6585.1004
39	BILL	STOFMEEL	VK2WST	BONNY HILLS NSW	02 6584.8104
40	DAVID	TARRANT	VK2HBC	WAUCHOPE	02 6585.6381
41	TREVOR	THATCHER	VK2TT	WAUCHOPE	02 6585.2278
42	BRUCE	WALKER	VK2HOT	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.8360
43	RONALD W	WYLES	-	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6581.1085