

April 1998

Compiled by VK2TT

 PRESIDENT:
 Bruce Walker
 VK2HOT
 6583.8360

 VICE. PRES:
 Bill Sinclair
 VK2ZCV
 6583.9302

 TREASURER:
 John McDonagh
 VK2VY
 6582.0020

 SECRETARY:
 David Tarrant
 VK2HBC
 6585.6381

President's Report

The John Moyle Day at the fire tower was a great event for those who attended. Next time DAL you are required to bring a shovel and lots of water so you can dig a mote around one operator.

The results of the day are as follows:-

HF 34 contacts x 2 = 68
UHF 3 contacts x 10 = 30
1 contact x 2 = 2
VHF 3 contacts x 20 = 60
9 contacts x 10 = 90
7 contacts x 2 = 14

TOTAL POINTS = 264

The event was well attended including the local inhabitants which were kept at bay. The conditions were not as good as one would have hoped for. Maybe next year we could go back to North Brother Mountain but I will visit the site first to check out the modifications to the area and the fauna.

The 1998 Field Day is fast approaching and the planning is going along okay. All members will be contacted by the section leaders as to the duties they would like you to carry out.

The section leaders are:-

HALL VK2HOT-Bruce

KITCHEN VK2TT-Trevor FOXHUNTS VK2ZCV-Bill VK2DAL-David

It is pleasing to see our membership increasing with VK1ZT-Neil, VK2YOR-Roy and Peter Fletcher joining up.

One of our members, VK2GD-Allan has been in hospital and I wish him a speedy recovery.

A reminder to members that the first Saturday in August is the AGM. Please think about what position best suits you to take on.

Cheers from VK2HOT-Bruce President O.R.A.R.C. Inc

In This Issue:

President's report	Page 1
Down The Coax	Page 2
OXTALES for April is Late	Page 2
East Meets West	Page 2
Hey! Mr. Goanna Man	Page 3
John VK2JJ Back from India	Page 4
Eastings & Northings	Page 4
VK2DAL'S Beam is Up	Page 5
Word Search Puzzle	Page 6
Field day Reminder	Page 6
Look out GIF & JPEG	Page 7
Membership List	Page 8
Some rough old pictures	Here & Ther

DOWN THE COAX

SATURDAY-2ND MAY 1998 MONTHLY MEETING AT SES BUILDING IPM.

SATURDAY-30TH MAY 1998
MONTHLY MEETING
AT SES BUILDING
1PM

FIELD DAY FINAL PREPARATIONS.

SATURDAY
6TH JUNE 1998

FIELD DAY.
SUNDAY 7TH JUNE 1998
FIELD DAY.

SATURDAY 4TH JULY 1998 MONTHLY MEETING AT SES BUILDING 1PM

NOMINATIONS FOR 98/99 YEAR

SATURDAY 1ST AUGUST 1998
AGM & MONTHLY MEETING
AT SES BUILDING 1PM
FOLLOWED BY
A
SAUSAGE SIZZLE.

OXTALES FOR APRIL IS LATE!

The April OXTALES is running just a wee bit late. There is a good, and valid reason. Getting all informative things (List of Sponsors, catering info, programme of events, etc.,) associated with the forthcoming June Field Day Weekend finalised for distribution to all members, needed a bit of "stitching together". This could best be achieved by snatching some additional time. These factors, coupled with some consideration for the economics relating to stationery and postage, prompted the organising committee to take a decision to do it all in one step, even though it meant delaying the distribution of the newsletter just a teensy-weensy bit. (The content of OXTALES matures with age, anyway!)

EAST MEETS WEST
O.R.A.R.C. Participates in Playing Host
to U.S. Visitors.

The afternoon of Easter Monday, 13th April, saw a gathering of 12 O.R.A.R.C. members and their ladies at Pilley's

Pad, King Creek, QTH of David (VK2AYD) and Dee Pilley. The occasion, organised by David & Dee, with sponsorship by our club, was arranged to extend a welcome, and hospitality to a group of visiting U.S. Amateurs, in the form of a good old Aussie style Barbecue.

The visitors, from various parts of the U.S. (predominantly central and east coast USA, with only one couple being "westerners"), were travelling in twenty mobile homes in a large group of twenty couples, wherein each of the OM's and their XYL's were licensed Amateurs...in fact, the XYL's should really be listed as Y.L.'s?

The Australian segment of their motor home trip began at their Australian landfall, Sydney, on the Thursday before Easter where they were met at the Airport by the W.I.A. President, Geoff McGrorey-Clark VK2EO and Secretary, Eric Fossey VK2EFY, NSW Div., who had made prior arrangements for those that wanted, to obtain VK2I** calls from the ACA. (At a cost of \$34 each). Each were presented with a WIA badge and temporary membership of the WIA whilst in Australia.

They collected their RV's (Campervans) from Amcliffe and then drove to Narrabeen where they encamped for a couple of days before heading north to Port Macquarie on Easter Sunday. You may recall Sydney was under flood on the Friday and Narrabeen had the maximum rain fall so they had a pretty good introduction to our climate.

Prior to departing Sydney, half of them went to Dural where the WIA have their Sunday morning 10 am broadcasts and took part in some of the call-backs. Upon their arrival in the Hastings region our local voice repeater, VK2RPM received probably the most use it has had this year with new accents and new calls livening up the normally rather soporific atmosphere that permeates the area of VK2RPM footprint.

The "Wagon Master" was Dick, W4AOP and his XYL, Meredith W4AMK, who had visited with David and Dee a couple of years previously, maintains regular sked together on 20m SSB. They have friends for nearly 30 years and were one time neighbours back in the USA.

Calls attending the function were:-WB8AMD Bill and Marce KB2FJ Roger and Joan KE2NTK W2GKN Frank and Joyce KE2MWU KB0REM Roberta and Carolyn W1USE Herb and Evelyn N1EV N6NTV Gilberet and Mary N6VXH N5UUR Cecil and Trudi WU9T Don and Martha KF9FB Jerry and Judy K9ZKJ Don and Joyce KB9APD
N5MFG Jack and Bennie
KD5DJD Fred and Janice KD5CKE
K9OSZ Dick and Frieda
KI5OJ David and Charlotte N5TKY
W9THI John and Martha
KC5NDD Bill and Sue
WB8TTQ Paul and Martha
WB2SFZ Harry and Donna
WB2DZF Frank and Virginia

Back home these guys and gals are members of the Good Sam Ham Radio RV Club and if you listen up on top end of 20 metres you will find them operating on their regular nets.

The entertainment highlight at the Barbecue was an extemporaneous instrumental/vocal act by husband/wife team from the USA visitors. An electronic keyboard and amplifier system "just happened" to be on hand, and this gifted couple used it to deliver a foottappin', hand-clappin' rendition of the well known folk-sie/railroadin' ballad, "Good Morning, America".

Much "chewing of the fat" took place throughout the afternoon, and in the relatively short time available, the U.S. visitors were hopefully able to obtain a fair and accurate insight as to how Amateur Radio and its social aspects function in the Oxley Region of VK-land.

The Porterhouse steaks, chicken, rissoles and bangers were all demolished together with some excellent additions. Our thanks to Roma (VK2DAL), Pat (VK2FSH) and Gwen (VK2KDL) for the additional foods they made and to Tonni (VK2WST) who got dish-pan hands.

A big vote of thanks and appreciation is due to David, Dee and family members who put the whole thing together. There were approximately 74 mouths to feed & 74 bottoms to place on seats, and this was done quietly, smoothly and without fuss or bustle.

It's a pity that so few of our members turned up to enjoy this super day.

It is hoped that our North American guests enjoy the remainder of their visit (which will include three weeks in ZL) and that they will take back home with them pleasant memories of VK-land in general, and the Hastings Valley and environs in particular. We certainly enjoyed their company, despite the fleeting nature of the encounter.

Hey! Mr. Goanna Man (Apologies to Billy Joel)

On Saturday 21st March a number of Club Members,

under the command of our esteemed President and accompanied by two XYL's, and one dog named Sam, travelled to Nr.1 Fire Tower, west of Wauchope to take part in the annual John Moyle Field Day. Three stations, HF, VHF and UHF, were set up and operated under the Club Callsign of VK2BOR. It was a beautiful day, a little on the warm side, and all were looking forward to a day of Radio, friendship and a good BBQ. Little did they know what was in store for at least some of the Group.

One of the members, Keith, (VK2KDL) set up his "spot" on one of the tables in the area, and was accompanied by his wife, Gwen and a couple of other people. Ian (VK2XU) set up the HF gear in a spot handy to trees for antenna purposes (and did very well getting numerous contacts), Bruce (VK2HOT) set up his 2 metre rig on a table which was under a beach umbrella, relatively close to Dave (VK2DAL) who had a camp of alsorans under a shady tree, and Bill (VK2ZCV) and Arthur (VK2ATM) experimented with 70 centimetres and got a few contacts.

It was soon apparent that this pristine spot was home to two fairly large goannas who immediately took a shine to Keith and Gwen (or their eats) and decided to join their party despite Keith's frantic waving of arms and expletives directed at his visitors. In the end, Keith, Gwen and Co. fled to the relative safety of Dave's camp.

The Goannas, not to be outdone, soon saw where their hosts had gone and decided to mosey on over to join them in their new QTH.

Dave and his crew were using the tabletop of his ute as a table for maps, picnic gear and other assorted goodies, along with Sam (VK2DOG) who was tethered to the load rail with a fairly long rope. Sam, being a good watchdog, saw the goannas approaching and all hell broke loose. Sam leapt off the truck, clearing the contents of the tray with the trailing rope. At the same time the 5 ft goanna fled to the comparative safety of the underneath of Bill's car and stayed there. Dave decided that the goanna would only make another attempt on the QTH, so decided the time had come to get rid of it, once and for, all by using a bedsheet and flicking it under the car.

In the meantime, Bruce who had awoken from his siesta under the beach umbrella, came over and stood in front of Bill's car and demanded to know what the hell was going on, just as 5 ft of very agitated goanna hurtled from under the car, no doubt looking for anything to climb. Bruce at this stage made a rapid decision which resulted in something akin to a heart attack crossed with a high jump, thus depriving the poor beastie of a refuge. The disappointed goanna

stomped off a few metres and Bruce retreated to his umbrella and 2 metre rig to recover.

Now, the large goanna who had been joined by his mate, not to be outdone, sighted Bruce and his umbrella and thought that they would like to make up with him after getting off to such a bad start. Meanwhile some of the group, seeing the goannas dilemma, decided to assist the reconciliation process and throw a few scrap of bread for the critters to eat. Unfortunately some (most) landed under Bruce's chair. You know, humans do not understand the good intentions of other species such as goannas, it just doesn't matter how hard one tries to facilitate meetings and friendships, there is always one party who will not play ball.

PS. Bruce was last seen heading in an easterly direction at a rapid pace making references as to the parentage of some members of the group.

PPS. It was a great day, a good time was had be nearly all, we even got a few points so that we may not come last this year. Thanks must go to VK2's ATM, ZCV, HOT, and XU for their efforts in establishing the radio bases, and Jason, VK2FT for looking after the Club BBQ. Ian's (VK2XU) aerial tuning unit was a lesson in what can be done without spending money. (See pickie, elsewhere in this issue... Ed)

I think that most of us are looking forward to the next John Moyle Field Day.

73's Dave VK2DAL.

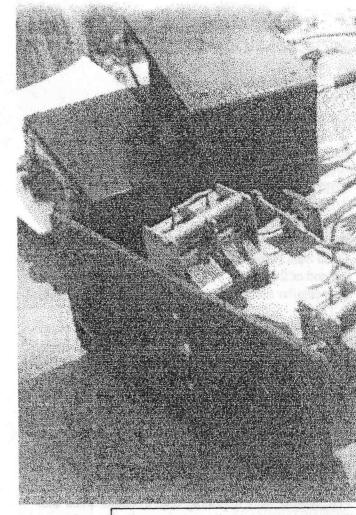
VK2JJ Back from India.

John (VK2JJ) has recently arrived back safely and soundly from a visit into the depths of India. When interviewed by OXTALES, he was recovering from a nasty bout of influenza (a good old Australian dose... not acquired whilst overseas!!) and rather than put him through the trauma of an in-depth interrogation regarding his trip, he was allowed to go back to his recovery cot. Get well John. You will be quizzed in due course.

Eastings & Northings.

Has any OXTALES reader ever encountered Eastings and Northings as a means of expressing a geographical location? Our Hon. Secretary, Dave (VK2HBC has!) Perhaps his encounter can more meaningfully be described as a confrontation.

Whilst Dave was quite happy to accept, record and submit to A.C.A., the available Eastings and Northings data relating to the planned location of our new digipeater, he let his enquiring mind get the better of him, and began probing as to why and how these two entities have come into being?. He dared to delve into the fringes of that mystical world where spherical trigonometry, Mercator charts, sketch



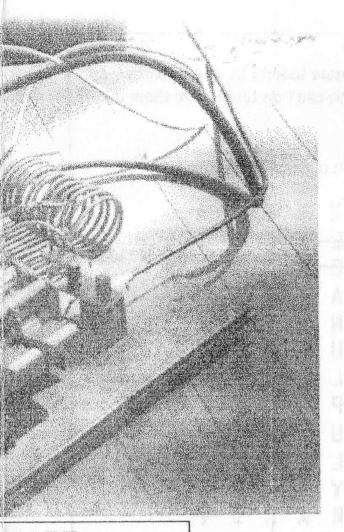
VK2XU's Field I

maps and "lines in the sand" all cohabitate in an impious relationship! It looks as though he could well have bitten off a lump that is going to require some time, and effort, to fully digest... but rest assured, he will prevail!

Sadly, he has propagated his interest (quite unnecessarily, one should stress) and there are now others nervously tinkering, albeit myopically, with the horrendous multi-element formulae that somehow or other can convert good old Latitude and Longitude to coordinates that revel in these satanic names of Eastings and Northings.

Methodology and Mathematics aside, my big question to the pedagogues who may happen to read this plaintive plea for guidance is, What is wrong with Lat.& Lon. that would prompt officialdom to demand locations be expressed in Eastings and Northings? There just has to be some valid reason for this seemingly (to me, anyway) unnecessary requirement. After all, the Australian Surveying & Land Information Group's maps of this fair land carry Lat. & Lon. notations as well as the National Grid reference system... upon which the Northings and Eastings presumably feed!

A second question, of perhaps lesser importance, but of high personal interest is, If I had a fertile breeding pair, comprising one Northing and one Easting,



ay A.T.U.

could I reasonably expect to ultimately see their progeny being Westings and Southings? (in the fullness of time, of course, and it is accepted that the gestation period would be in minutes and seconds of arc.)

Any frustrated Geodeticians out there who are just busting to put straight, a timid, but receptive, ignoramus?.

(I will get you for this Dave!!! Even if I have to live beyond 100!) de Trevor (VK2TT)

VK2DAL's Beam Is Up & Running!

Recent visitors to the shack of David (VK2DAL) will have witnessed the completed structure that David has put together to form his completed. Tri-bander beam.

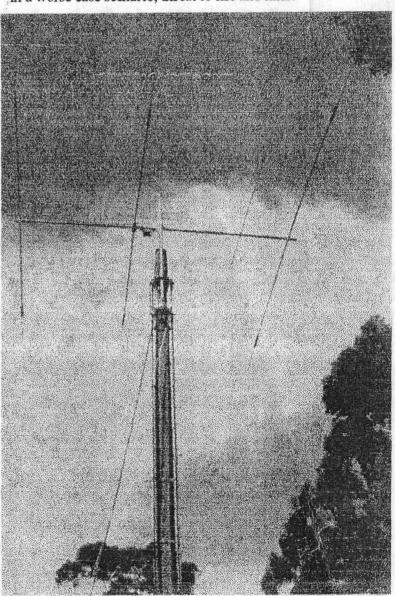
It sits atop a 15 meter power pole (treated variety, a la electricity corporations) and is fitted with a somewhat rare but particularly functional altitude compressor, i.e. "the device wot brings the beam itself down to 'fiddle height' for maintenance or adjustment, and takes it back up to operational height as required".

David designed and manufactured a "tram-way" (two specially designed galvanised folded steel parallel

tracks) that is attached to the pole, running vertically, from top to bottom, (and up and down too!). Upon these two tracks runs a "Tram". The tram is a sturdy aluminium frame, fitted with four wheels that engage snugly within the folded tracks to maintain captive tracking and stability. This assembly can thus be raised or lowered, up or down the tram-way by means of a DC powered winch and cable.

The antenna rotating mechanism, along with its thrust bearing, and the antenna itself, are attached to the tram, so the whole caboodle becomes a very convenient system for antenna access, without the operator having to leave ground level when "fiddle" or modification time comes around.

Mechanical latches are included in the system to ensure that in the unlikely event of the main winching cable suffering a parting of the ways, there will be minimal distance for the tram assembly to drop & crash, thus significantly reducing risk to hardware, or in a worse case scenario, threat to life and limb.

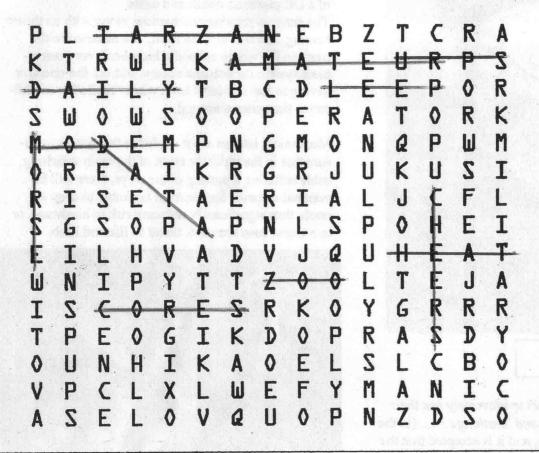


Above is a poorly processed shot of DAL's handiwork, but read on...

JUST FOR FUN

The word search puzzle below has 25 words (4 or more letters) in it. All words were selected from the December 1997 OXTALES. If you can't do them, give them to your xyl to do! -de David (VK2AYD)

Answers will be in the next edition of OXTALES.



The electric winch is powered from a truck battery which is in turn float charged by solar panels. A catenary cable supports the coaxial feeder, completing what is in effect a very convenient antenna system of a type not seen in every Amateur's backyard.

David reports that performance of the beam is well up to expectation, but in true amateur spirit, there will be continuing fine tuning of the overall system. The price tag, all up, could scare off the "small punters". There was not an awful lot of change out of Four Grand!

Queen's Birthday Weekend Field Day

Saturday, June 6th and Sunday June 7th are the dates that members and interested parties should mark boldly in their social calendars. Those are the dates of our annual Field Day weekend. All

members will receive with this issue of OXTALES, a complete programme of events for these two days.

Any members and/or XYL's, who would wish to volunteer some time to assist in any way, in preparations, organisation or in the the catering area on the days, don't be shy in coming forward and letting any member of the committee know of your willingness.

Offers of help will always be welcome.

Look Out, GIF & JPEG

John (VK2JJ), has dug out the following snippet for those of our readers who are "image" minded. It comes from Adobe Magazine columnist, Glenn Fleishman.

"If you've used the Web for more than a few days, you know that virtually every image you encounter there is a GIF or JPEG file. That may be about to change.

A competitor to these two formats has emerged - it's called PNG (pronounced "ping"), or portable network graphic. It emerged in late 1997 from a grassroots effort by dedicated Internet developers to create a format with features designed specially for the Web.

Like GIF, PNG offers lossless compression (it doesn't actually discard image data) and indexed color. Unlike GIF, it also supports full 24-bit color just as JPEG does. And these knock-'em-dead features make PNG a standout: built-in gamma, alpha-channel transparency, and two dimensional interlacing.

To explain what makes PNG so powerful, let's start with two things that differentiate graphic file formats: how they store color data and how they perform compression. On a computer, a color definition is generally stored as an RGB value that comprises values for red, green, and blue components. A standard RGB value is 24 bits, consisting of three 8-bit numbers (values that can range from 0 to 255) for red, green, and blue. The RGB palette consists of over 16 million colors, and the differences among some of those colors are extremely subtle.

Some formats, such as TIFF and JPEG, can store the full 24-bit value for each pixel in an image. Others, like GIF, use an abbreviated (indexed color palette to reduce the size of a file, with a big trade-off in color fidelity. A GIF file contains a maximum of 256 RGB color definitions, which it stores in a color map. Each pixel in a GIF actually points to one of the colors in the colormap, which points to the full RGB color data either as real 24-bit values or in an indexed color palette, so it gives you a choice between maximum color fidelity or minimum file size.

Another defining aspect of a graphic file format is what kind of compression it uses. GIF (and sometimes TIFF) uses a method called LZW (Lempel-Ziv-Welch), the algorithm for which is owned by Unisys, which charges software developers fees for the use of the algorithm. LZW offers lossless compression which works by identifying certain kinds of redundant data patterns and replacing them with tokens - short codes that can be replaced with the original long pattern during file decompression. PNG offers lossless compression similar to that used by LZW, but it's patent-free.

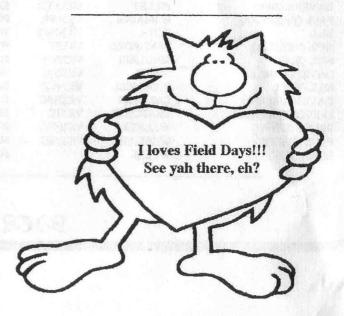
PNG images can also store the gamma setting of the system they were created on (gamma compensates for monitors' tendency to display midtones either too lightly or too darlky relative to highlights and shadows). This allows other systems to display the PNG as similarly as possibly to the way it displayed on the system used to create it.

Another bonus feature in PNG is alpha-channel transparency, which lets you define areas of varying degrees of transparency using an extra grayscale channel. GIF has single color transparency, which allows you to assign one or more of the colors in your colormap to be transparent, so each pixel is either totally transparent or totally opaque.

Finally, PNG images offer two-dimensional interlacing. In browsers that support this feature, interlaced PNG images fill in gradually, getting progressively sharper from top to bottom and left to right, thereby seeming to load faster. Interlaced GIF and JPEG images, in contrast, fill in from top to bottom only using full lines of pixels.

Support for PNG in various Web browsers and other software is beginning to catch on, although not all applications compatible with PNG support all of its features - at least not yet. In late 1997 Netscape and Microsoft added support for PNG: Netscape added it to version 4.04 for Windows and Macintosh, while Microsoft added it only for Windows Internet Explorer 4.0. Adobe's major graphics products (including Photoshop, Illustrator, and Page Maker) also offer support for PNG.

Right now, about 20 percent of all Web browsers can view PNG images, but expect the number to grow rapidly. As it catches on, you might find yourself PNGing away."





OXLEY REGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB Inc. MEMBERSHIP REGISTER. 28th April, 1998

F	IRST NAME(Spouse)	SURNAME	CALL SIGN	TOWN/CITY	TPH. NO.
	PETER	ALLAN	VK2GLJ	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.9150
	JOHN (FLORENCE)	BAILEY	VK2KHB	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.2192
	COLIN (JAN)	BELLENGER	VK2AF	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.3803
	BOB	BLYTH	VK2XIQ	PORT MACQUARIE	
;	MARK	BRENTON	VK2XFK	COLLOMBATTI	015 401508
;	ВОВ	BRODIE	VK2EJK	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.0592
	ROY W	BURGESS	VK2YOR	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.9349
3	DEANNA	CAMERON	100	PORT MACQUARIE	and the first car
)	KEVIN (JUNE)	COULTER	VK2MAM	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.8325
0	IAN	DALRYMPLE	VK2XU	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.9922
1	ЛМ	DANIELS	Shirt and have	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.1933
2	CHARLES (PAT)	EDMONDSON	VK2FSH	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.0495
3	PETER (CAROLINE [VK2CZF])	FLETCHER	710101	PORT MACQUARIE	02
4	BADEN	GLEESON	VK2MOQ	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.2018
		GREEN	VK2AG	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.9162
5	LEWIS (PAMELA)	The second secon	VK2ZIS	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.4684
	GRAEME	GREENWOOD	VK2LSG	TAREE	02 6552.3149
7	SAM	GRIFFITHS	VKZLSG		02 0332.3149
8	KEITH	HANLON	- 3.07.007.4	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6585,5449
9	PETER	HILL	VK2BZA	LAKE CATHIE	02 6583,7095
20	SNOW	HODDER	VK2DV	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6585.4522
21	JOHN (THEA)	JONES	VK2JJ	LAKE CATHIE	02 6582.5084
22	DON	JONES	A DECEMBE	PORT MACQUARIE	
23	JACK	LEEDS	VK2KN	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.1206
14	GARY	LEEDS	VK2NOV	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.3978 02 6587.1155
.5	LARRY	LINDSAY	VK2CLL	WAUCHOPE	
26	HENRY	LUNDELL	VK2ZHE	PORT MACQUARIE	02 65 -
27	KEITH (GWEN)	LUTTON	VK2KDL	TELEGRAPH POINT	02 6585.0321
8.	ALLAN (DAWN)	MADIGAN	VK2MAI	WAUCHOPE	02 6585.2043
29	JASON	MARIS	VK2FT	TELEGRAPH POINT	02 6585,0426
30	JOHN (KARIN)	MCDONAGH	VK2VY	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.0020
31	DOUG	MCDONALD	VK2EUM	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.6157
32	JOHN	MCLEAN	VK2KCE	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.7400
33	TERRY	MEEHAN	VK2KL	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.2997
34	ARTHUR (WENDY)	MONCK	VK2ATM	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.1311
35	LAURIE	NEWHAM	VK2ELN	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.3981
36	ALLAN	NUTT	VK2GD	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.3557
37	DAVID A (DEE)	PILLEY	VK2AYD	KING CREEK	02 6585.2647
38	PAUL (BARBARA)	ROMAINE	VK2UPR	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.1830
39	BILL	ROTH	VK2CWR	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6581.1776
40	NEIL (VERENA)	SANDFORD	VK1ZT	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6584.9162
11	BILL (RUTH)	SINCLAIR	VK2ZCV	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.9302
12	DAVID (ROMA)	SMITH	VK2DAL	WAUCHOPE NSW	02 6585.1004
43	BILL (TONI)	STOFMEEL	VK2WST	BONNY HILLS NSW	02 6584.8104
44	DAVID (AILEEN)	TARRANT	VK2HBC	WAUCHOPE	02 6585.6381
45	TREVOR (PHYLLIS)	THATCHER	VK2TT	WAUCHOPE	02 6585.2278
46	BRUCE (GWEN)	WALKER	VK2HOT	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6583.8360
47	PAUL (CAROL)	WEBSTER	VK2BZC	PORT MACQUARIE	02 6582.3377
48	RONALD W	WYLES		PORT MACQUARIE	02 6581.1085

8008