



# OXTALES

First published 1980

Club Nets on VK2RPM  
146.700MHz  
(CTCSS 91.5Hz)  
Sundays 0900  
Thursdays 1930

Newsletter of the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club Inc.,

**PO Box 712 Port Macquarie 2444**

Club email address: vk2bor@orarc.org also on Facebook as Oxley

Region Amateur Radio Club

Club Website: <http://www.orarc.org>



ORARC's Forty-eighth Anniversary Year

## May 2019

PRESIDENT: Henry Lundell	VK2ZHE	6582 0534
VICE PRES: Paul Colledge	VK2ICQ	6580 9912
TREASURER: Dennis Meade	VK2DAM	6582 2998
SECRETARY: Henry Lundell (act)	VK2ZHE	6582 0534

### *President's Report*

May 2019  
President's Report



### ORARC 2019 Field Day

The ORARC 2019 44th annual Field Day takes place on Saturday the 8th and Sunday the 9th of June during the Queen's Birthday Weekend. The venue will be the Wauchope Showground hall in High Street, Wauchope.

Thank you to Larry Lindsay VK2CLL for all his effort in securing the Wauchope Showground Hall for the Field Day. Thanks must also go to Larry's daughter Jacqui for creating the Field Day advertisement for Amateur Radio and the Field Day Program.

The Field Day dinner will be at 6pm on Saturday the 8th of June in the Aspire Restaurant at the Port Macquarie Golf Club on Ocean Drive. The full menu is available with payment as you order. The food is excellent. The club has been recently

### ORARC VHF/UHF Repeaters

#### MIDDLE BROTHER

VK2RPM 2 metre (Voice - CTCSS 91.5Hz)  
O/P 146.700MHz - I/P 146.100MHz

VK2RPM 70 cm (Voice - CTCSS 123Hz)  
O/P 438.525MHz - I/P 433.525MHz  
C4FM digital mode capability

VK2RPM-1 (APRS Digipeater)  
SX 145.175MHz 1200bps

#### TELEGRAPH POINT

VK2RCN 2 metre (Voice)  
O/P 147.000 MHz - I/P 146.400 MHz

VK2RCN 70 cm (Voice - CTCSS 123 Hz)  
O/P 438.425MHz - I/P 433.425MHz

VK2RCN (6m Repeater)  
O/P 53.800 MHz - I/P 52.800 MHz

VK2RCN-1 (APRS Digipeater)

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## Down The Coax

ORARC meetings held in the S.E.S. Building  
Central Road, Port Macquarie.

Monthly General Meeting  
Saturday 4 May 2019 2:00 pm

World Telecommunication Day  
Friday 17 May 2019. AX prefix permitted

Friday Night Get-Together  
Friday 17 May 2019 7.00 pm

Monthly General Meeting  
Saturday 1 June 2019 2:00 pm

ORARC Field Day Wauchope Showground Hall  
Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 June 2019  
Field Day Dinner Sat. Port Macquarie Golf Club

Friday Night Get-Together  
Friday 21 June 2019 7.00 pm

Winter VHF/UHF Field Day  
Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 June 2019

Monthly General Meeting  
Saturday 6 July 2019 2:00 pm

Friday Night Get-Together  
Friday 19 July 2019 7.00 pm

Annual General Meeting  
Saturday 3 August 2019 2:00 pm

Monthly General Meeting  
Saturday 3 August 2019 after AGM

## Net Controllers' Roster

Nets on Voice Repeater VK2RPM 146.700 MHz

**Sundays**  
(0900 Local)

**Thursdays**  
(1930 Local)

### May 2019

VK2FMGM	May 5	VK2EM	May 2
VK2FMGM	Mar 12	VK2ZHE	May 9
VK2FMGM	Mar 19	VK2ICQ	May 16
VK2FMGM	May 26	VK2EM	May 23
		VK2ZHE	May 30

### June 2019

VK2FMGM	Jun 2	VK2ICQ	Jun 6
VK2FMGM	Jun 9	VK2EM	Jun 13
VK2FMGM	Jun 16	VK2ZHE	Jun 20
VK2FMGM	Jun 23	VK2ICQ	Jun 27
VK2FMGM	Jun 30		

### July 2019

VK2FMGM	Jul 7	VK2EM	Jul 4
VK2FMGM	Jul 14	VK2ZHE	Jul 11
VK2FMGM	Jul 21	VK2ICQ	Jul 18
VK2FMGM	Jul 28	VK2EM	Jul 25

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renovated and the restaurant is now segregated from the lounge area.

The Field Day will have all the usual attractions with 2 metre and 80 metre fox hunts on both days, disposals; bring your items to sell, no commission charged, barbeque lunch both days with bacon and egg breakfast available both days. Don't miss out on the traditional fruit salad and ice cream dessert following Sunday lunch. As usual, tea and coffee and biscuits will be free throughout the two days to those who have registered.

Foxhunting has always been an important part of ORARC Field Days. As reported elsewhere in this issue of Oxtales, the tradition has been carried on continuously since the very first Field Day. The report by Pierce Healy VK2APQ in his column in the December 1972 issue of Electronics Australia mentions the foxhunts that were held during the ORARC Field Day that was held on the 13th and 14th of October 1972. This only one year after the club was formed in 1971. (see below)

### *Oxley Region Radio Club*

*A very successful field day was held at Port Macquarie on Sunday, 14th October 1972. Registrations totaled 79 and included members of the Westlakes Radio Club, Armidale Youth Radio Club and amateurs from Kempsey, Taree, South West Rocks, Woy Woy and Sydney. The visitors almost completely booked out one motel. For those who arrived on the Saturday a night a hidden transmitter hunt was organized.*

*The event on the Sunday consisted of hidden transmitter hunts and the usual field day activities. Morning and afternoon teas and a monster barbecue lunch at Shelleys Beach, in excellent weather, added to the enjoyment of the day.*

*The object of the field day was to boost funds for an Oxley Region VHF repeater. Some members have contributed in the form of debentures.*

*Several locations are being investigated and it is anticipated that VHF mobile contact may be made by amateurs travelling along the coast for about 161 km (100 miles) either side of the site. During the afternoon of the field day, the Gosford repeater could be worked from Port Macquarie and along the Pacific Highway about 161 km (100 miles). VK2PA worked VK2ZHE via the Gosford repeater, both being in Port Macquarie. Officers of the Oxley Region Radio Club are:*

<i>President</i>	<i>Peter Alexander</i>	<i>VK2PA</i>
<i>VicePresident</i>	<i>Arthur Monck</i>	<i>VK2ATM</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Owen Bested</i>	<i>VK2AEB</i>
<i>Publicity</i>	<i>Henry Lundell</i>	<i>VK2ZHE</i>

Members are currently building new 80 metre foxes for the 2019 Field Day. The 2 metre and 80 metre hidden transmitter hunts are always keenly contested. The Saturday afternoon 2 metre talk in foxhunt offers an opportunity for those without direction finding equipment to participate in a foxhunt.

Sunday is the trading day for the commercial traders.

Radio Supply from Bellingen <http://www.radiosupply.com.au/> will have a wide range of items for sale at the Field Day. Thank you to Gary Ryan VK2ZKT and Carol VK2FCSR. Gary will also have an interesting range of his home brew projects on display. This will include his new version uBitX 5 band HF 10 Watt QRP HF SSB/CW transceiver.

Jaycar <https://www.jaycar.com.au/> are supporting the Field Day again this year. If you don't already have one you will be able to pick up a new Jaycar catalogue at the Field Day. The Jaycar Port Macquarie store will be open for business during the weekend.

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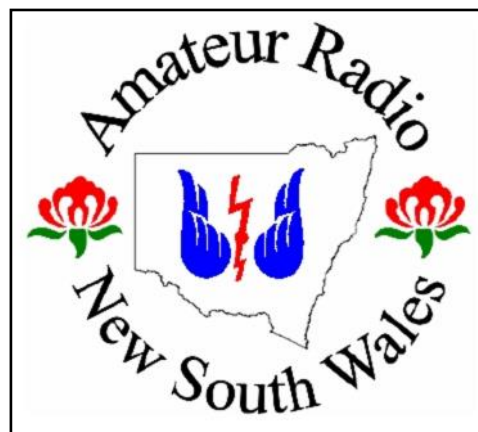
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Remember to bring your latest project along and enter it into the Home Brew competition and display. Last year the Home Brew competition was very popular with some excellent projects on display. This year we are expecting even more entries than ever with several amateurs working hard to complete projects in time for the Field Day.



ALARA <http://www.alara.org.au/> will be there again this year. Thank you to Dot VK2DB and John Bishop VK2ZOI. The Australian Ladies Amateur Radio Association (ALARA) was formed in 1975. Today there over 200 members. The Association's mission is to encourage women's interest and active participation in amateur radio. The term "YL" stands for "young lady" – regardless of age. There are regular ALARA on air nets and contests. ALARAmets are held every three years and the opportunities for members of Australian and International Ladies' Amateur Radio Associations to meet face to face are extremely popular. Dot and John have travelled widely throughout Australia and overseas to these events. The ALARA stand is always popular and Dot will be very pleased to meet everyone during the weekend. Please take the opportunity

during the weekend to find out more about ALARA and its activities.



ARNSW <http://www.arnsw.org.au/> will be in attendance as usual. Thank you to Tim Mills VK2ZTM and Mark Blackmore VK2XOF. Amateur Radio NSW is very active with the VK2WI weekly Sunday morning and evening news broadcasts and a wide range of other activities and projects supporting Amateur Radio. The recent subsidised 40 metre dipole antenna construction and testing day is one such activity that a number of ORARC members were able to participate in at Port Macquarie concurrently with the day run at Dural in Sydney. ARNSW is currently upgrading its facilities at Dural. The new concrete monopole can be seen on the ARNSW home page.

There will be demonstrations of the various digital modes on both HF and VHF, and also live demonstrations of multi protocol digital radio on air hotspots. Thank you to Bruce Ekert VK2EM for offering to run these demonstrations this year.

See how simple it is to operate the new digital modes using a transceiver such as the Yaesu FT-991 which has a USB port that connects directly to your computer. Transceivers without a USB are easily connected to a computer via the sound card using a simple interface which can be home constructed.

See the SharkRF OPENspot digital radio hotspot.

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This stand-alone hot spot has a UHF multi mode digital radio transceiver which has the ability to cross connect to several of the

common digital mode systems via the Internet. For example you can use your C4FM digital radio to communicate with DMR stations on distant DMR repeaters or rooms. The OPENspot is an impressive device and several ORARC members are already using it.



*Bruce VK2EM with the hotspot*

Bruce will also have his DV4 Mini digital radio hotspot operating on a Raspberry Pi.

If you are unsure about digital radio then the demonstrations will show you the capabilities of the digital voice modes and what is required to get on the air. Bruce will show you how you can access several different digital voice radio network protocols using whichever type of digital voice radio that you end up purchasing. You don't need to buy one of each type! For example your DMR radio can of course access DMR networks but with the same radio you can also connect to C4FM networks for example.

Regular ORARC Field Day participant Kevin Dawson VK2KD from Sydney will set up his Wi-Fi Access Point in the Wauchope Showground Hall for the Field Day. The access point will enable users to follow the Field Day activities. All you need is your smart phone or tablet with WiFi turned on to connect. The Access

Point will appear when you view available networks. At the Field Day Kevin will advise the connection and browsing details.

Kevin set up his Wi-Fi Access Point at the 2019 70th Annual Urunga Radio Convention in the Urunga Senior Citizen's hall over the Easter weekend and it was a great success. The Wi-Fi access point at the Wauchope Showground hall for the ORARC 2019 Field Day will operate in a similar way so those who connected to the access point at Urunga will have a head start at Wauchope.

Jeff Pages VK2BYY is well known for his barefoot foxhunting but as mentioned in March 2019 Oxtales, Dr Pages is also an author. His first novel, Barefoot Times, was published in 2004, followed by Call of the Delphinidae in 2006, The Mind of the Dolphins in 2008, Cry of the Bunyips in 2011 and Plight of the Tivinel in 2015. His newly published book, Rise of the Gomerol is the sixth and final book in the series. Jeff will have copies of this books for sale at the Field Day. For more details visit Jeff's Barefoot Times website at <https://www.barefoottimes.net/RiseOfTheGomerol/Author.htm>

Please make yourself available when calls are made for assistance in running the Field Day. By sharing the workload we can all enjoy the weekend without anyone being overworked. It is important to make the field day a success as it is the major fund raising activity for the year.

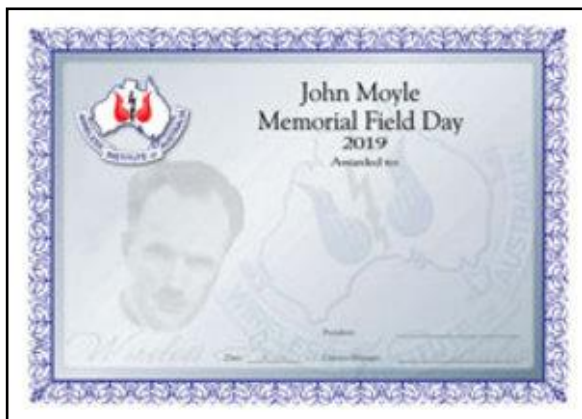
The Field Day program is included with this issue of Oxtales. The program can also be downloaded from the ORARC website [http://www.orarc.org/?tribe\\_events=orarc-field-day-2019](http://www.orarc.org/?tribe_events=orarc-field-day-2019)



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## **John Moyle Memorial Field Day 16 & 17 March 2019**



The John Moyle Memorial Field Day began at noon on Saturday the 16th of March 2019 and ended at noon on Sunday the 17th of March 2019.

As reported in March 2019 "Oxtales" planned ORARC participation had to be cancelled at short notice on the Saturday morning due to the heavy

continuing rain accompanying a series of storms moving up the coast. The intention was to set up the club's Communications Caravan in the camping area at the Camden Haven Airfield. A lot of planning and preparations had been made for the weekend and the caravan had been loaded in readiness for the trip to the airfield.

While the last minute cancellation of the Camden Haven Airfield operation was very inconvenient and disappointing to all concerned the risks in setting up and operating in the rain were just too great to ignore. Also, the rain would have significantly reduced the enjoyment of the event.

Hopefully we will have more luck with the weather for next year's John Moyle Memorial Field Day.

## **Middle Brother Mountain VK2RPM Repeater Site 147.000 MHz Test**

The target date for beginning the test of the VK2RPM Middle Brother Repeater on 147.000 MHz with -600 kHz input offset with 91.5Hz CTCSS for analogue FM access is Saturday the 11th of May 2019.

The Telegraph Point VK2RCN 147.000 MHz repeater will continue to operate on 147.000 MHz during the testing period but it will require a 123 Hz CTCSS sub audible tone for access so that it will not be keyed by stations accessing the Middle Brother repeater using 91.5 Hz CTCSS.

The testing period is expected to last for 2 weeks until the 25th of May 2019 but may be extended if necessary to fully evaluate the interference level on the 146.400 MHz input frequency at Middle Brother while the tower is both wet and dry.

During the 147.000 MHz testing period the VK2RPM 2 metre repeater will continue to be accessible by C4FM digital transmissions using the standard -600kHz input offset. As is currently the case, incoming C4FM transmissions will be retransmitted as analogue FM.

Echolink will continue to be available on the VK2RPM 2 metre repeater during the 147.000 MHz test.

The Middle Brother VK2RPM two metre repeater will continue to operate on 146.700 MHz until the test commences and will return to 146.700 MHz when the test concludes. The Telegraph Point VK2RCN 147.00 MHz repeater will only require a CTCSS sub audible tone for access during the test period.

If the test is successful an application will be made to permanently swap the VK2RPM and VK2RCN 2 metre repeater frequencies.

The reason for the test is to determine if the interference

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level at the Middle Brother repeater site is lower on 146.400 MHz than it is on the current repeater input frequency of 146.100 MHz as indicated by intermodulation calculations. Thank you to Bob Ecclestone VK2ZRE for doing the intermodulation calculations.

### **Telegraph Point VK2RCN Repeater Site**

The VK2RCN repeaters are all working well.

The Telegraph Point VK2RCN 147.000 MHz repeater will continue to operate on 147.000 MHz during the testing period when the Middle Brother VK2RPM 2 metre temporarily changes to 147.000 MHz. The VK2RCN 147.000 MHz repeater will require a 123 Hz CTCSS sub audible tone for access during the testing period so that it will not be keyed by stations accessing the Middle Brother repeater using 91.5 Hz CTCSS. When the VK2RPM 2 metre repeater changes back to 146.700 MHz the VK2RCN 147.00 MHz repeater will no longer require a CTCSS tone for access.

Any inconvenience to VK2RCN 147.000 MHz repeater users during the test period is sincerely regretted.

ORARC is working towards building an entirely new repeater site in the Red Hill area. Negotiations and planning are currently in progress. The existing VK2RCN site will continue to operate until the proposed new site is ready to be commissioned.

Preparation for the new all mode UHF digital repeater and linking are under way.

### **Repeater Linking Meeting**

As reported in the March 2019 issue of Oxtales, a Coastal Repeater Linking meeting was held in the SES Building in

Port Macquarie on Saturday the 9th of February 2019 with representatives from clubs between the Great Lakes and Coffs Harbour. Summerland were unable to attend as their AGM was on the same weekend. Since the meeting individual clubs have been discussing the linking proposal.

### **Education**

The contract to run Amateur Radio assessments and administer licencing has been awarded to the Australian Maritime College which is part of the University of Tasmania. Fortunately the three ORARC WIA accredited Assessors Larry Lindsay VK2CLL, Steve Wynn VK2ZSW and Bob Ecclestone VK2ZRE were eligible to be accredited by the AMC. Now that AMC have set up the new assessment procedures, ORARC will be able recommence assessments shortly. Please contact Larry Lindsay VK2CLL for further details.

### **Urunga Convention**



Thank you to those who attended the 70th annual Urunga Radio Convention over the fine and sunny Easter Weekend on Saturday the 20th and Sunday the 21st of April 2019. ORARC was represented on both days.

The 70th anniversary was celebrated with a special display of memorabilia and photographs, a very impressive 70th anniversary cake and a well attended 70th anniversary dinner in the dining room at the Ocean View Hotel.

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Each person who registered at the Field Day received a special 70th anniversary certificate to remember that they attended the event.

In a very significant ceremony the 70th anniversary cake was cut on the Saturday jointly by Arthur Monck VK2ATM and June Austin, XYL of the late Arnold Austin VK2ADA. Arthur VK2ATM has been attending the Urunga Radio Conventions



*Arthur VK2ATM cutting the 70 Anniversary Cake with June*

for a very long time. Arnold VK2ADA took over the running of Convention with June when long time organizer Brian Slarke VK2ZCQ became a Silent Key. Sadly Arnold also became a Silent Key a few years ago but June has continued to work tirelessly for the Convention.

Fortunately the 70th Anniversary cake was of very generous proportions so there was still cake left to serve on the Sunday. This meant that those only attended on the Sunday were able to enjoy some cake. Having attended all but two Conventions since 1969 and only able to attend on the

Sunday this year I felt very privileged to be able to enjoy some 70th Anniversary cake. I didn't argue when Terry VK2TEZ insisted that I should have a second slice! I remember in 1969 the convention was celebrating its 20th anniversary and I thought then that it had been running for a long time.

The 70th Anniversary Dinner in the Dining Room of the Ocean View Hotel was a very special event. Those attending were treated to reminiscences of events in past Urunga Radio Conventions. The Ocean View Hotel has always been a part of the history of the Convention. The perpetual trophies are always on display in the Hotel between conventions.



*Many familiar Fox Hunter faces enjoy a meal together.*

*Kevin VK2KD, Gerard VK2IO, Darian VK3FAST, Monica VK3FFAB, Rodney VK2TI Rod VK3FRME and Jeff VK2BYY*

Radio Supply had a great range of "must have" items ranging from connectors to multimeters. Gary Ryan VK2ZKT and Dr Carol Ryan VK2FCSR are long time supporters of events such as the Urunga Convention. They will of course be at the ORARC Field Day at the Wauchope Showground hall during the June Long Weekend.

Gary had an interesting cross section of his home brew and restoration projects on display on the right hand end of the Radio Supply stand at Urunga. The display included his MFT40 DSB 40 metre transceiver, and a

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selection of restored 27 MHz CB transceivers, and his home brew 27 MHz transportable transceiver kit. Gary always illuminates his home brew displays with the soft glow of tungsten filament lamps in his desk lamps.



*Gary VK2ZKT, Radio Supply's table above and home brew below.*



ORARC club member Bruce Ekert VK2EM set up an interesting working display demonstrating the capabilities of digital voice radio. He had his stand alone Shark OpenSpot multimode digital voice hotspot as well as his DV4 Mini digital

radio hotspot operating on a Raspberry Pi. Bruce uses a laptop display driven by an adaptor board as the display for his Raspberry Pi. Bruce will have these items as part of his demonstration at the ORARC Field day on the June Long weekend.



*Yulia and Bruce VK2EM discuss the Raspberry Pi.*

Jeff Pages VK2BYY set up a display of his 6 fiction novels, (see photograph below) including his latest book which has just been published, Rise of the Gomer. This is the sixth and final book in the series. Jeff will have copies of this books for sale at the ORARC Field Day.



There were bargains to be had from the various collections of disposal items on offer on various tables in the Senior Citizens hall housing the Convention.

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*Foxes Hunting by night above and in the day below.*



The foxhunts were keenly contested with a large contingent of dedicated hounds again making the pilgrimage to Urunga to do battle with the locals. Most of the hunters are coming to Port Macquarie on the June Long Weekend to contest the ORARC Field Day fox hunts in Wauchope. The exception is Bryan Ackerley VK3YNG and his team who fox hunt at the Mount Gambier Field Day each year. Usual ORARC Field Day participant Gerard Hill VK2IO will also be going to Mt Gambier this year. Mount Gambier in South Australia also holds their Annual Field Day on the June Long Weekend.

Over the two days there were 10 fox hunts comprising both mobile and pedestrian events. Jeff Pages VK2BYY from Umina Beach took out the "Arnold Austin Award". Darian Panter VK3FAST, from Scoresby in Melbourne, took out the "Brian Slarke Award" with most points for two days. His team comprising Monica VK3FFAB, Rod VK3FRME and Bryan Ackerley VK3YNG kept the local hounds on their toes.

Terry Wood VK2TEZ of Macksville won the Chocolate Easter Bunnies basket Judy O'Brien VK2HZV of Cardiff won the Baofeng high powered water resistant VHF/UHF dual band hand held transceiver. Merv Savins VK2DMS of Toormina won the toaster oven.



*Winners are grinners VK3FRME, VK3FFAB, VK3YNG and VK3FAST hold a selection of trophies that they have won.*

The Field Day Saturday night Dinner at the Bowling Club was well attended. As with all Field Days, the Urunga Convention organisers thanked their generous sponsors for the donations which made the Convention affordable.

There was a big round applause in recognition of the tireless efforts of the Urunga Radio Convention Members who helped to organise and run the Convention. There was special recognition of the kitchen helpers. The pancakes expertly cooked to order by Terry Wood VK2TEZ were the dessert of choice after the delicious Macksville pies. A few astute attendees snapped up the few pies remaining at the end of the Convention. I was one of those who enjoyed a pie for dinner when I arrived home on Easter Sunday night. Delicious! Another nice touch deserving mention is that everyone departing the prize presentation received an Easter Bunny to take home.

The Urunga Radio Convention was formed by a small group of amateurs including Crieff Retalick VK2XO (SK)

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and Peter Alexander VK2PA (SK) in 1949 at the “Do Me” boat shed on the Kalang river at Urunga. This is where Anchors Wharf Restaurant is now located. The Convention has run continuously each subsequent Easter, aided by Brian Slarke VK2ZCQ, sadly now a Silent Key too, and a small band of dedicated helpers. It is the longest running “Foxhunting” Field Day in Australia.

There is a lot of history recorded of the early Urunga Radio Conventions. Look on line at <http://users.tpg.com.au/goldy2/index.htm> . Each year the extensive collection of memorabilia is on display at the Convention (see photograph below).



Thank you to Ken Golden VK2DGT for generously providing much of the material used to compile this report. He also supplied some of the accompanying photographs. Thank you also to Gary Ryan VK2ZKT for also providing some photographs.

*Raffle ticket Prizes below*



## WICEN (NSW) Mid North Coast Group



The WICEN (NSW) Mid North Coast Region group holds a monthly meeting at the conclusion of the ORARC Monthly General Meeting on the first Saturday of each month.

More information on WICEN may be found on the WICEN (NSW) website <http://www.nsw.wicen.org.au>

### VK2BOR Club Station

After the ORARC Field Day the club station VK2BOR will participate in the following events in the next few months. Mark your calendar now:



The Remembrance Day Contest which takes place on the weekend of Saturday and Sunday the 17th and 18th of August 2019.



The 21st annual International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend which takes place on the weekend of Saturday and Sunday the 17th and 18th of August 2019.

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Note that this year both the RD Contest and the ILLW are on the same weekend. VK2BOR will operate in the ILLW from the club's Communications Caravan to be located at the Tacking Point Lighthouse.



The Scouts and Guides 62nd annual Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) which takes place on Saturday and Sunday the 19th and 20th of October 2019. This year the VK2BOR JOTA station at McInherney Park in Port Macquarie will again be part of a District Event so ORARC will only run one JOTA station on Saturday the 19th of October 2019.

There will be more details regarding the RD Contest and the Lighthouse weekend in the July issue of Oxtales.

### **Congratulations**

Congratulations to Tim Mills VK2ZTM on joining the ranks of the octogenarians in April. Amongst the birthdays recently celebrated Arthur Monck VK2ATM turned 85. ORARC members are eligible for Life Membership at 85. Arthur is already a Life Member but a reminder to any other members turning 85 to please let the Committee know as Life Membership proposals must go before ORARC AGMs which are held in August each year.

### **Breaking News**

Bruce Ekert VK2EM, president of the Great Lakes Amateur Radio Club, advises that the VK2RGL 147.100 MHz 2 metre repeater at Cabbage Tree Mountain now requires 91.5 Hz CTCSS for access. The tone squelch has become necessary due to low level interference on the repeater input frequency holding the repeater open.

Henry Lundell VK2ZHE  
President

## **Important Annual Subscription Information**

Dear fellow ORARC members,

This is a reminder that annual subscriptions are due for renewal on th 1 July 2009.

The easiest way to pay subs, for members with computer access, is by direct deposit into the Club's account with the Holiday Coast Credit Union.

BSB: 721-000  
Account Number: 100032744

Don't forget to reference your call sign or name to identify your payment.

Alternatively, you can pay by a cheque made out to Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club and post it to PO Box 712 Port Macquarie 2444 .

Finally, if you attend the monthly meeting on July 7, you can pay then.

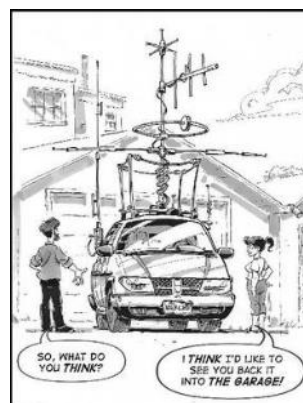
If you wish to pay by Cheque please add 50 cents to the amount as the Bank charges a 50 cent fee for processing the Cheques.

Fees remain the same as last year: \$40 for ordinary membership, \$10 for distant membership and the family membership concession still applies.

73

Dennis VK2DAM

### **Club Treasurer**



*Thanks Larry VK2LJT for the cartoon.*

The attached articles from

## The Talking Clock

Henry VK2ZHE has submitted the following articles about the Talking Clock service. Telstra is intending to close down the dial up service on 1 October 2019.

The following is an amalgamation of two articles published by the Sydney Morning Herald in April 2014 and April 2019.

**“At the third stroke, there will be ... no more dial-up talking clock”**



By [Carolyn Webb](#)

April 18, 2019 — 11.59pm

For 66 years, its sonorous voice has provided certainty at times of doubt, but in 165 days, at the third stroke after midnight on October 1, Australia's 'talking clock' will fall silent.

After September 30, Australians will no longer be able to dial 1194 to find out the exact time.

No longer will that striking, somewhat ominous, voice intone: "at the third stroke, it will be... 10.27 and 50 seconds" before the familiar "pip, pip, pip".

Dennis Benjamin, executive chairman of Informatel, the Melbourne-based company that runs the number, says the "millisecond precise" service attracts about two million calls a year, and he wants it to continue. "There's still great demand for it," he said. "The number of calls for daylight saving this year exceeded last year." But the ultimate decision belonged to Telstra, which provides the service's network and billing, and Telstra is pulling the plug.



*Posters for the talking clock in 1953. CREDIT: TELSTRA*

A Telstra spokesman said the service was not compatible with its new network technology. "It's like any time you upgrade to radically new technology, sometimes older services wouldn't work," the spokesman said. It was similar to how, "with software, if you're trying to use Microsoft Word 95 with the latest operating system, Windows 10", the spokesman said.

"Or with iPhone 3, you won't see those products working with the latest iPhone software. It's not compatible."

Mr Benjamin is optimistic that Telstra will reverse the decision. "There is another network solution to provide it: cutting out ISDN [the older, Integrated Services Digital Network that carries voice and data services over the switched telephone network] - and using SIP [Session Initiation Protocol, that can send all forms of media including voice, data and video, to multiple parties]. "And ISDN is being phased out over the next three years. They don't need to cut this service off now."

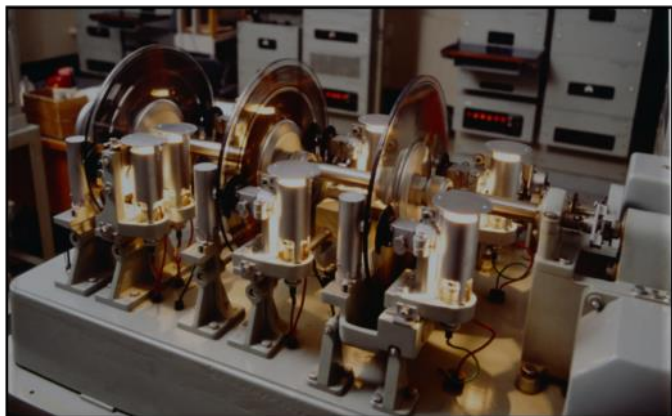
The Telstra spokesman said although the public "now have many devices that provide an accurate time", the service has been given a three-month extension from the initial shut-down date June 30 "to give users more time to find an alternative solution". But Mr Benjamin, from Informatel, said the talking clock should be retained as a community service.

He said some businesses and customers without smart phones relied upon it.

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"You and I rely on our [mobile] phones and most times, that would be fine. But there are other people who aren't as capable of looking at their phone or who are comfortable using the service because they've done it for decades. It's an important part of their lives". Mr Benjamin said it would cost too much money and effort to find another network provider.



*The Telecom talking clock 1954-1990 from City West Exchange, Melbourne.*



*High-tech: Gordon Gow, the voice of 'George' the talking clock when it was mechanised in 1953.  
CREDIT:TELSTRA*

Before its automation 66 years ago, people wanting to know the precise time would dial a telephone exchange, and operators would read the time from the exchange clock.

In 1953, well-spoken theatre critic Gordon Gow was paid £100 to record the hours, minutes and seconds for a new, mechanised system.

About 15 years ago, Telstra outsourced management of the service, nicknamed "George" to Informatel. In 1990, Telstra replaced Gow's voice with ABC broadcaster Richard Peach.

Peach's voice can still be heard long after his death in 2008, although his relatives don't receive any royalties.

Background information on the talking clock from the April 2014 Sydney Morning Herald by journalist Julie Power.

### **At the third stroke: George the talking clock now on atomic time**



By [Julie Power](#)

*"At the third stroke it will be ... "*

If you are under 40, you may have never dialled 1194 for the precise time or even heard of George, the speaking clock. Telstra says that calls to 1194 (aka George the speaking clock), will rise six-fold with the conclusion of daylight saving. When daylight savings ended at 3am on Sunday - clocks went back an hour - the 1194 number was likely to have rung with callers checking the time. From the time the clock was computerised in 1953 until August 1991, more than 1.4 billion calls were made to 1194.



*Arthur Midgely,  
chief technician of  
the speaking clock,  
in  
1960. Credit: Barry  
Gilmour*

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"At peak hour, 4.30pm, everyone would call to check that their clocks at work weren't running late so they didn't have to work overtime for nothing," said Brian Mullins, a former Telstra telegraphist and manager of its museum at Bankstown. Before the clock was computerised, the time was read live by changing shifts of women every 30 minutes. Their job was to mark off time in 30 second lots, speaking as soon as a light flashed. "It was a punishment, in my opinion," said Mr Mullins, who worked at the GPO at the time.

In 1960, calls peaked at more than a million a year - one day reaching 80,000 - prompting *The Sun-Herald* to declare Sydney "a city of clock watchers". Many of the women got "hysterical" if the shifts lasted too long, and dizzy from watching the second hand and responding to the flashing light. Nobody knows why the clock was called George. The two voices of the computerised version were Gordon Gow, a theatre critic, and Richard Peach, an ABC broadcaster and brother of Bill. Today's callers will still hear Peach's voice, recorded nearly 25 years ago.



*The speaking clock, number circa 1953. Note the number and the rotary dial!*

But the clock is now atomic, stable to one millionth of a second. If the public has trouble adjusting clocks for daylight saving, consider the dilemma facing scientists such as astronomer Dick Manchester, who are debating whether to adjust clocks by "leap seconds".

"The accuracy of the talking clock is more than adequate for the average person. But there are many applications in science and business where higher precision is needed," said Dr Manchester, a CSIRO fellow. He wants to maintain atomic time without adjusting for the Earth's variations in rotation speed.

At the Powerhouse Discovery Centre in Sydney's Castle Hill, George the speaking clock has become the subject of a new oral history project. Joyce Gow, Gordon Gow's 96-year old widow, recalled her husband was paid £100 to record numbers and phrases. "He was feted and put up in a nice hotel. And after he had said a few words, like 'At the third stroke', they said, 'You must be exhausted - have a whiskey, brandy or something'," she said.

Just like the old days, many calls today come at peak hour. Miners, for example, cannot use a mobile phone underground, so they rely on the speaking clock.

"They want to know when to finish a shift so they ring the time," said Dennis Benjamin, chairman of Informatel, which runs the line. A call costs 38¢.

### **New Repeater Site for VK2RCN at Telegraph Point.**

Arthur VK2ATM and Barry VK2LBG recently went up to Telegraph Point to examine the location for the Club's new repeater Site. Photograph below, details which were discussed at the May meeting.





## 2019 WIA Annual Conference Sydney



The 2019 WIA Annual Conference and AGM is being held at the ParkRoyal Hotel 150 Day St Sydney over the weekend 24th to 26th of May 2019.

### Friday Evening Program

14:00 Secretariat Opens Park Royal

18:00 Secretariat Closes Park Royal

17:00 Set up Sydney Town Hall - Marconi Terrace

18:00 Welcome Desk - Sydney Town Hall -

18:30 Welcome Function -

18:50 Pre dinner - entertainment -

19:30 Welcome to Country -

19:35 President Address -

19:40 Key Note Address -

### Saturday Program

8:00 Secretariat Opens Park Royal

9:15 Welcome Address Function

9:30 WIA AGM - Session 1

10:45 Break

11:00 WIA AGM - Session 2

12:30 WIA AGM Closes

12:35 Lunch

14:00 Technical Paper - Round 1

14:45 Technical Paper - Round 2

15:30 Technical Paper - Round 3

16:15 Technical Paper - Round 4

18:30 Pre dinner drinks Park Royal Bar

19:30 WIA Annual Dinner Function space Park Royal

19:40 Welcome by WIA MC -

20:00 Presentation by Sponsor

20:45 Key Note Speaker -

Prof Fred Watson

22:00 WIA Annual Dinner

### Sunday Program

8:35 Bus Meet Foyer Park Royal

8:50 Bus leaves Hotel Park Royal

10:00 Bus Arrives Dural ARNSW - Dural

10:10 Welcome to ARNSW 10:30

ARNSW Broadcast - Interview with WI

ARNSW - Dural

10:30 Mini Trash and Treasure, stalls for ARNSW - Dural

10:45 static displays and informal tours ARNSW - Dural

12:00 BBQ Lunch ARNSW - Dural

12:40 Commercial presentation by Sponsor

13:00 Technical Paper - Round 5

13:50 Technical Paper - Round 6

14:30 Formal Close to Conference 1

17:00 Closing Drinks—Rose Bay

### ACMA Amateur Licence Fee Increases

**Date : 07 / 04 / 2019**

Author : ACMA

The ACMA undertakes annual reviews of licencing fees. The latest review (April 2019) has just been undertaken and amateur licence fees have increased.

The ACMA uses a system of apparatus licence types to apply common licence conditions to categories of radiocommunications services.

Amateurs use non-assigned apparatus licences. Non-assigned licences are issued when an individual frequency assignment is not required.

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There are two types of fees applicable to apparatus licences:

1. administrative charges to recover the direct costs of spectrum management.
2. annual taxes to recover the indirect costs of spectrum management and provide incentives for efficient spectrum use.

Indirect costs are those that cannot be directly attributed to individual licensees.

These activities include international coordination and domestic planning and interference management.

The new fees applicable to the Amateur Service are:

A new licence fee is now \$80 (was \$76).

A licence variation fee is now \$51 (was \$49).

The licence renewal fee is now \$55 (was \$52).

Issuing a Repeater or Beacon Station Frequency Assignment Certificate is now \$29 and variation of a Repeater or Beacon Station is now also \$29.

### Yet More 122 GHz Records

Date : 29 / 04 / 2019

Author : WIA

Roland Lang VK4FB and Stefan Durtschi VK4CSD have set a new VK4 and national record for the 122 GHz band. VK4CSD at Panorama Place, VK4FB at Edens Landing

This is a National record between VK4FB and VK4CSD on 31 March 2019 over a distance of 21.2 km.

David Minchin VK5KK and Iain Crawford VK5ZD have broken the VK1 record for 122 GHz.

VK5ZD/1 at Questacon Science Museum Car Park, VK5KK/1 at Mt Ainslie Lookout.

VK1 record between VK5KK/1 and VK5ZD/1 on 19 March 2019 over a distance of 3.8 km.

The full lists of past and current VHF-UHF records are available on the Records Update web page:

John VK3KM provides the following clarification on Mobile Record Claim Conditions

Re the query on mobile record conditions: As a minimum, one of the two claimants must have been operating mobile. (The other could be a mobile, portable or home station). To qualify as a mobile station, the following from the current record claim conditions: "A station is mobile if its equipment, including power source and antenna, is installed in a vehicle and the station is capable of full operation while the vehicle is being driven."

For those attending the WIA AGM Conference weekend - you will be able to hear about David VK5KK's EHF Dxpedition around the country. This should be a fascinating talk about bleeding edge amateur radio experimentation in the EHF band.



## Equipment from the Past

### Acitron 400 SSB Transceiver.



The Acitron 400 SSB Transceiver was designed by an Australian Amateur Ken Nisbet VK2KP and built by ACI The Australian Glass Manufacturer and sold briefly in the early 1970's for about \$850. It is thought that the Acitron 400 was the only Australian built Transceiver built specifically for the Amateur Radio Market.

This was not the first attempt by ACI to develop an Amateur specific transceiver. In 1968 a prototype was developed, the Acitron 200 SSB and was to be a competitor to the Yaesu FT200. John Bays VK2BLH led the development team and the proposed price was just below the \$500 mark. Specification of which were published in the September 1988 issue of Amateur Radio. However the Acitron 200 did not appear to go into commercial production.

Club members who were Amateurs in the 1970's may remember that Australian Customs decided that the existence of the Acitron 400 was a reason to increase the tariff on imported HF Amateur Transceivers. However the success of the FTDX400 and FT200 and the introduction of the Yaesu 101 made the Acitron SSB 400 uncompetitive.

Occasionally Acitron SSB400 may appear for sale and are regarded as collectors items. A Google and Facebook search will return the site of several amateurs who are undertaking restoration of the old sets.

Specifications of the Acitron 400 follows in the next column.

### Specifications:

Frequency: 80 meters to 10 meters  
Plus 10 meter band could be used as an IF with optional 2 meter converter (no FM)

Mode TX: SSB/CW  
RX: AM/SSB/CW

Power out: HF 400 w (PEP)  
2 m 20 w (PEP) (no FM)

Power supply External

Dimensions: 305mm x 165mm x 318 mm

Weight: 8.62 Kg

New Price: \$800 AUD plus sales tax.

Options: AC power supply.  
110—240V  
plus 4 ohm speaker.

DC power supply. 12 VDC  
Remote VFO.  
IF noise blanker

The "Acitron Story" may be found in Radio Amateur Old Timer's Club magazine "Old Timer's News" (OTN) of March 2008.

### Resources:

Rick VK2RR <vk2rr@keylink.com.au>

Amateur Radio September 1998

Amateur Radio July 1971

Amateur Radio September 1971

Amateur Radio November 1971

Posts by VK6AXB, VK3YE, VK3AQZ

www.rigpix.com



## Blast from the Past

Blast from the past is our monthly section where we look back on what happened in the club five and ten more years ago.

The May 2014 edition of Oxtales contained reports on the Urunga Radio convention with Craig VK2ZCM gaining second place in both the 2 metre foxhunt and the Saturday 2 metre talk in activities. There was also mention of a special prize awarded for the “the most handsome amateur” which was won by Lyle VK2SMI, photograph of Lyle receiving his “Easter bunny Prize” below!



Reports were also written on the Clubs communications involvement in the Bago Car Rally. Also a report on the John Moyle Memorial Field Day.

Lyle VK2SMI had also finished the fit out of his caravan as a mobile radio shack. The



magnificent fit out earned the caravan the nickname of ‘The Palace’.



In the Breaking News section of Oxtales hearty congratulations were given to Barry VK2LBG formally VK2FBRG on passing the examination to be upgraded to a Standard License holder.

In the May 2009 edition of Oxtales there was a report on another Car Rally (Burrawan Forest Drive). The Club’s communication caravan proving an efficient central point for collating information on the timing of the various stages.

Bruce VK2HOT, above, was the officer in charge of communications.



Arthur, VK2ATM photograph below, provided a mobile relay point to extend the VHF range where needed.

