



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 fiftieth Anniversary Year

January 2021

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

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)

President's Report



January 2021

Welcome to 2021

COVID-19

The continuing mandatory restrictions imposed to reduce the spread of infection by the COVID-19 virus is still impacting on club activities but it is planned to recommence face to face activities with the February Monthly General Meeting at 2pm on Saturday the 6th of February 2021.

The Committee is continuing to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation as the pandemic continues to evolve. The situation has been quite volatile. Just as restrictions were being eased throughout Australia after Christmas, infections were detected in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne resulting in further selective lock downs and state border restrictions but it is hoped that the

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Down The Coax

Ross Hull Memorial Contest 1 to 31 January 2021

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

Monthly General Meeting
Saturday 2 January 2021 2:00 pm Cancelled COVID-19

Summer VHF-UHF Field Day Saturday 16 &
Sunday 17 January 2021

Friday Night Get-Together
Friday 15 January 2021 7.00 pm Cancelled COVID-19

AX Prefix May be Used on Australia Day
Tuesday 26 January 2021

Monthly General Meeting
Saturday 6 February 2021 2:00 pm

ORARC Antenna Shootout
Sunday 7 February 2021 - Postponed

Friday Night Get-Together
Friday 19 February 2021 7.00 pm

Wyang Field Day Wyong Racecourse
Sunday 28 February 2021

Monthly General Meeting
Saturday 6 March 2021 2:00 pm

Friday Night Get-Together
Friday 19 March 2021 7.00 pm

John Moyle Memorial Field Day Saturday 20
& Sunday 21 March 2021

Urunga Convention - 71st Annual Convention
Saturday and Sunday 3 and 4 April 2021

Net Controllers' Roster Nets on Voice Repeater VK2RPM 146.700 MHz

Sundays
(0900 Local)

Thursdays
(1930 Local)

January 2021

VK2FMGM Jan 3 VK2ICQ Jan 7

VK2FMGM Jan 10 VK2EM Jan 14

VK2FMGM Jan 17 VK2ZHE Jan 21

VK2FMGM Jan 24 VK2ICQ Jan 28

VK2FMGM Jan 31

February 2021

VK2EM Feb 4

VK2FMGM Feb 7 VK2ZHE Feb 11

VK2FMGM Feb 14 VK2ICQ Feb 18

VK2FMGM Feb 21 VK2EM Feb 25

VK2FMGM Feb 28

March 2021

VK2FMGM Mar 7 VK2ZHE Mar 4

VK2FMGM Mar 14 VK2ICQ Mar 11

VK2FMGM Mar 21 VK2EM Mar 18

VK2FMGM Mar 28 VK2ZHE Mar 25

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restrictions will be eased just as quickly. Two vaccines are now being rolled out world wide and Australia is expecting to begin its vaccination programme in late February 2021. This bodes well for an improvement in the situation during 2021.

Fortunately, the planned ORARC Christmas Party in the covered picnic area at the Long Point Vineyard and Art Gallery was able to be held on Saturday the 5th of December 2020. The event was a great success. After many months without opportunities for members to get together it was nice to end the 2020 calendar year with such an enjoyable face to face social activity in an outdoor environment where it was easy to maintain the required social distancing. This excellent venue has been booked again for the 2021 Christmas Party. There is an expanded report on the Christmas Party later in this president's report.

Thankfully, Australia has managed to control the spread of the virus within our borders. This has been achieved through very strict restrictions. World wide disruption to social and business life continues with the virus still spreading in a great many countries so international travel is still on hold.

ORARC Celebrates 50 Years



Yes, as readers will have noticed from the Oxtales masthead and the ORARC 2021 Calendar, the Oxley Region Amateur Radio is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year.

The Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club Inc. was formed in 1971. This coincided with the emergence of VHF FM repeaters and a number of like minded Amateurs in Port Macquarie and surrounding towns who were active on 2 metres decided that we should establish a 2 metre repeater to cover the area.

At the time only radio clubs could apply for a repeater licence so a meeting to form a club was held at the QTH of the late Owen Bested VK2AEB in Condon Avenue in Port Macquarie on the 2nd of October 1971. The late Peter Alexander VK2PA convened the meeting which Owen and his XYL were very happy to host. Of those at the Founding Meeting, Arthur Monck VK2ATM and Henry Lundell VK2ZHE are the two surviving members. The founding members included Amateurs from Port Macquarie, Wauchope, Taree and Kempsey. These towns were encompassed by the Civil Defence Oxley Region so the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club came into being.

VK2RPM Middle Brother Mountain 2 Metre Repeater



In each issue of Oxtales during 2021 there will be a short article tracing the history of the club. We begin with the establishment of the VK2RPM 2 metre repeater on Middle Brother Mountain.

Amongst the newly formed Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club's immediate objectives was the

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establishment of a 2 metre repeater at Middle Brother Mountain where the ABTN1/ECN8 TV transmitting site had recently been built. Ian Dalrymple VK2XU (SK) was the Chief Engineer in charge of the site which greatly assisted with gaining access. Even in those early days there was a lot of paperwork to be done so the appropriate applications were made and a licence for VK2RPM at Middle Brother Mountain was issued.

At the time, AWA had just bought out Hills Communications who had been producing the Hills FM600 VHF FM transceiver. The Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club received a bag of surplus FM600 High Band VHF circuit boards which VK2ZHE and VK2ATM turned into a 2 metre repeater. It should be mentioned that the FM600 design was less than ideal for the demanding performance parameters required for a talk through full duplex repeater. The 25 watt transmitter PA comprising the then popular 2N5591 driven by a 2N5590 left a lot to be desired in terms of spectrum purity and stability. VK2ZHE was able to achieve acceptable performance into a 50 ohm dummy load in the DCA laboratory using a spectrum analyser but as those who worked on the equipment will attest, that performance could not be guaranteed over a temperature range when working into a real world antenna system via appropriate filters.

In 1975 the late Bill Sinclair VK2ZCV moved to Port Macquarie and joined the club. He lived in an elevated location in Astronomers Terrace on Transit Hill and the repeater was temporarily set up on test at his QTH which was a lot easier than having to work on the equipment at Middle Brother Mountain. Suffice to say, after the addition of some new circuit boards and much testing, the VK2RPM 146.7 MHz 2 metre repeater was finally set up permanently at Middle Brother Mountain with the transmitter and its antenna located high on the TV tower and the receiver located in the TV station screened room with the receive antenna on the station's

adjacent off-air receiving antenna mast.

For a great many years the VK2RPM repeater performance was extremely impressive with reliable coverage stretching all the way along the coast from the high ground in Newcastle through to Coffs Harbour. The transmitted 25 Watt signal was extremely strong and with the low noise preamplifier on the receiver operating in an electrically quiet environment the repeater consistently received an almost noise free signal from the then typical 10 watt mobiles. We all miss those days!



Coming Events

ORARC 2021 Field Day 12 & 13 June

The ORARC 2021 Field Day takes place on Saturday the 12th and Sunday the 13th of June during the Queen's Birthday Weekend. It will be the 45th Annual Field Day. The 2020 Field Day was to have been the 45th Annual Field Day but since it had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the 2021 Field Day will be the 45th.

The Field Day venue will be the Wauchope Showground Hall. This venue was very popular in 2019 and the hall has been booked again for the 2021 Field Day. It had been booked for the 2020 Field Day but since this Field Day had to be cancelled, the booking was remade for 2021 and the hall hire payment which had been made for

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2020 has carried over to 2021 so the 2021 hall hire is already paid for.

The Wauchope Showground hall is spacious with plenty of off-street parking.

On site camping is available and the Wauchope Showground is pet friendly. Early bookings to the live-in caretaker on phone 0475 111 074 are essential <http://www.wauchopeshowociety.com.au/camping.html> as the camp sites are very popular during the Queens Birthday Holiday weekend. This is likely to be even more so in 2021. Rates are very reasonable with power available. There are toilets and hot showers. You can even stable your horse!

The Field Day Dinner will be at 6 pm on the evening of Saturday the 12th of June 2021 in the Seaview Room at the Port Macquarie Golf Club. Thank you to Gary Ryan VK2ZKT of Radio Supply for sponsoring the function room for the dinner. Gary had originally sponsored the hire of the room for the 2020 Field Day Dinner but he very kindly agreed to carry over this sponsorship to the 2021 Field Day Dinner. As with the Wauchope Showground Hall hire, the Port Macquarie Golf Club Function Room hire for the 2021 Field Day Dinner is already paid for. There is an extensive menu to suit all tastes. Meals are at club prices.

Planning for the 2021 Field Day has commenced so please consider offering your assistance. The committee will be very pleased to hear from you. The position of Field Day Manager is still open, and there are lots of tasks to volunteer for. It is hoped that by the June Long Weekend the COVID-19 pandemic will be under control now that vaccines are becoming available.

One important project that must be completed prior to the Field Day is the construction and testing of new 2 metre and 80 metre foxes for the mobile foxhunts. Construction of these commenced in 2019 but there is still more work to be done to

complete them.

Summer VHF UHF Field Day Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th January 2021

The event runs from 12 noon on Saturday the 16th to 12 noon on Sunday the 17th of January 2021.

This year the club station VK2BOR will not be operating in the Summer VHF UHF Field Day.

Club members are encouraged to participate in the Field Day individually. This can be done using home stations, or perhaps operating portable or mobile. If enough members do this, quite respectable scores can be amassed by working each other. Activity breeds activity so amateurs from surrounding areas will hopefully be tempted to come on air and add to the number of stations that can be worked.

The 6 metre sporadic E season is still very active so if the band opens during the Contest some very impressive scores can be made as there are usually a lot of 6 metre stations participating in the Summer VHF UHF Field Day in the southern states, particularly VK3, VK5 and VK7. Sporadic E signals are usually very strong so even a mobile whip will work extremely well. Most contacts will be made on SSB. At the time of publication the 6 metre sporadic E season is still open which bodes well for the contest weekend.

The contest rules are available for download from the WIA website at <https://www.wia.org.au/members/contests/vhfuhf/documents/2021%20Summer%20VHF-UHF%20Field%20Day%20Rules.pdf>

Antenna Shootout Day February 2021

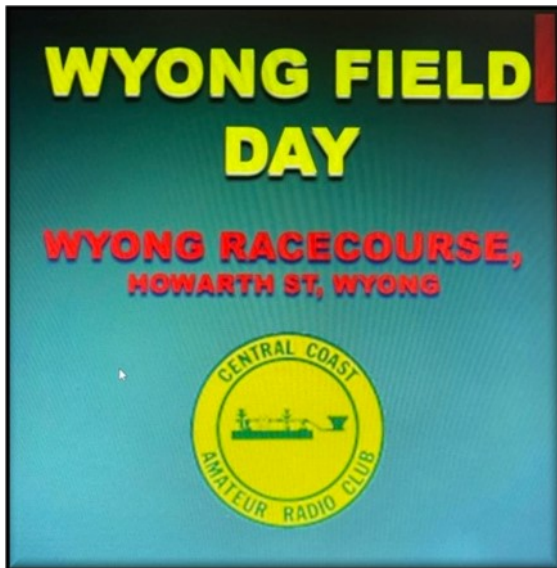
The club's popular annual Antenna Shootout would normally be scheduled to be held on Sunday the 7th of February 2021 at the Tuffins

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Lane sports fields. Unfortunately, due to the uncertainties in booking the site arising from the evolving COVID-19 situation and the continuing heavy rainfall making the sports fields unusable for the immediate future, the Committee has decided to cancel the February event. Consideration will be made to hold the Antenna Shootout later in the year.

Wyong Field Day Sunday 28th of February 2021



It is hoped that many club members will be able to make the annual trip to Wyong racecourse for the Central Coast Field Day on Sunday the 28th of February 2021. The Field Day details are at <https://www.ccarc.org.au/wyong-field-day/>

This event is the largest Amateur Radio Field Day in the Southern hemisphere. The Wyong racecourse facilities have been significantly upgraded. The flea market will be under cover and the Traders will be in an air-conditioned environment. This will make for a very enjoyable day regardless of the weather.

There are always lots of bargains at the Field Day and there is a full range of very interesting seminars during the event. Wear your ORARC polo shirt and cap or hat. Our club is always well represented at Wyong and the club yellow and black stands out in the crowd.

As with all planned large gatherings, the Central Coast Field Day committee is closely monitoring the evolving COVID-19 situation impacts on the Field Day.

Urunga Convention 3 & 4 April 2021



Remember to mark your calendars for the 71st annual Urunga Convention during Easter on Saturday and Sunday the 3rd and 4th of April 2021. <http://users.tpg.com.au/goldy2/index.htm>

The 2020 Urunga Convention was to have been the 71st annual convention but sadly the 2020 convention was another victim of the COVID-19 pandemic and last year's event had to be cancelled. This is the first time ever that the Convention has not held.

The Urunga Convention is always a very enjoyable weekend with plenty of time for socializing and participating in the keenly contested foxhunts. There are always bargains on the disposals tables and Radio Supply of Bellingen will have their usual wide range of trade items on sale.

In addition, the famous Urunga Scramble on the Sunday morning is not to be missed. The scramble runs on all bands for a frantic 30 minutes from 9 am to 9:30 am. Even if you are not able to get to Urunga please come on air on HF, 6 and 2 metres and 70 cm during the scramble to give the scramble contestants some extra contacts.

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Remember the scramble permits a contact on each separate band.

Recent Events

Coastal Walk Against Domestic and Family Violence 29 November 2020

The Liberty Coastal Walk Against Domestic and Family Violence, previously known as the White Ribbon Walk, took place on Sunday the 29th of November 2020. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions the walk was run as a virtual event because a physical event with a large number of participants could not be held. Individuals walked on their own in their own time and took selfies to post on social media to document their walk but the usual event infrastructure was not set up.

As the usual infrastructure was not set up, there was no opportunity for ORARC members to set up safety communications for the 2020 virtual walk. Thank you to those members who had volunteered to provide the safety communications.

ORARC received a letter from the event organisers thanking the club for its interest and inviting the club to provide the safety communications for the 2021 walk. ORARC is very pleased to have the opportunity to support this most important cause.

2020 Christmas Party



The extremely enjoyable 2020 Christmas Party was held at the Long Point Vineyard and Art Gallery on Saturday the 5th of December. Thank you to Arthur Monck VK2ATM for booking the Long Point venue and negotiating the free use of the timber deck picnic area and barbeque facilities.

The Christmas Party was the first face to face activity for the club for many months. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in restrictions which necessitated having to cancel all the usual club activities for most of the year. It was very nice to end the 2020 calendar year with such an enjoyable face to face social activity in an outdoor environment where it was easy to maintain the required social distancing.

The weather on the day was absolutely perfect for the duration of the party. The shade cover above the deck enabled everyone to enjoy the event out of direct sunlight.



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A very pleasant breeze made for a very comfortable environment during the sunny weather.

Thunderstorms began developing as everyone was leaving but it remained dry until late in the afternoon.

Thank you to everyone who attended the party and contributed to making the day a great success. The sausage sizzle lunch was expertly barbequed and served by Larry Lindsay VK2CCL and Ivan Southwell VK2IJS. (see photograph below).



The delicious trifle dessert made by Sue Meade was a very popular treat to end a very enjoyable lunch.



Please Sue can I have some more? Sorry none left!

As usual there was a veritable feast of party food brought by members. Thank you to Arthur VK2ATM for sharing the delicious cherries. No one went hungry. The tea and coffee, soft drinks and chilled water ensured that no one remained thirsty. (More photographs of the Christmas Party may be seen on the penultimate page of this Oxtales).

Those attending included Arthur Monck VK2ATM and Lesley, Dennis Meade VK2DAM and Sue, John Hansen VK2AYQ, Ian Lindquist VK2IDL, David Pilley VK2AYD, Larry Lindsay VK2CCL, Murray Smith VK2LAT, Ray Mullins VK2JU, Bruce Ekert VK2EM, Bob Ecclestone VK2ZRE and Diana, Ivan Southwell VK2IJS, Les Ware, Col Terry VK2LCT and Kath, Paul Colledge VK2ICQ, Paula Colledge VK2FPDC, Bob Small VK2BIG, Hans Mare VK2MRK, Rob Frost VK2CRF, Steve Smith VK2IS and Henry Lundell VK2ZHE.

Quite a few apologies were received from members who were unable to attend. Hopefully, most of those who had to tender apologies for the 2020 party will be able to join those attending the 2021 Christmas party.

The venue has already been booked again for the 2021 Christmas Party on Saturday the 4th of December. Mark your calendars now! The Christmas Party is indeed the social family highlight of the year and should not be missed. The covered timber deck picnic area at the Long Point Vineyard and Art Gallery is a perfect party venue.



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Middle Brother Mountain VK2RPM Repeater Site

The Middle Brother Mountain VK2RPM repeaters have been working well with the exception of the 438.525 MHz UHF voice repeater which is currently transmitting on low power. A working bee to swap out the faulty repeater will take place when the spare repeater which has a similar fault is repaired.

Telegraph Point VK2RCN Repeater Site

There has been a lot of work by the sub-committee appointed develop a new site for the VK2RCN repeaters at Telegraph Point. The Development Application has been approved. The lease for the site has been signed. The Funding Deed for the \$23,361.00 grant which will partially fund the construction of the equipment shelter and the footings for the mast has been submitted. Work is in progress to obtain a Construction Certificate so that site works can commence when the grant funds are received. Work is underway to obtain the documentation required in order to obtain engineering sign-off for the erection of the mast and its associated guys and footings. This is a prerequisite for issue of the Construction Certificate.

A further grant application for \$10,300.00 was submitted this year to partially fund the connection of mains power to the site. Sadly, this application was unsuccessful so the additional funds will have to be raised by other means.

The VK2RCN 53.800 MHz 6 metre FM repeater is still out of service. A replacement repeater is under construction.

When the new VK2RCN repeater site is completed, in addition to the existing repeaters, the VK2RCN facilities will include a UHF multimode digital voice repeater supporting DMR, DStar, P25, C4FM and NXDN.

The existing site still needs to be maintained and the surrounding bush kept under control. Dennis VK2DAM attended a recent working bee and took the following photographs.



Arthur VK2ATM sweeps the dirt away! Note the cavity filters in the background.



Above Rob VK2CRF and left Ian VK2IDL clear the undergrowth

ARNSW DMR Expansion Project

The Committee has submitted an expression of interest to Amateur Radio NSW to host a dedicated DMR UHF repeater at the new VK2RCN site at Telegraph Point as part of the DMR Expansion Project. DMR has proven to be very popular among ORARC members so a dedicated

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DMR repeater would cater for this growing interest. It would also leave the already built VK2RCN multimode digital voice repeater free to cater for users operating the DStar, P25, C4FM and NXDN modes. The coverage of a dedicated DMR UHF repeater at the new VK2RCN site would complement the coverage of the recently commissioned 439.775 MHz VK2RGL DMR repeater at Mt Cabbage Tree. This repeater was provided to the Great Lakes Amateur Radio Club under the ARNSW DMR Expansion Project.

The Central Coast Amateur Radio Club commissioned the VK2RAG 438.850 MHz DMR Repeater in time for Christmas. This repeater is also part of the ARNSW DMR Expansion Project. Note that VK2RAG DMR repeater has a - 7 MHz offset for its input.

DMR voice communications is becoming increasingly popular. Many ORARC members already have DMR capability with others expressing interest. So far members in at least Forster, Tuncurry, Failford, Rainbow Flat, Port Macquarie, Wauchope and Pappinbarra are on the air. Many of those members also have equipment for other digital voice protocols as well including C4FM, DStar and P25.

New VK2RGL DMR Repeater Commissioned at Cabbage Tree



As mentioned above, the Great Lakes Amateur Radio Club recently commissioned the new VK2RGL 439.775 MHz DMR repeater at Cabbage Tree Mountain. This repeater was provided to the club through the Amateur Radio NSW DMR Expansion Project. Unfortunately, the repeater failed after a lightning strike during one of the many thunderstorms that passed through the area on Monday the 4th of January.

Preliminary checks indicate antenna system damage. The repeater will be restored as soon as possible.

The Cabbage Tree site has a large coverage area which extends northwards to the southern parts of Port Macquarie which have a clear view to the south. Unfortunately, Transit Hill creates a large shadow area for a lot of the town in a similar manner to the shadow area in Wauchope caused by Bago Mountain.

VK2IDL DMR High Power Hotspot in Port Macquarie



As reported in the November 2020 issue of Oxtales, Ian Lindquist VK2IDL has his high power DMR hot spot operational in Port Macquarie transmitting and receiving on 439.325 MHz simplex. It has good coverage around Port Macquarie, and can also be accessed from parts of Wauchope. For more information, see Ian's article on the hotspot in November 2020 Oxtales.

Ian is intending to make the hotspot a full duplex hotspot which will enable the hotspot to be used as a repeater. Ian will advise when the change is to be made.

Repeater Linking, Multi Protocol Repeaters and VK2WI Broadcast Relay

Work on this project has temporarily slowed due the personal circumstances of the club members responsible for this project. Work will be carried when time and opportunity are available.

The proposed meeting between the North West Repeater Linking Group and the coastal radio clubs was postponed earlier in the year due to the bushfire situation,

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and then the COVID-19 pandemic intervened.

Education and Amateur Licence Assessments

The club's long serving Education Officer Larry Lindsay VK2CLL together with Steve Wynn VK2ZSW and Bob Ecclestone VK2ZRE have their AMC assessor accreditations.

A Foundation Licence training and assessment weekend was planned for early in the new year but has been delayed by the continuing COVID-19 situation. As the situation improves, Larry Lindsay VK2CLL will contact those candidates who have already expressed interest. As well, at least a couple of club members are planning to upgrade their licences.

If you know anyone who would like to obtain their Foundation Licence or would like to upgrade their existing licence, please contact Larry Lindsay VK2CLL.

Anyone who is ready for assessment may consider the option of Remote Assessment. If you are interested in this option, contact Larry Lindsay VK2CLL or Steve Wynn VK2ZSW.

ORARC 2021 Calendar

The club's 50th Anniversary 2021 calendar is the most popular yet with photos of almost all of our current members. The calendar was launched at the Christmas Party on the 5th of December 2020.

Thank you to Bruce Ekert VK2EM who took copies

to distribute to the ORARC members in the Great Lakes who weren't able to attend the party, and to Larry Lindsay VK2CLL who took calendars to distribute to the

Wauchope members who were unable to attend the party. Thank you to Grahame O'Brien VK2FA who is distributing calendars to the ORARC members in Newcastle and the Hunter Valley. Thank you to Bob Yorston VK2CAN who picked up the calendars to distribute to the ORARC members in Sydney. Arrangements are being made to distribute copies to the remaining Distant Members.



Henry VK2ZHE unveils the 2021 ORARC Club calendars. Watched by Bob VK2BIG, Ivan VK2IJS and Steve VK2IS

Copies are still available and may be purchased at the Monthly General Meeting on the 6th of February 2021, and subsequent club activities. The price, a mere \$2 each.

The club meeting dates and the ORARC Field Day dates are all marked on the 2021 Calendar. The calendar also contains the details of the frequencies for the club's repeaters.

Thank you to John Hansen VK2AYQ for creating this year's calendar. Steve Wynn VK2ZSW who has done a great job on the previous calendars was unable to do the 2021 calendar as he was preparing for surgery so it was very kind of John to step into the breach. Members will be pleased to know that Steve is now convalescing after his successful surgery.

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As always, ORARC is indebted to Jaycar Port Macquarie for their sponsorship towards the cost of the printing of the calendar. Thank you Jaycar.

Clubmember of the Year Certificate

John VK2AYQ was presented with the 2020 Member of the Year Certificate for work in preparing Oxtales and this years club calendar.



Henry VK2ZHE presenting John VK2AYQ with the Clubman of the Year 2020 award.

2021 Callbooks

Sadly, there is no 2021 callbook this year. After 105 years of annual WIA Callbooks, the 2019 WIA Callbook is likely to be the last to be published. The Wireless Institute of Australia was founded in 1910 and is the oldest national Amateur Radio Society in the World. The first Callbook was published in 1914 with the title of “Wireless in Australia”. It was preceded by a single page list of WIA Members and Commercial Stations published by the Wireless Institute of Australia of NSW. The Wireless Institute of Victoria published a listing of experimental, commercial and Navy stations in 1913.

The First World War began shortly after and on the 14th of August 1914, all Australian Experimental stations were closed down.

Fortunately, many past Callbooks are archived on the internet and elsewhere so it is possible to do research even if you don't have access to the printed copies of the Callbooks. However, if publication of Callbooks after 2019 is not resumed, that will be the last year of Callsign reference material for future historians to research.

Yes, the ACMA website Register of Radiocommunication Licences https://web.acma.gov.au/rrl/register_search.main_page enables lookup of current Australian Callsigns but as soon as callsigns lapse the details are no longer available so past history is lost. For example, it is not possible to see who held your callsign before it was issued to you.

The importance of current Callsign information in the international Amateur Radio community can be gauged by the popularity of on-line databases such as QRZ.com.

Milestones

Just a reminder that members who turn 85 years are rewarded with Life Membership. Eligible members must be nominated by the end of June so that they can be included in the agenda for the ORARC Annual General Meeting. Please let the Committee know of any members who will become eligible in 2021. There are at least a couple of members who will become eligible in 2022.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome returning member Richard Hall VK2BXO of Port Macquarie.

Welcome to new member Hayden Thring of Temagog. Hayden is looking forward to obtaining his licence shortly.

A couple of ORARC members with Foundation licences have taken the opportunity to take out their “callsigns for life”. Murray Smith who was VK2FLAT is now VK2LAT.

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Murray is looking forward to obtaining his Standard licence. Stuart Walsh who was VK2FSTU is now VK2WAL. Stuart has moved from Wauchope and is now a resident of Tuncurry. Others are still awaiting issue of the “callsigns for life” that they have applied for. There are delays in AMC processing the great number of applications received.

Best wishes to all members and their families for a happy and healthy 2021. Last year was a trying year for all of us. I sincerely hope that 2021 will see a great improvement. The widespread heavy rainfall which began before Christmas 2020 and is still continuing in January 2021 has given a good low fire risk start to the New Year. Everyone is looking forward to the planned rollout of the COVID vaccine in Australia in February. With vaccinations well under way throughout the world, we may even be able to start thinking about international travel again. In the mean time, with the possibility that the new Solar Cycle may be much better than originally forecast, the wish for better HF communications might also become a reality. This is definitely an incentive to spend more time on the air!

Henry Lundell VK2ZHE
President

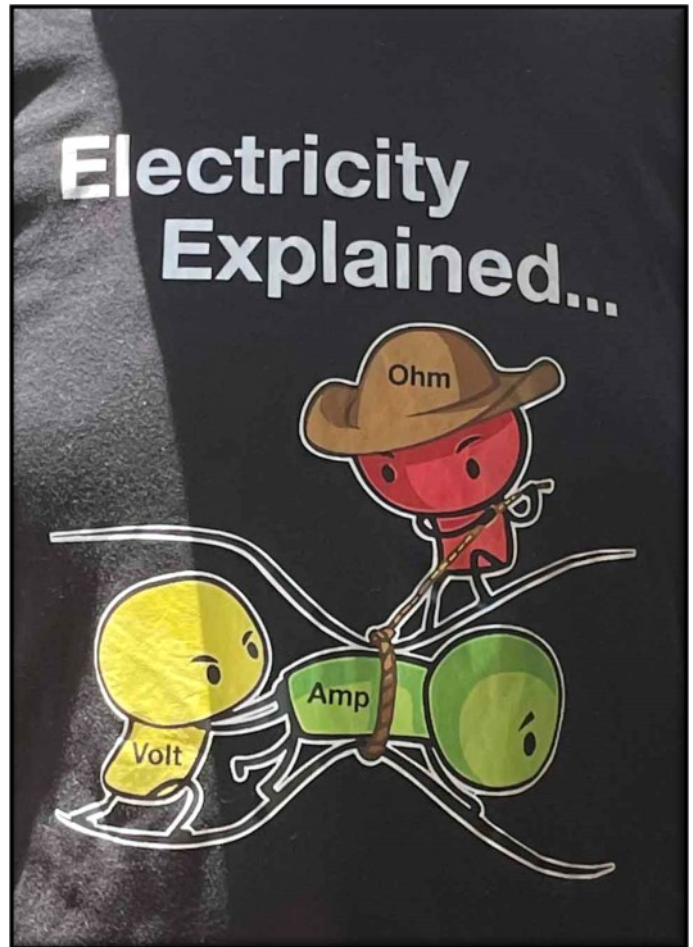
STOP PRESS

In breaking news Paula VK2FPDC has received, after a long wait, her new callsign of VK2PDC. Congratulations are extended from the club to you Paula.

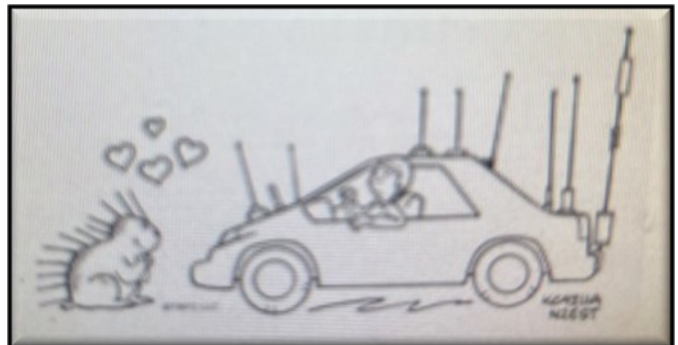


Just for laughs

A selection of amusing cartoons and signs.



The above amusing and instructive T shirt transfer worn by Larry VK2CLL one of the club's accredited Training Instructors always on the job! Aware readers will recognise the above tea shirt from the photographs of the club's 2020 Christmas party photographs in this edition of Oxtales.



The above cartoon could be a warning for club members with a multitude of antennae on their car!

Equipment from the Past



Kenwood TS 50 High Frequency Amateur Transceiver.

The Kenwood TS-50 Amateur Transceiver was first produced in the early 1990s at recommended retail cost of around \$2,000 A\$ depending upon accessories. An updated version the TS-50S was introduced in 1998.

The relatively small size made it quite a popular set for mobile operation for use on the Amateur Bands from 160 to 10 meters plus the WARC bands. Maximum output was 100 watts and it had an impressive range of features that included 100 memory channels a relatively wide dynamic range. IF shift and CW reverse mode also helped to reduce interference. Split frequency operations was also possible.

The menu system was designed with mobile operation in mind and could also be accessed by buttons on the multi-function microphone. Performance was claimed to be equivalent to that of most large HF transceiver on the market at that time. Modes built in included LSB, USB, CW, AM and FM.

The memory channels could be scanned either continuously or in groups; channel 99 stores the upper and lower limits for programmable band scan. Scan speed was variable, and selected channels could be skipped without data loss using the lock-out function. The TS-50S also offers a carrier-operated scan stop mode.

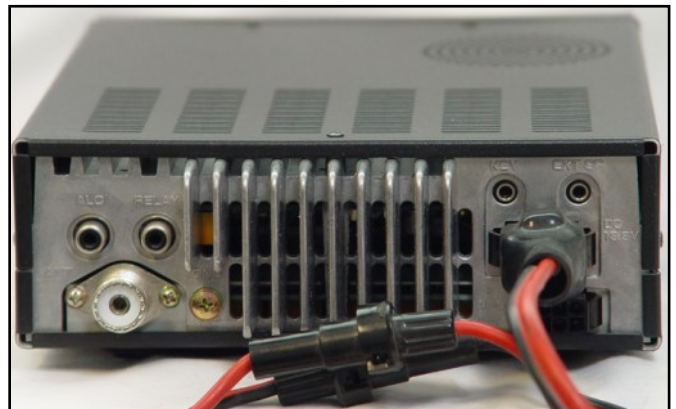
Dual VFOs (A and B) were included where VFO data was stored independently for each band, which enabled the previously used frequency to be available even after

switching bands.

A multi-function microphone was supplied and was similar to and compatible with other Kenwood remote control microphones that featured 4 programmable function keys, shown below.



Kenwood offered an optional external antenna tuner (AT-50) that could provide accurate tuning, even at band edges, and was initiated by pressing the AT TUNE key on the TS-50S. This would then transfer band data and alleviate the necessity to operate the tuner directly enabling it to be installed closer to the antenna feed point.



The above rear view of the TS-50 shows the simplicity of connections on the rear panel.

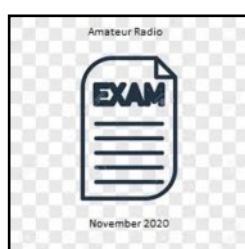
Despite its compact size, the Kenwood TS-50S had full-sized features. Output power was adjustable to 10, 50 or 100 watts on 160, 80, 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, 12 and 10 meters. It also had a general coverage receive tunable from 500 kHz to 30 MHz.

Prices today for second hand unit vary considerably from a few hundred dollars to six hundred depending upon condition and accessories. Readers should also be aware that with older electronic equipment that some components may have dried out and may be in need of replacing.

Acknowledgements. www.eham.net/reviews
RigPix Database - Kenwood/Trio - TS-50S



Excessive Processing delays for new callsigns and exam results.



Problem Statement:

The WIA has been contacted by many radio amateurs, aspirant radio amateurs and assessors very concerned over current excessive delays being consistently experienced for “deed” processing services. That is new callsign allocations and exam processing.

Recurring delays close to 90 days (or higher) have been consistently reported to the WIA. These members have also expressed frustration with the lack of transparency in terms of getting “time-to-complete” or “processing milestone status” updates. The complainants have also asked what options are available to them in respect to i) resolving their specific issue; and ii) rectifying an obviously broken process.

Background:

These services were outsourced by the statutory communications authority to the current exam provider with a 15 (business) days service levels. During the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic during lockdowns in Tasmania, the statutory commu-

nications authority provided the current exam provider contract relief by temporarily extending the “deed” service level to 45 days.

Current Status:

The Service Level relief has not yet been rescinded, despite Tasmania not being subject to lockdowns in recent months. Excessive delays are still the subject of many complaints as of late October 2020. From advice received from those who have complained direct to the statutory communications authority, ACMA has stated that the “delays are due to circumstances beyond the current exam providers direct control”. No detail as to why constraints would still apply.

Recommendation:

The WIA advises customers of the current exam provider, AMC Radio Amateur services, who are impacted by excessive delays to send a formal complaint to the exam provider if their request has exceeded the current 45 day service level applicable to these services.

The subject line should include the words “Formal Complaint re: ” and the name of service that has been impacted and the date that service was originally requested.

Optionally you may choose to copy (CC) the ACMA as the current exam provider is required by the “deed” to report unresolved complaints to the statutory authority on a regular basis. Email addresses are on AMC’s and ACMA’s respective websites.

Please do not copy all and sundry in your email – keep it focussed on the parties responsible. Should you receive an unsatisfactory reply, we would welcome that you email us at nationaloffice@wia.org.au.

Next Steps

The WIA will be liaising with both the AMC and ACMA in the near term to understand the current processing constraints and discuss potential options to resolve the issue.

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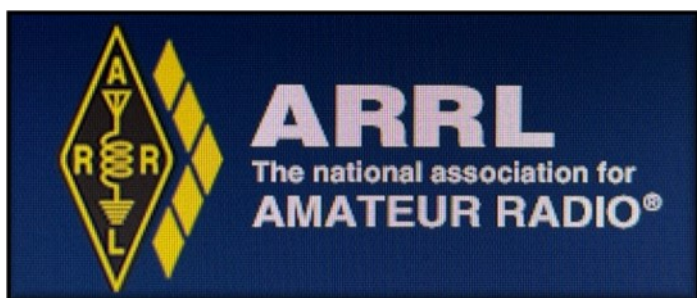
WIA Office closure for the Christmas New Year holiday period

Date : 22 / 12 / 2020

Author : Bruce Deefholts

The WIA office in Bayswater will close on Friday December 18th 2020 and re-open in the New Year at 11am (AEDT) on Wednesday 20th of January 2021.

Note .. the Office will be unofficially open from the 18th January 2021 for the purpose of carrying out a stock take.



American Radio Relay League

2021 AM Rally Set for First Weekend in
February 07/01/2021

The 2021 running of the AM Rally will take place from 0000 UTC on Saturday, February 6 to 0700 UTC on Monday, February 8. The annual AM Rally operating event encourages all operators to explore amateur radio's original voice mode by

showcasing the various types of amplitude modulation equipment in use today, ranging from early vacuum-tube radios to the latest SDR-based transceivers.

“Participation in the AM Rally has continued to grow over the past 5 years, as more operators explore the mode,” said Clark Burgard, N1BCG. “The AM Rally is a great way to beat the winter and COVID-19 blues.”

The AM Rally is open to all radio amateurs capable of operating on AM using any type of radio equipment from vintage to modern, vacuum tube to solid state. The AM Rally will use the 160-, 80-, 40-, 20-, 15-, 10-, and 6-meter bands.



New Amateur VLF Transatlantic Record Set 11/01/2021

Very low frequency (VLF) enthusiast Joe Craig, VO1NA, reports that Stefan Schaefer, DK7FC, copied his 50-character message transmitted from Newfoundland on 8.271 kHz, with a radiated power of 10 mW.

“This is a new record for amateur transatlantic VLF,” Craig told ARRL. “The mode used was EbNaut by Paul Nicholson. EbNaut is a synchronous coherent BPSK mode for use at VLF and low LF. Craig’s tower supports a VLF RL (rotated L) 10-meter (33 feet) average height and 100 meters (328 feet) long. VLF is the ITU designation for radio spectrum in the range of 3 – 30 kHz, corresponding to wavelengths from 100 to 10 kilometers, respectively.

“Since VLF waves can penetrate at least 40 meters (131 feet) into saltwater, they are used for military communication with submarines,” Craig noted.

Blast from the Past

'Blast from the Past' is the section of Oxtales where we reflect on what the club was doing in years gone by. This months 'Blast' is taken from the 2016 January edition of Oxtales.

In January 2016, Lyle VK2SMI was President, Richard VK2CHC Vice President, Secretary Henry VK2ZHE and Larry VK2CLL Treasurer. The club had 66 financial members.

The main activities reported on were the White Ribbon Walk, Telegraph Point Working Bee Spring VHF and UHF Field Day and the December 2015 Christmas party. Held at Settlement Point Reserve.

An extract on the field day is printed below from Lyle VK2SMI's report.

'Noon arrived and all hands were at the ready for the many contacts to be made. We called and called on all three bands but there was no answer and we called and listened and still no answer. This went on until around 3:30 pm when the weather started to turn on us and the decision was made to call it a day and retire to our homes away from the impending storm.'

By 4.00 pm we were packed and ready to travel, slightly damp and dejected from the lack of contacts and the weather that had turned on us.

Although we made no contacts for the day (probably due to the expected storms) and there were indications on contestradar.com that there was very little activity out there as we were the only station listed between Sydney and the VK4 border.

We still achieved the desired result of working a portable station away from our QTH's and had a great get together and some good food in the process.

Thirteen members attended the day. Thanks Arthur VK2ATM, Mark VK2FMGM, Barry VK2LBG, Stuart VK2FSTU, Henry VK2ZHE, Peter VK2PMK, Lyle VK2SMI, Bill VK2ZCV, Larry VK2CLL, Dennis VK2DAM, Rich-

ard VK2CHC, Rob VK2CRF, Bob Small VK2FBOB, and Paul VK2ICQ.'

The Telegraph Point repeater working was far more successful with much better weather and a good roll up of members

VK2RCN at Telegraph Point was visited by a working-bee in December. Nine members carried out the usual maintenance tasks which involved checking/topping-up battery water-levels, sweeping the floors and a general tidying-up of the inside of the repeater building. Outside of the building, much effort was put into clearing the ever-growing grasses, and bushland. Long grasses were brush-cut, and saplings were removed, all of which reduced the fire-risk to our repeaters for the coming fire season



A formidable group of workers. Richard VK2CHC looks positively lethal with his scrub cutter! From left to right Steve VK2ZSW Rob VK2CRF Lyle VK2SMI, Arthur VK2ATM, Larry VK2CLL and Richard VK2CHC.

An impressive amount of hazard reduction was achieved as seen in photographs below



Lyle VK2SMI, Steve VK2ZSW, and Larry VK2CLL inspect the work!

Continued on next page

December 216 Meeting and Christmas

Editor's note it is interesting to compare these photographs with the Christmas party of 2020 on page 20



Bill VK2ZCV, Peter VK2MPK Arthur VK2ATM VK2FSTU and Paul VK2ICQ at the meeting.



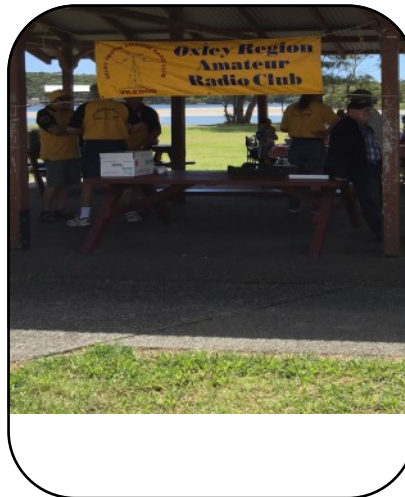
Sue and Nora having a chat.



Above, Bruce VK2EM and Bob VK2ZRE enjoy the moment.



Top Larry VK2CLL, Tim VK2ZTM and Richard VK2CHC listen to the meeting.



Below Stuart VK2FSTU and Jennifer in thoughtful pose.



Below John VK2AYQ and John VK2KC discuss an Oxtales Article.



Lyle VK2SMI, and Peter VK2MPK Bill VK2ZCV Gordon VK2GFC



John VK2KHB

Helping with the cooking.



Left John VK2KC Denis VK2DAM and Arthur VK2ATM enjoy a talk.

Right Bruce VK2EM, Paul VK2ICQ and Gordon VKGFC discuss a point.



Christmas Party 2020 at Long Point Vineyard



Dave VK2AYD, and Dennis VK2DAM



Henry VK2ZHE presenting 2021 Calendar



Rob VK2CRF



Ray VK2JU and Col VK2LCT



Ian VK2IDL and Bruce VK2EM



Hans VK2MRK



Murray VK2LAT



Right Steve VK2IS

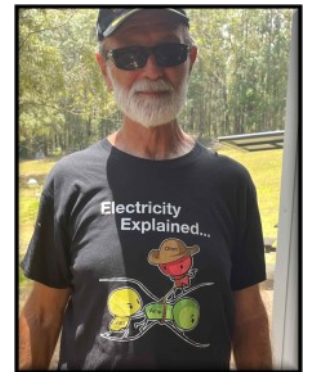
Right Arthur VK2ATM



Arthur VK2ATM, John VK2AYQ Bob VK2BIG



Jovan, Paula VK2FPDC and Sue



Larry VK2CLL



Bob VK2ZRE and Diana



Col VK2LCT and Bruce VK2EM Hot Spot demo below



Right father and son Jovan and Ivan VK2IJS



MEMBERSHIP REGISTER Membership List as at 1, January 2021

No.	Cat	Surname	Given Name	Spouse	Call	Location
1	O	BAILEY	JOHN	(FLORENCE)	VK2KHB	PORT MACQUARIE
2	D	BAYLISS	KEITH	(DEBBIE)	VK2FPTL	COOPERNOOK
3	D	BLACKMORE	MARK	-	VK2XOF	BAULKHAM HILLS
4	L	BLYTH	BOB	-	VK2XIQ	TELEGRAPH POINT
5	O	BREWSTER	DAVID		ZL3DS	LAKE CATHIE
6	D	BRICE	GRAHAM	(CYNTHIA)	VK2VV	SCONE
7	O	BRUCESMITH	SANDY	(KAY)	VK2WH	PORT MACQUARIE
8	D	CAMPBELL	JAMIE		VK2YCJ	HAMILTON
9	O/F	COLLEDGE	PAUL	(PAULA)	VK2ICQ	PORT MACQUARIE
10	O/F	COLLEDGE	PAULA	(PAUL)	VK2PDC	PORT MACQUARIE
11	O	COOPER	GORDON	(GLENDA)	VK2GFC	LAKEWOOD
12	O	COURT	RICHARD	(LINDA)	VK2CHC	PORT MACQUARIE
13	D	DORAHY	ALEX	(ANNE)	VK2HBF	TOORMINA
14	O	ECCLESTONE	BOB	(DIANA)	VK2ZRE	KEMPSEY
15	D	EKERT	BRUCE	(YULIA)	VK2EM	FORSTER
16	O/F	FLETCHER	CAROLINE	(PETER)	VK2CZF	PORT MACQUARIE
17	O/F	FLETCHER	PETER	(CAROLINE)	VK2HPP	PORT MACQUARIE
18	O	FROGGATT	DARREN	(KRISTY)	VK2MIA	PORT MACQUARIE
19	O	FROST	ROBERT	(SUSAN)	VK2CRF	PAPPINBARRA
20	D	GARLAND	JOHN		VK2CJG	JEWELLS
21	O	GILSON	BARRY	(FAY)	VK2LBG	PORT MACQUARIE
22	L	GREEN	LEWIS	(PAMELA)	ex-VK2AG	PORT MACQUARIE
23	O	HALL	RICHARD		VK2BXO	PORT MACQUARIE
24	O	HANSEN	JOHN	-	VK2AYQ	PORT MACQUARIE
25	L	HARDING	DAVID	-	VK2AIF	WAUCHOPE
26	D	HARPER	JOHN	(VIVIANE)	VK2LJ	VICTORIA
27	D	HIRSCHEL	ALLAN	-	VK2OK	DOUBLE BAY
28	D	HUTCHESON	COLIN	(PAULINE)	VK5DK	MT. GAMBIER
29	D	JANES	LES	(BEVERLY)	VK5JL	SALISBURY HEIGHTS
30	D	JOHNSON	STEVE	-	VK2SJJ	BELLINGEN
31	O	JONES	PAUL	(SANDRA)	VK2DEL	PORT MACQUARIE
32	D	KEIR	ANDREW	(BARBARA)	VK2AAK	DARAWANK
33	O	KOPPEL	HORST	-	VK2FHKO	LAKE CATHIE
34	O	KUCERA	PETER	-	VK2MPK	WAUCHOPE
35	L	LINDSAY	LARRY	(PENNY)	VK2CLL	HUNTINGDON
36	O	LINDQUIST	IAN	(BERNADETTE)	VK2IDL	PORT MACQUARIE
37	L	LUNDELL	HENRY	-	VK2ZHE	PORT MACQUARIE
38	D	MACNAUGHTON	JENNY	-	VK2BA	MUDGE
39	O	MCDONAGH	JOHN	(KARIN)	VK2VY	PORT MACQUARIE
40	O	MARE	HANS	-	VK2MRK	PORT MACQUARIE
41	O	MARTIN	CRAIG	(JENNY)	VK2CSM	SANCROX
42	D	McADAM	PETER	-	VK2EVB	COFFS HARBOUR
43	O	McGUIRE	MARK	-	VK2FMGM	PORT MACQUARIE
44	O	McLEAN	JOHN	(CORRINE)	VK2KC	PORT MACQUARIE
45	O	MEADE	DENNIS	(SUE)	VK2DAM	PORT MACQUARIE
46	D	MEEHAN	TERRY	-	ex-VK2KL	KEMPSEY
47	D	MELVILLE	STUART	-	VK2KSM	NORTHERN RIVERS
48	O	MESSINA	TOBY		VK2XTX	PORT MACQUARIE
49	L	MONCK	ARTHUR	-	VK2ATM	PORT MACQUARIE
50	O	MULLINS	RAY	(LYNNE)	VK2JU	PORT MACQUARIE
51	O	NEWHAM	LAURIE	(ROBIN)	VK2ELN	PORT MACQUARIE
52	D	NIVEN	TREVOR	(BETH)	VK5NC	MT. GAMBIER
53	D/F	O'BRIEN	GRAHAME	(JUDY)	VK2FA	CARDIFF
54	D/F	O'BRIEN	JUDY	(GRAHAME)	VK2HZV	CARDIFF
55	D/F	PETTET	JOHANNA	(STEVEN)	VK2FJMM	ILARWILL VIA MACLEAN
56	D/F	PETTET	STEVEN	(JOHANNA)	VK2ZVG	ILARWILL VIA MACLEAN
57	L	PILLEY	DAVID	-	VK2AYD	KING CREEK
58	O	PISANI	VIC	(MEREDITH)	VK2UVP	BONNY HILLS
59	D	PRATT	PETER	-	VK2PX	PENNANT HILLS
60	O	RAE	THOMAS	-	VK2ATR	PORT MACQUARIE
61	D	RAY	ROBERT	-	VK2ZWZ	SINGLETON
62	D	ROMAINE	PAUL	-	VK2UPR	PORT MACQUARIE
63	O	SANDERS	BILL	(SUELENE)	VK2FWHP	REDBANK
64	O	SMALL	ROBERT	(LYNN)	VK2BIG	LAKE CATHIE
65	D	SWINDLEY	RON		VK2DDQ	KEMPSEY
66	O	SMITH	LYLE	(JEANNINE)	VK2SMI	WAUCHOPE
67	D	SMITH	MURRAY	(MARGARITA)	VK2LAT	RAINBOW FLAT
68	D	SMITH	STEVE	(HELEN)	VK2IS	RAWDON ISLAND
69	O	SOUTHWELL	IVAN	-	VK2IJS	PORT MACQUARIE
70	O	TERRY	COL	(KATHLEEN)	VK2LCT	YIPPIN CREEK
71	L	THATCHER	TREVOR	-	VK2TT	WAUCHOPE
72	D	THOMPSON	DES	(BETTY)	VK9FLHI	LORD HOWE ISLAND
73	O	THOMPSON	LARRY	(KATHLEEN)	VK2LJT	TUNCURRY
74	D	THRING	HAYDEN			TEMAGOG
75	O	WALKER	BRUCE	(GWEN)	VK2HOT	PORT MACQUARIE
76	D	WALKER	STUART	-	VK2BMX	BEECROFT
77	D	WALSH	STUART	(JENNIFER)	VK2WAL	TUNCURRY
78	O	WARD	MICHAEL	(SEREENA)	VK2FMDW	PORT MACQUARIE
79	O	WINCHESTER	JOHN	(PAULINE)	VK2NJJ	PORT MACQUARIE
80	O	WYNN	STEPHEN	(LYALLE)	VK2ZSW	YIPPIN CREEK
81	D	YORSTON	ROBERT		VK2CAN	ROSEVILLE

Cat Key : A = Associate D = Distant F = Family L = Life O = Ordinary