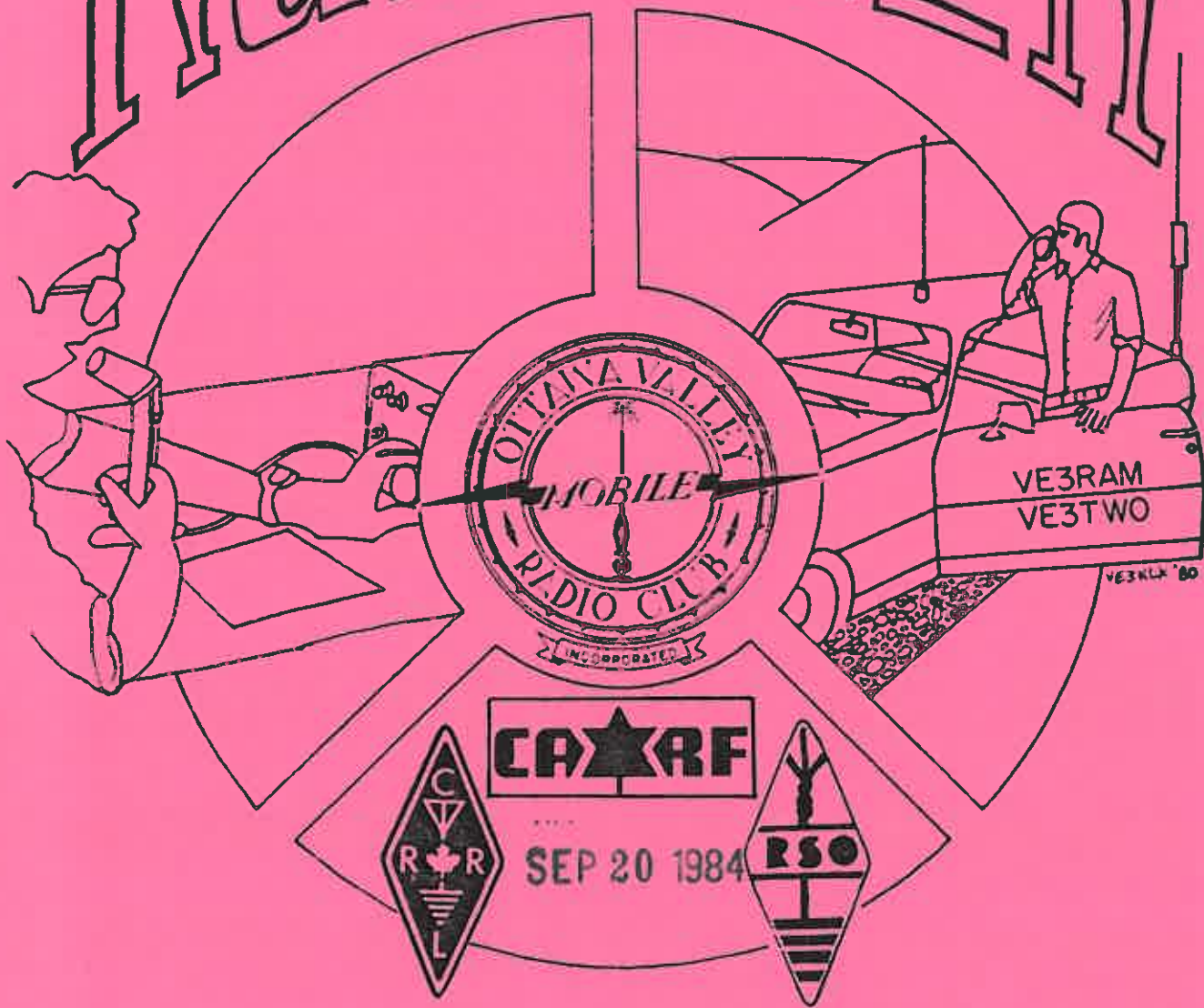


# Ramble



THE OTTAWA VALLEY MOBILE RADIO CLUB INCORPORATED

1984-1985 EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT	Pat Brewer	VE3KJQ	725-1528
VICE PRESIDENT	Vance Johnson	VE3OAO	824-9555
SECRETARY	Bob Campbell	VE3KLK	729-7536
TREASURER	Fred Haire	VE3NJF	737-4638
TECHNICAL ADVISOR	Mike Shacklock	VE3LAR	523-1571
PUBLIC RELATIONS	Alan Boyce	VE3LNH	737-4937
EDITOR	Jerry Wells	VE3CJS	225-7374
PAST PRESIDENT	Dave Coutts	VE3KLX	829-2537

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CLUB SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

POT HOLE NET - OVMRC Net - Every Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 local time on 3.76 MHz SSB. All radio amateurs are welcome to participate.

THE WISE OWL NET - OVMRC Net - Ragchew net each Friday evening at 20:00 local time on the club repeater VE3TWO - 147.30/147.90 MHz.

CODE PRACTICE - Transmitted on VE3TWO by Dave, VE3KLA Wed. at 1900 local, 18, 15, 13, 10 and 7 wpm. Friday at 1900 local 40, 30, 25, 20, 18, 15 and 13 wpm.

VE3JH - Amateur Radio Station of the National Museum of Science and Technology. The OVMRC helps maintain the station and schedules operators for the station as part of an Amateur Radio public relations display. VE3JW operates on all HF Bands, both CW and phone. Slow scan TV is also demonstrated.

LOCAL AMATEUR RADIO ACTIVITIES

POT LID NET - Sponsored by Ed, VE3GX. An informal slow speed CW net meeting each Sunday (except July and August) at 11:00 Hrs on 3.62 MHz, to provide and stimulate interest and proficiency in CW procedures.

CAPITAL CITY FM NET - Sponsored by the Ottawa Amateur Radio Club Inc. every Monday night at 20:00 Hrs. Conducted on VE2CRA repeater 146.94/146.34.

SWAP NET - Sponsored and conducted by Ed, VE3GX, each Sunday as a part of the Pot Hole Net and each Monday as a part of the Capital City FM Net (except July and August). Ed may be reached at 733-1721 for listings and queries.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS BULLETIN GLADLY ACCEPTED

Membership in the OVMRC is open to all those interested in Amateur Radio. Regular meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month (except July and August) at 20:00 Hrs unless otherwise posted. Meetings normally take place in the auditorium of the Museum of Science and Technology on St. Laurent Blvd. (south of the Queensway)







THE VIEWS FROM THE TOP (OF THE HEAP)

OK, so the club is not a "heap" of whatever. I see this "top" job not as putting me above it all, but simply as the one executive position that tries to stay on "top" of everything. That doesn't mean trying to do everything either. You can't count on your executive to do it all for you. We in the executive have committed ourselves to a number of activities such as the Amateur Radio Course and don't have much extra time. When we ask for your help we really do need and expect it. The first thing that we need your help with this year is the RSO Convention. About four or five people are needed to help man the Morse Code Proficiency Run and the OVMRC hospitality suite, both on the Saturday. Some of you volunteered to help with the Talkin and Bob VE3KJK will be reminding you of that.

So much for soapboxing. In other views, we had a very successful summer barbecue on August 18th at the new QTH of Alan VE3LNH. A total of 19 people enjoyed the fine fare as prepared by chefs Alan VE3LNH and Mike VE3LAR. We dined on hamburgers, hotdogs, corn, and watermelon. Tomatoes were provided from the garden of Bob VE3MPG. Alan and Joyce managed to buy a house with that accessory most necessary to the success of a barbecue, a pool (an in-ground one at that). So you say, having been at past barbecues, the highlight of the day must have been watching Russ VE3FSN jump into the pool fully clothed. Well, he did do that again, but he was upstaged by a newcomer. Perhaps your president was up to some foolishness? No. Maybe Mike VE3LAR was in a funny mood? No! Surprise, surprise it was your mild mannered vice-president operating UNICYCLE mobile. It seems that among his hidden talents Vance VE3OAO likes to ride the unicycle and he put on quite a demonstration. There was also the first annual OVMRC food auction following the barbecue to get rid of the extra food we bought for all the no-shows. The net result being that we actually made a profit of \$11.98 on the event.

The Amateur Radio Course is off and running with 18 students registered at this point. It looks as though the Ottawa area club presidents will be holding about three "Presidential Council" meetings this year to discuss things of mutual interest. The repeater should be running again by the time you read this. It has been on sick leave for the better part of August. We should see some major improvements to it as the year progresses. Don't forget to volunteer to Alan VE3LNH to work VE3JW some weekend. Finally, we are making a concerted effort to provide entertainment for every meeting this year. For a preview read Mike's article and note the fine print regarding the October meeting.

See you at the September meeting.

de Pat VE3KJQ

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THINK UR GUD AT CW

The OVMRC will be presenting a CW proficiency run for your entertainment at the RSO convention at the Westin hotel. Saturday Oct 6 at 0900, 1100, and 1445. Speeds will be in descending order startin' at 50 wpm down to 15 wpm in 5wpm steps. Each of the 8 speeds will be sent for 4 minutes with a 1 minute break before the next speed starts. Copy will be marked until the first error is encountered. Certificates will be presented for perfect text and only one certificate per person will be issued unless a higher speed is obtained at a later session. Each session will be limited to 20 participants

MINUTES OF THE OVMRC MEETING JUNE 21/84

The President, VE3KLX, Dave Coutts, called to order, this the last meeting of the Club year 1983-1984, at 2001 hours.

Visitors: George Dew, Susan Conally and Joan Yanofsky were introduced.

After one minor correction to the call sign of VE3NSY, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved on a motion by VE3NJI and seconded by VE3OAI, Bill.

The President proposed a discussion of next year's budget as proposed by the Treasurer, VE3OAO. VE3LAR, Mike, reported the availability of a colater and jogger which would aid in the production of RAMBLER. He asked that the sum of \$300 be added to the Budget and that he be authorized to offer this amount. Following some discussion the budget was amended accordingly on a motion by VE3LAR, and the budget as amended was then approved on a motion by VE3LAR seconded by VE3OFM.

FIELD DAY: VE3CDS, Jerry reported the club's planned activity at the Carp Fair Grounds with "set-up" to commence at 10 AM on Saturday June 23. It is planned to operate at least two 1st class stations on 80-40-15 & 10 meters.

CRRL: VE3CDS, Jerry reported no news and that CRRL has generally closed down for the summer months.

CARF: VE3ZS, Art, read extracts from the CARF bulletin dealing with antenna problems with some municipalities. DOC has quashed rumours of a "no-code" certificate and confirmed that there will be no "give-away" amateur certificates.

RSO: VE3CV, Merv, had nothing to report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

President: reported receipt of local directories for members who will not be receiving them from OARC.

- Wise Owl Certificates and endorsement stickers available for qualified members who have not yet claimed them.

- Members wishing to obtain Canadian Canada Call Book to see VE3LAR with appropriate fee.

- VE3MSC, Frank Collins in Hospital recovering from an operation.

- Wise Owl Net and code practice closing for summer; will reopen first week of September.

- VE3MJI, Bob, has obtained advanced certificate.

VICE PRESIDENT: VE3KJQ, Pat, displayed RSO Convention CW Run Certificate - discussed new amateur course beginning in the fall.

- reported 2 students of last course had tried recent DOC exam but to date no results known.

SECRETARY: warned members to expect "forced-voluntary" participation in RSO Convention "talk-in" activity. "Press-gang" recruiting will take place at first meeting in September.

RAMBLER EDITOR: Jerry, VE3CDS, expressed thanks for assistance from membership in producing RAMBLER - also commented on "Horse People" activity and suggestions to help organizers improve their operation.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: VE3LNH, Alan, spoke concerning VE3JW activities throughout the coming summer.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The meeting was turned over to VE3BAJ, Fred Noble, who after reading the appropriate portions of the Club's Constitution and By-Laws, supervised the election of the Club Executive for the year 1984-1985, as follows:

PRESIDENT	VE3KJQ	Pat Brewer
Vice President	VE3OAO	Vance Johnson
Treasurer	VE3NJF	Fred Haire
Secretary	VE3KJK	Bob Campbell
Public Relations	VE3LNH	Alan Boyce
Technical Advisor	VE3LAR	Mike Shacklock
RAMBLER Editor	VE3CDS	Jerry Wells
Past President	VE3KLX	Dave Coutts

The New President VE3KJQ then took over the meeting and presented a framed certificate to the retiring President VE3KLX.

The next executive meeting for both new and old executives will be held Thursday June 28 at 1930 hours at the home of VE3LAR.

The meeting adjourned at 2145 hours on a motion by VE3GOG seconded by VE3KLX.

Bob Campbell, VE3KJK  
Secretary

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#### THE BACK BENCH

Here we go again. No matter how hard I try, I can't seem to quit writing articles for The Rambler. Just when you thought you would never read a page of text composed by this individual again, here I am under a new title. Come to think of it, my official club title (aside from has-been) and my article title have both changed.

Unlike the Past Past President, my column will probably be a potpourri on just about anything and everything.

I don't really have much to soap box on. I gather we are in for a real test of our emergency communications capability with the arrival of The Pope on Sept. 20. I know that Joe, VE3CAT and Ken, VE3IHX have been busy gathering up all the support operators they can find. If you have portable equipment, you are probably in particular demand. The more individuals that participate, the lighter the load will be all around.

I'm sure the RSO Convention is mentioned elsewhere in this issue so I won't bore you too much with repetition, but I will say that the OVMRC will be doing the Code Qualifying Run and the Talk in plus hosting our own hospitality suite.

I am not sure whether or not I will be able to attend the meeting since it coincides with what I call "PopeCom 84". I shall have to see.

P.S. The Wise Owl Net and the Code Practice should be on the air on the week following Labour Day pending the return of VE3TWO to the land of the living.

Dave, VE3KLX  
OVMRC Past President

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#### NOTICE OF MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Ottawa valley Radio Club will be held at The Museum of Science and Technology on St Laurent Blvd.

Time: 8.00 pm

Program: Dave Brown on Integrated Circuits...

SEE YOU THERE.... SEPT 20



QUA VE3OAO, THE OVMRC ADMISSION OFFICER

Hello! to everyone. Did you have a good summer? Did you get all your amateur radio projects completed that you dreamed about completing during last year's freezing weather? If you like me, everything else - under-the-sun- kept coming up and interfering. But, my vacation worked out fairly well.

I am sure it will be mentioned elsewhere in this issue, but I want to help you to remember by repetition, that our next club meeting, - the first one of the new club year - will be, as usual, on the third Thursday of this month, on 20 September, 1984, at 8:00 PM (2000L/0000Z) and we would like to see you all there. (My, would that ever be a surprise - if 101 members showed up!). I haven't the latest information about entertainment, but the directors of the club are all tasked with helping with improving the quality and quantity of the entertainment for the coming year.

Attached to this issue of the RAMBLER are the new membership cards for the coming '84-85 year to those of you who have already renewed their membership dues or recently signed up as new members. Unless you have already been handed your new card by one of our members of the executive, if you didn't get a card attached to your SEPTEMBER RAMBLER, let that be a sign and a reminder to you that your renewal dues have not yet been received by the OVMRC Admission Officer. (If any of you have mailed your renewal to our Post Office Box, I have not received it as of this date (28-8-84). But, I don't have direct access to the box myself, so that doesn't mean it hasn't been received into the box nor picked up by another member of the executive.)

I must congratulate you on the good response you gave to us by making use of the renewal forms attached to the RAMBLERS on the two last issues of last year. At this time we have 35 Full members, 4 Associate members, 1 Life member, and 3 Family Associate members. That leaves 57 renewals to go if all the members from last year's list re-enlist. Any by the time you folks get this issue, we should have a new class of Students for the OVMRC Amateur Radio Course which will increase the club's enrollment because each one of them will become an Associate Member in our Club. To those new members, I want to express a WELCOME TO THE CLUB! That is where I started just two years ago.

Let's take a closer look at our membership cards: The Membership Card Number: The first 8 numbers are reserved for the current members of the executive. The next one is for our Life Member. The remaining numbers have no particular significance other than to show the approximate order that the applications were received by the membership chairman (me). I entered your names into the book according to the dates on the application form so that they were chronological with one exception. Pat, KJQ, keeps track of things in his Apple computer using these numbers. Next is the SEAL of the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club, showing that it is an amateur radio organization of Ottawa, Ontario. The TITLE line which spells out the name in bold type for verification of the title in the seal, plus the designation that we are Incorporated and act as a body. The Member's name and call sign: It is safe to say that most men's names would be preceded by "Mr.". But with most of the ladies names I didn't feel safe specifying "Mrs" or "Miss", so I left them unmarked. If you were an Associate member, I put a line through the space where the Call Sign is supposed to go. When you



get your licence, we'll be happy to issue you a new card showing that you are now a Full member with your new call sign shown accordingly, at no extra charge! Expiration Date: In Article 6 of the OVMRC Constitution, it states: ". . . Dues become payable 1 September of each year. Non-payment of dues by 30 November shall be cause for cancellation of club membership." That is why the date for next year's membership cards say, "This card EXPIRES as of 30-11-85. The Signature Lines: In the OVMRC BY-LAWS, Section 4.f. "The signatures of the Treasurer and the President.....shall be required on all cheques drawn on the Club bank account.", would seem to be the key to why these two signatures are required on the Membership Cards, because it is a document certifying that the person who is bearing it is a member of the club. But, prior to last year, the Treasurer was also the membership chairman, and we still have hundreds of blank membership cards with these two officers titles printed thereon. So, we gotta' use them all up, right? Right!

Now all this talk about the look of the card leads us to discuss that cards have made the rounds from the Tech Advisor's QTH to the Treasurer's QTH and back to the V.P.'s QTH. Pat KJQ signed them all, then Fred NJF signed them all, then I added the remaining information. So, this is a very labour intensive operation. The result? Just another card to clutter your burgeoning wallet? No! For all the Full members, you have the key to open the door to VE3JW. For, part of the security check used by the security guards at The Museum of Science and Technology is to check to see if you have an OVMRC Membership card.

Well, while we still have fairly decent weather to go to evening meetings in, come to the auditorium of the Science and Technology Museum on South St. Laurent Blvd after you've gotten there early enough to go in and take a look at the physical appearance of VE3JW. And don't forget that we always have fresh brewed hot coffee and cookies.

73 Vance VE3OAO  
Vice President

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#### TECH TALK

Well here we are a new year and I'm back on the Executive. I wonder if I really have all my marbles! I suppose that as the 'ol Tech' Advisor I should be saying something technical but I think that for this time it will be a bit of an intro. For those of you who may not know me (have you been asleep?), I have been a member of the club since 1978. Since that time I have been involved in various aspects of the OVMRC's activities. These range from being the Club's President, Vice-President and Public Relations Officer to being a part of the "Gang of Four" that produces the OVMRC's Amateur Radio Course. On the top of that, as a member of the Ottawa Amateur Radio Club, I am handling the registration for the upcoming Radio Society of Ontario Convention '84 to be held at the Westin Hotel 5, 6 and 7 October '84. This means I will be a little busy over the next little while. It does keep me off the street and away from the front of the modulated knothole (TV). Which can be a mixed blessing I suppose!

As a part of the duties our illustrious (or soon to be illustrious) President hath laid upon me is the task of co-ordinating the entertainment for the Club Meetings. Notice the emphasis on the word co-ordinating. I have a couple of ideas for entertainment, however the collective minds of you 100 plus members should also have some good ideas. How about letting me know what's perking away in your head bone. For that matter if you would like me to try to present a technical topic of two here, or perhaps a project, let me know.

Well I think I'll leave it at that for now. So until next time;

TTFN  
Mike  
VE3LAR

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#### PROVINCE OF ONTARIO QSL CARDS

We have been able to obtain a further quantity of the Province of Ontario QSL cards. We have, however, been asked to pass them out only to operators that do a lot of operating on HF and would send these cards to other provinces or countries. If you feel that you could make good use of these cards, contact Mike, VE3LAR, at 523-1571 to arrange pick up.

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#### OTTAWA AREA CALL BOOKS

There are still a number of the Ottawa Area Call Books that have not been claimed by their owners. They are:-

VE3AAW	VE3LC
VE3ABC	VE3MJY
VE3BDK	VE3MSJ
VE3CAO	VE3MSR
VE3EEC	VE3NVI
VE3GQE	VE3NPG
VE3JDJ	VE3NJM
VE3JSM	VE3OAW
VE3KMG	VE3YK
VE3KHP	

If any of the above operators would like to make special arrangements to pick up the Call Books, they may do so by first calling Mike, VE3LAR, at 523-1571. If you would like to have your copy mailed to you, send a minimum 14 x 22 mm (5.5 x 9 inch) SASE in the amount of \$0.85, to:-

Mike Shacklock  
2133 Lemay Cres.  
Ottawa, Ont.  
K1G 2X5

Lastly you can pick your copy up at the next meeting, 20 September, 1984 or any meeting thereafter.

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Fred, VE3BAJ, the chairman of the nominating committee at our annual meeting held in June would like to thank all those club members who agreed to stand for office. To those who were not successful this time, We are sure that you will find a club activity to keep you involved..... Thanks to all....Fred.VE3BAJ

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OVMRC

Brought forward from 83-84 ..... 2,558.11

REVENUE

Interest .....	32.79	
Membership dues .....	223.00	
B - B - Q admission charge .....	48.00	
B - B - Q sale of unused supplies .....	33.00	
	<u>336.79</u>	.. 2,894.90

EXPENSES

Bank service charges .....	6.18
Collator and jogger .....	321.00
Electric stapler .....	74.98
Door prizes annual meeting 83-84 ..	48.00
Frame for past president plaque ...	6.58
Printing supplies RAMBLER .....	114.13
Amateur radio course supplies .....	183.25
Supplies annual B - B - Q .....	70.67
	<u>824.79</u>

CASH ON HAND ..... 2,070.11

Submitted by: Fred Haire VE3NJF

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CLUB ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE REMAINDER OF 1984

The following is the planned schedule for entertainment at the OVMRC meetings for the rest of this year:-

SEPTEMBER - A presentation from Dave Brown of Mitel Corporation on the subject of Integrated Circuit Design for Telecommunications. Dave is on the IC design staff at Mitel so this promises to be a very interesting presentation.

OCTOBER - A presentation on astronomy presented by Mary Grey or Rob Dick of the Museum and Science and Technology. As this lends itself to the entertainment of the younger kids in your family, attendance at this meeting will be thrown open to all members of the family. There will be short film presented to occupy the children (and adults) while the adults visit the telescope. For planning purposes please contact Mike VE3LAR at 523-1571 to let him know how many people you plan to bring, before 20 Sept. 84 or at the Sept. meeting.

NOVEMBER - This will be a repeat of the popular computer night held last year. We expect to be able to expand on some of the topics presented before and also get into some areas not covered before.

DECEMBER - This will be a light evening consisting of ways to deal with the demon of static electricity.

If any of the topics presented above are areas where you have a particular skill or knowledge and you would like to take part, or if you have any ideas or contacts for entertainment in the new year, please contact Mike, VE3LAR, on the air or by calling 523-1571.

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Does anyone know where I can get my hands on two of those heatsinks that used to appear at the auctions. The ones that were about 12x3x1.5 inches, with four transistors mounted on them. These are needed for a new supply for VE3TW0, to allow us to run the full design spec of 40 watts output

Russ VE3FSN

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NETS Part 1 from KWARC "Kilowatter" by Merrick Jarrett VE3BCZ

We hams really have a fascinating hobby. There are so many different directions that we can take...some of us are DX'ers, others like to ragchew, some of us like to experiment with our rigs, making good things better...others are avid contest ops, some like to go after WAS, WAC, DXCC, and other certificates...or perhaps into such esoteric adventures as moonbounce or working OSCAR satellites... and still more who are advancing the frontiers of RTTY and SSTV. But there are a lot of us who work the various phone and c/w nets, either using them as meeting places for friendly QSO's, or for sending and receiving messages as part of the National Traffic System. When Paul Tait, VE3EK, asked me if I would write something about the nets, I thought I would describe some of the more active social and/or traffic nets into which we report here in Ontario, and how they operate. Thinking about it also took me back to my first net, VE3QBN, the old Beaver Net, where a few of us hung around the low end of 80 after the war, when there wasn't quite the QRM or the sophisticated equipment that we have now; and I could get away with a 15-watt xtal-controlled 6L6 1-tube and a little 2-tube regenerative receiver...something I couldn't do now!

Here's what a dyed-in-the-wool net op might be thinking..."Well, lessee now....the XYL's gone for the day...no chores around the house..propagation conditions look pretty good on 80 and 40....20's opening up....think I'll pick up IATN at 0630 before breakfast.... then see if the Kirby Breakfast Club is on the air on 80...ONTARS will be on at 0700...I see I'm NCS on COMSONT at 1000...then over to TP at 1030...if nobody's looking for me on TP, then I'll hit OSN at 1600 and get rid of that Ottawa traffic...80's sounding good, so I'll drop in on CJ Net and see what's cooking, then up the band at 1900 to pass some traffic on OPN...probably pick up some stuff for APN or QSN to take over to ECN, so over to ECN at 1945 and check back at 2130...then to OSN at 2200...it's been a busy day...."

Does any of that sound familiar? I'm sure many of my readers have worked most of the above nets at one time or another, but if you're still in the dark, let's take a look at some of these nets, some of which are social, some of which are emergency, some of which are strictly traffic, and some of which combine elements of all three.

The "social" nets are the ones that, although they have net control stations to keep things in order, they are not "directed", i.e. you don't have to follow the normal customary formal net procedures observed on the traffic nets. The best nets for us in Ontario are ONTARS (Ontario Amateur Radio System) and the TP Net (Transprovincial). ONTARS starts at 0700 daily on 3.755, and ends at 1800. You'll find it very busy in the morning and later on in the afternoon, but during the day, 80 being what it is as a daytime band, ONTARS tends to fade somewhat and become pretty much a southern Ontario net. ONTARS is sponsored by the Radio Society of Ontario, and is one of the oldest established nets. This is a great net on which to meet your friends; if you report in and are looking for someone who may not be on at the moment, but who generally checks in, the controller will put your call "on the hook" and leave it there until you tell him to take it off. You'll often hear our own Terry, VE3NED, one of the regular morning controllers. You can also check in on c/w (as you can for any of the nets), but take it easy... many of the controllers are not c/w men, so send slow and clear, and



there's always someone around to relay. Many of the controllers are "white caners", and bring a loyalty and dedication to their job that is a real inspiration. Bill Birchall, VE3FQV, in London, is Net Manager.

The other very active "social" net is the Transprovincial, otherwise known as the TP. It holds forth daily at 7.055, starting at 1000. This is an excellent daytime net, with stations reporting in from all over the province as well as from VE2-land and the Maritimes, and occasionally the West. Formerly this was known as ONTARS -40 and was set up to fill the communication gap that ONTARS couldn't fill during the day time. It originally was also sponsored by the Radio Society of Ontario, but is now an independent net. Ron Tannenbaum, VE3LZI, in Stayner, is Net Manager. Ron tells me that because so many VE2's check into TP, there are plans to have bilingual controllers at specified times during net operation. Neither TP or ONTARS are "directed" nets, but will handle traffic, with the controller asking you to move off frequency to clear it.

Another old and established net is CJ, or Chicken Junction, which meets daily at 1830 on 3.790. Again, there is a controller to keep things sorted out, and traffic can be passed off-frequency. Joe Kirby, VE3ST, in Chatham, is the original organizer of the CJ Net and is Net Manager, with Ralph Miles, VE3CMQ, in London, as Assistant Net Manager. (To be concluded next issue)

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#### THE EXPERIMENTER'S NOOK

Starting in the October issue of the Rambler, a new monthly column will appear. The Experimenter's Nook is an attempt to bring together the members of the amateur community who still believe that it really is the Amateur Experimental Service. Out in the wide world, there are those who are experimenting with RTTY, AMTOR, computers, SSTV and other exotic forms of communications. Amateurs are buying, begging and borrowing components and building keyers, convertors, receivers, transmitters and other sorts of equipment in their basements. Unfortunately, unless you are actively involved with such a group, you may not even know that such activities are taking place. It is my hope that the Experimenter's Nook can bring such closet experimenters and builders into the open, and stimulate interest in this portion of the hobby.

Having written many articles for the Rambler, as a member of the executive, I know that finding material to write about can be next to impossible at times. However, I feel that what is going on out in the amateur community is of interest to enough people to make the attempt worthwhile. So I am asking for input from the members and non-members at large. This doesn't have to be in a neatly typed format, as long as I can guess at your handwriting.

So lets see who is doing what in the Ottawa area and maybe even spur some interesting activities on. This is going to a members column, not an FSN column. By this I mean, no input, no output.

Until next month and the first Experimenter's Nook, keep building.

Russ Pastuch  
VE3FSN

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Is there a red dot on the address label of your Rambler? If there is you have not renewed your membership. Do it now.....

NOTE: The following article has been approved for release.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE BY

Fred Zupp

Chief Shrink

Zupp's Home for the Slightly  
Deranged

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CURSE OF THE REPEATER

Once upon a time, there was a repeater. And this repeater was called VE3TWO and it worked well. It did, however, until that fateful day in June.

The club's repeater, VE3TWO, has worked almost flawlessly for the last five years. In June, it began to experience problems that manifest themselves as a fluctuating output signal level. Why it decided to do this in June was very clear to me. I had just sold my house, and all my tools and test equipment were packed away. Somehow it knew this!

I faced the rising sun in the eastern sky and after the usual mumbled curses, found that the problem appeared to go away. The repeater was only taunting! A few days later the problem reappeared and this time, was so severe that the output would drop to zero. The obvious solution was to go up to the site and correct whatever was wrong. However, I adopted an even better tact, "Leave me alone, this is summer and no one is using the repeater anyway". Drat them anyway, the Military Net kept right on going all summer and I finally had to do something.

Up to the site I went with great confidence, certain that the problem would prove to be dirty connectors. After all, they did cause a similar problem a few years ago. Wiggle, twist, remove, replace and clean. Success, the machine is working like a charm, until I get home. Power is still varying. At this point a few choice words were expounded, these neither helping the situation nor making me feel particularly better.

Up to the site again, this time with my trusty bearer, Pat VE3KJQ, and a raft of test equipment. Test the output, Ah Ha, definitely is varying. Test the drive from the exciter, varying as well. Gee, this is almost too easy, as the power starts to really go crazy. Seems like it varies when I move the power meter. Squeeze the connectors, power goes up, let go, power drops. Wonderful, now I don't know if it's the repeater or the stupid power meter. A few more choice words and we decide to removed the power amplifier and operate with just the exciter. Now, if the power varies, we know it's the exciter. All the time I'm hoping it's the exciter, I don't want to have to fix the amplifier.

Away from the site we drive with the repeater operating perfectly. A few days later, Mike VE3LAR, announces that the power is fluctuating. Oh well, at least we've narrowed the problem down.

Back to the site, remove the exciter and take it to work, where as expected, it works perfectly. Wiggle, twist, bang, Ah Ha again, the power finally fluctuates. After a suitable length of time, I find that the problem is the same trimmer pot that caused us grief before. A few more tests to confirm the diagnosis and, the power drops to zero. Another half hour and I determine that the problem has grown to encompass the final transistor in the exciter.

No problem, this is Ottawa and parts are easy to find. Four stores later and I've found the lousy pot. The transistor is beginning to look like an impossible task. Oh well, substitute, that always works. The substitute works and gives me a whole five watts out of the amplifier. This I decide is not so good for a forty watt transmitter strip. Off I go again on my safari. Nobody in town has the part I need, until I track one down in Hull. Arrangements are made to pick it up and over the bridge I go. What do I find, you guessed it, a locked door.

At this point I am beginning to lose my cheery disposition. One more time over to Hull and I have the priceless item in hand. Somehow I manage to install the transistor and low and behold, full rated output power. All I need to do now is to reinstall the equipment at the site. Funny thing though, there appears to be something burning. That something burning turns out to be the pot I searched all over town for. I've never seen a trimmer pot go up in a cloud of smoke quite like this before. I am displeased, most definitely displeased. However, I was bright enough to get two trimmers and quick change and it's up again. This time I touch the pot and it's quite obvious that it too will go west if I give it half a chance. It's surprising looking back, that I was quite calm as I trouble shot the board again. Eureka, I was getting tired of ah ha by this point, the problem is the same power pass transistor that had failed once before and destroyed the same trimmer. (Note to feeble mind, I must do something to redesign this part of the circuit, if I can ever get the repeater to work again.) Off I go to the local parts emporium, you know the one that operates out of Toronto and is supposed to be well stocked, well guess what. Not happy at all!

When all else fails, it's off to Radio Shack. And as expected, they have the transistor. Somehow, and I'm not quite sure why, I also decided to pick up an insulated mounting kit for it. Back to the exciter I happily go, install the pass transistor and.... fantastic! The exciter is putting out full power, the trimmer pot is cool as a cucumber and the pass transistor is hot enough to cook eggs. (I think the rest of the office staff has quit wondering why I am talking to myself so much these days.) Taking the aforementioned insulated mounting kit, I install the transistor, using a hole i've made in the chassis using knife and screwdriver. Applying power, I wait for the smoke. No smoke, no heat, by George, I think the bloody thing is finally fixed. Up to the site it goes, with a wish that I don't see the thing for at least a year.

By now you would think that the Gods would smile on this poor tormented person. At the site I find that the repeater keys just fine but there is no audio going through. Three times I hauled the thing to the site and then back to the lab. I even went so far as to take a scope to the site to try and find the problem. Finally I decided that the only way to make it work was to set the whole thing up on the bench. Lo and behold, the amplifier/limiter in the transmitter is dead. No time to find a replacement. The Wise Owl net starts up again tonight. A quick modification to the transmitter, bypassing the dead IC and jumpering and attenuator in the control circuitry, and it works. The audio sounds a touch more mellow than it used to but it works. (I'm going to have to repair my mods some day, but then again, maybe I can skip town before it fails again).

All this has taught me a number of things which I think can be summarized as two morals:

- a) Anyone who decides to build a repeater should be committed and kept where they can't harm themselves or anyone else. If they persist, they deserve everything they get.
- b) People who use the repeater should be very careful not to criticize it, for this makes the repeater builder/maintainer very upset and he is looking for any excuse to foist his task on someone else.

And that is why the repeater has taken so long to get back on the air. Sometime you convince yourself that you must be crazy to submit yourself to such abuse but after all, this is a fun hobby. Isn't it, I mean this is what I was told. What do you mean I was lied to. Wait, how do I get out of this chicken outfit.....

Russ Pastuch  
VE3FSN

Note to patients file

For the last few weeks the patient, Mr. VE3FSN, has been seen assembling a 70 cm. repeater, which he says he intends to have in operation this fall. The staff is becoming rather concerned about his continued pre-occupation with this hobby of his. He seems to be mumbling something about 1296 MHz. and linear translators, this we are still trying to translate.

Fred Zupp

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