

THE OVMRC RAMBLER

Volume 36, Number 3 - March 1993

Home brew handyman holdout – Ken's Isoloop!

by Ken Barry, VE3KJB

Since I first became an amateur, I have been looking for an antenna that didn't require a lot of height. A tower was out of the question – it costs too much and there is the trouble with municipal bylaws, the possible trouble with neighbors, and the fact that my wife would not allow it. So when I saw the Isoloop advertised in *CQ* magazine, I thought it would be the answer.

However the cost of this antenna was prohibitive and I didn't want to face the trouble of importing it from the USA.

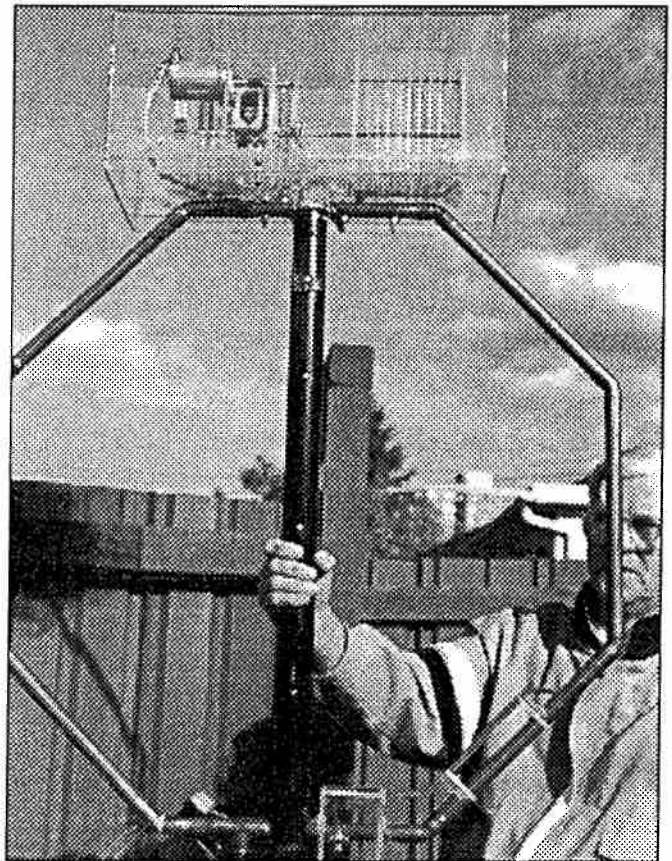
Then, a stroke of luck. I ran across an article by Robert T. Hart in the *ARRL Antenna Handbook* describing how to build the isoloop. The instructions were unclear in some areas, but with the help of Paul VE3JLP and Brice VE3EDR I was able to fill in the missing bits of information.

The most difficult job was making the capacitor. But first let me explain: this antenna (mounted on my roof) is tuned by a capacitor attached directly to the top of the antenna. This means you have to adjust the capacitor remotely from the radio shack. In addition, the capacitor is a split stator type and all connections to it must be soldered.

Well, I went to Cohen & Cohen's and bought some 16 gage copper, then to the hobby shop for some brass tube, and then to Canus Equipment for some plexiglass.

I put these all together to make the capacitor (see the picture), and then I put together the 36" loop. It is not a circle but an octagon made from 3/4" copper pipe soldered together.

To turn the capacitor rotor, I used a dc motor I bought at a flea market and the gears from a rotisserie motor that I also got at a flea market. I mounted them in a plexiglass enclosure on top of the loop with a chain drive to turn the capacitor. I added 35 feet of wire, a 12-volt power supply and a double-pole double-throw switch in the shack. Now I could tune the capacitor nicely. When everything was completed, I cut a hole in the roof and installed the works on a 1-1/2" ABS pipe on top of a TV rotor.



Ken's crazy capacitor caps this contraption Photo: VE3KJB

In the beginning I didn't notice any improvement over my vertical dipole. As a matter of fact, I talked to a ham in France and conducted a short test using the isoloop on one transmission and my 20m vertical dipole on the other. He gave me a 5/7 on the vertical and a 5/2 on the isoloop – very discouraging.

However, on subsequent transmissions I found that you have to meticulously aim and tune the antenna. The bandwidth is very narrow – no more than 80 kHz. However, when you are tuned up accurately and have the antenna pointed in the right direction, there is no limit to the results you can get.

The Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club

RAMBLER

The *Rambler* is published monthly by:

The OVMRC
Box 5530, Station F
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K2C 3M1

Opinions expressed in the *Rambler* are those of the authors, and not necessarily those of the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club, Incorporated, its officers or its members. Permission is granted to republish the contents, in whole or in part, providing the source is properly acknowledged. Commercial use of the contents is expressly prohibited.

The 1992-1993 OVMRC executive

President: Jerry Wells, VE3CDS, 225-7374
Vice-President: Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH, 747-5565
Past President (acting): Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH
Treasurer: Richard Adams, VE3EIT, 749-2619
Secretary: Larry Woram, VE3WLN, 835-2959

Standing committee chairs

Amateur radio exhibit: Cy Webster, VE3SIY, 733-2371
Amateur radio training (acting): Doug Carswell, VE3ATY, 839-5854
Field day: Vic Bajaj, VE3BSV, 726-9270
Flea market: Ken Barry, VE3KJB, 746-4823
Historical (acting): Pat Brewer, VE3KJQ, 825-8721
Hysterical: Neil Herber, VE3PUE, 829-4668
Membership: Mike Beausoleil, VE3BGP, 739-8871
Newsletter: See hysterical (don't ask)
Publicity and programs: Keith Beardsley, VE3SVQ, 731-7912
Radio operations: Ian Kennedy, VE3SNX, 747-8387
Technical: John Pope, VE3ACI, 989-3629

Ramblerites

Contributors to this issue:
Roger VE3XRR, Ron VE3UWR, Larry VE3WLN, Ed VE3VLF, Jerry VE3CDS, Ken VE3KJB, Ian VE3SNX, Leonard VE3LPH.
Hey look! Still room for you!

Circulation:

Bill Chapman, VE3RWC, Stellar stamper.
Fred Haire, VE3NJJ, Extraordinary exemplar.
Dave Scobie, VE3BOX, Xany Xeroxer.

Mark Your Calendar!

Next general meeting:

Thursday, March 18, 1993 19:30 local time in the auditorium at the National Museum of Science and Technology. Surprise guest speaker (we haven't told him yet!)

Next executive meeting:

Thursday, March 25, 1993 19:00 local time in the volunteer room at the National Museum of Science and Technology.

Deadline for the next issue of the Rambler:

Thursday, March 25, 1993.

Affiliated clubs

The OVMRC exchanges bulletins with the following organizations:

Augusta Amateur Radio Association, Augusta, ME
Border City Radio Club, Windsor, ON
CARF, Kingston, ON
CRRL, Arva, ON
Chatham-Kent Amateur Radio Club Inc., Ridgetown, ON
Calgary Amateur Radio Association, Calgary, AB
Halifax Amateur Radio Club, Halifax, NS
Heritage Amateur Radio Club, Cobourg, ON
Kingston ARC, Kingston, ON
London Amateur Radio Club, London, ON
Ottawa Amateur Radio Club, Ottawa, ON
Pioneer Amateur Radio Club, Nepean, ON
Scarborough Amateur Radio Club, Inc., Scarborough, ON
Seaway Valley Amateur Radio Club, Cornwall, ON
Sudbury Amateur Radio Club, Sudbury, ON
Saskatoon Amateur Radio Club, Saskatoon, SK
Thousand Islands Amateur Radio Association, Prescott, ON
West Island Amateur Radio Club Inc., Dorval, PQ

Sponsors

The OVMRC provides bulletins to the following organizations for their past support of our activities:
Bytown Marine, Ottawa, ON
Kenwood Electronics Canada Inc., Mississauga, ON
Seaway Communications Co., Cornwall, ON

We gratefully acknowledge the support provided by Fulline Office Products in printing the Rambler.

Ramblings

Wise words from our President, Jerry Wells, VE3CDS



Here I am back again in the president's chair for the remainder of the 92-93 club year. I must say that I was quite surprised when our former president, Bob VE3YBC informed me that he had to step down. I was disappointed as were many others in the club. I respect Bob's reasons and there is no doubt that we will continue to see him in other roles in the club.

Now that we are almost into spring and will soon see the snow banks disappear, let's look at what is ahead for us in the OVMRC. The radio course is in its final stages and our students will be writing their exams before the next issue of the

Rambler. We will have quite a number of successful new hams.

The major event of the club year is fast approaching – that is, the flea market early in May. This year it will be held at the Dow's Lake DND facility. I'm not sure of the proper name. I think it is HMCS Carleton. The exact time, date and details will be announced at club meetings and on the club nets as the time approaches. [They have been appearing on the back page of the *Rambler* for the past three months. Ed.] If you have any questions contact Ken VE3KJB.

The club annual meeting comes up in June and it is important for the life and vitality of the club to ensure that we all look at our involvement and select members to serve on the executive.

There are many changes facing the amateur community in Canada with the formation of one national organization, The Radio Amateurs of Canada. Our two national organizations CRRL and CARF will be no more. This club will be involved in the new

organization. The strength of amateur radio lies in clubs such as ours. Let us all make sure that we are a part of the new national organization.

The final event of the 92-93 year is the Field Day exercise held on the last weekend in June. This year we are planning to operate from the grounds of the National Museum of Science and Technology. We have used this location in the past and it is readily accessible to all. Plan to participate.

I encourage club members to contact me with ideas for the club. There are many new amateurs and I am sure many new ideas are kicking around. Tell me about them. I will tell you about some of the other aspects of amateur radio that you have not yet had the opportunity to experience. Let's get the dialogue going.

I greatly appreciate being asked to serve the club for the remainder of this year.

-73-

Seniors set up starting schedule

by Jerry Wells, VE3CDS

The senior operators of the club are setting up at the museum and will have equipment up and running by the time this article hits the *Rambler*. The basic HF system (using the new Kenwood 850) is available for operation on the bands. A brief set of instructions is being prepared to ensure that those

who wish to operate will be able to set up the station.

Our initial operating times will be Wednesday evenings from 19:00 to 22:00 and Sunday afternoons from 13:00 to 16:00. As we progress, other operating times will be available. Currently we cannot get operating time during the weekdays because the classroom is heavily booked.

We will have some special open-house displays during the next few weeks to allow members to become familiar with station set up and operating procedures. I can give you more information at the regular monthly meeting or you can call me at home at 225-7374 around 18:00.

-73-

Minutes

from the last general meeting, by Larry Woram, VE3WLN

OVMRC General Meeting,
February 18, 1993

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Larry VE3WEH at approximately 19:30. Visitors to the meeting included Bob Baren and Sidney VE3GVI.

Technical Help

Jake VE2TQX announced that contrary to last month's minutes he was not looking for a phone patch. Mike VE3FFK was looking for a ride to the EMRG meeting in Arnprior and received two offers. Vic VE3BSV is looking for help to erect antennas at Lisgar High School. Russ VE3UAV needs help on burning EPROMs.

Announcements

Larry VE3WEH announced that Museum policy dictates that no food or drink be allowed in any carpeted area. Consequently, coffee and cookies will be served outside the auditorium. Mike VE3FFK announced that the Ottawa Amateur Radio Club was running an advanced amateur course and that he was now a delegated examiner. A bunny hunt will be held on March 13, 1993, more information to follow. Al VE3TYJ announced that the Welcome Mat net had its 1000th check-in, Dave VE3QQQ. Al's 21 day CW course has graduated four of its five students.

Committee Reports

Field Day - Vic VE3BSV reminded the members that Field Day would be held on the last weekend in June at the Museum of Science and Technology. Vic has operated station VE3VOS, a special event space simulation station at Lisgar High School.

Membership - Mike VE3BGP announced that we now have 274 members including Rod VE3MHD who joined this evening.

Radio Operations - Ian VE3SNX thanked those amateurs who worked the NCC 5 and 10km races and a thank you to Leonard VE3LPH for organizing the event.

Technical - John VE3ACI, in response to a question from Doug VE3ATY advised that the frequencies for the 70cm repeater have not yet been allocated and he hoped they would receive them in about a month. The 6m repeater was experiencing a range problem and as a result the antenna will be raised an additional 10 feet when possible.

CARF Bulletin

Dan VE3EBI paraphrased Bulletin #3 dated February 15, 1993. The executives of CRRL and CARF will meet with representatives of DOC in Vancouver to discuss problems. The DOC has announced that "Q" calls will now be issued to amateurs. The first board meeting of the RAC directors will be held on May 2, 1993.

Door Prize

Paul Cooper VE3JLP won the door prize, a copy of the 4th edition of the ARRL Operating Manual obtained through Bytown Marine. Dan Holmes VE3EBI won the second draw, a demo software program donated by Neil VE3PUE.

New Business

Richard VE3UNW questioned the relationship between the OVMRC and the Welcome Mat

net. It was explained by Al VE3TYJ and Larry VE3WEH that while there was a relationship in the initial stage that the net has since become an informal net with no official affiliation to any club.

Neil VE3PUE explained that the club may have to start paying to print the *Rambler* and the cost would be approximately \$2000 yearly. Anyone interested in helping the club in this area was asked to contact Neil.

Elections

Larry VE3WEH opened the floor to nominations for the position of President as per section 9.4 of the bylaws. The following were nominated; Jerry VE3CDS, Doug VE3UTF, Gerry VE3GK, Dave VE3QQQ and Al VE3TYJ. Doug VE3UTF and Dave VE3QQQ declined the nominations and Gerry VE3GK was not present to accept and thus his name was removed.

Gerry and Al gave a short speech prior to balloting. Votes were counted by Rich VE3UNW and Bob VE3SUI. The counting was scrutinized by Larry VE3WLN. Results were 58 votes for Gerry VE3CDS, 14 votes for Al VE3TYJ and 4 spoiled ballots. Jack VE3TTX moved to destroy the ballots and was seconded by Joe VE2JHT. Gerry VE3CDS thanked all those who voted for him and thanked Al for standing.

Close

John VE3NJ moved to close the meeting, seconded by Joe VE2JHT. The meeting was closed at 20:45 and was followed by coffee and ragchew.

-73-

From the mailbox

by Larry Woram, VE3WLN



This month we will start with the Saskatoon Amateur Radio Club's *Feedline*. They report that 18 out of 19 students passed their exam in December. The editor included a short quiz:

- What does "PL" in PL-259 stand for?
- What do the letters of the BNC and the N-type connectors stand for?
- What do BNC, N-type and C-type connectors have in common?

Answers next month. The feature article was part three of an antenna tutorial by Joe Reisert W1JR.

The *Border City Radio Club Newsletter* reported that at a recent meeting they had Paul Gryn from the local DOC office speak to the membership. Paul discussed his feelings toward DOC relations with the new Radio Amateurs of Canada, the growth of the hobby since no-code was introduced and regulatory issues. Paul also won the 50/50 draw.

The *Wireless Garden City ARC* reported that a 47 year old Pennsylvania woman was sentenced to two years probation, fined \$100 and ordered to pay restitution for damage to the station of a neighboring amateur radio operator. The lady was convicted of cutting two coax cables connected to her neighbor's equipment. The

amateur claimed damages in the amount of \$1971.49.

The Augusta Amateur Radio Association, Inc. January issue of *The Augustan* reported on their monthly meeting held on January 20. They also featured a VE1 repeater directory with a map and they included a flyer announcing the upcoming hamfest and computer fair sponsored by the Androscoggin ARC in Lisbon, Maine.

The February issue of the *Reflector* published by the Halifax Amateur Radio Club carried an article by Scott Wood VE1QD. Scott has been involved in a community based organization engaged in the development of education in The Gambia. The organization (NSGA) has taken more than 250 high school and university students and teachers on educational trips to this country. The Gambia is approximately the same size as Nova Scotia. Scott intends (with the help of the Nova Scotia Amateur Radio Association) to contribute to the development of amateur radio in The Gambia. Plans are for a small group of hams to travel to The Gambia, set up three amateur stations at educational institutions, train instructors and demonstrate the stations. They are planning a trip for October 22 to November 7, 1993, during the CQ World Wide Contest to operate as C50?? from the Bungalow Beach Hotel. Initial costs are approximately \$2600. Well done Scott. Part 13 of Larry Kenney's *WB9LOZ Introduction to Packet Radio* was featured.

The HARC second annual ham breakfast was a success. More than 150 amateurs and their families attended the breakfast held at a local school.

The West Island ARC in their February issue of *The WIARC Bulletin* announced that their Spring auction will be held on Saturday, April 24, 1993, at the St. John Fisher Church in Pointe Claire. Admission will be \$3 and tables \$10 each. With summer fast approaching the WIARC DXpedition committee is planning their next trip, most likely to St. Paul Island (CY9). The February meeting featured Mike Campey VE2CPY who described how to receive weather faxes via HF. The Laval flea market and auction will be held on March 27, 1993.

The London Amateur Radio Club announced in the February issue of the *LARC Bulletin* that the club has over 230 members. The editor estimated that if 10% of the members submitted an article that he would be swamped. Several amateurs from the LARC attended the OPP disaster preparedness seminar held on December 10. The seminar followed the scenario of a large commercial passenger jet crashing into one of the residences at the Agriculture College at Centralia. Fully operational UHF/VHF and HF stations were on display. The LARC HF net meets every Sunday at 11:00 EST on 3.750 Mhz with the swap shop following at 12:00. The feature article by Eric VE3EPP explained how to download files from the VE3EPP landline BBS. A companion article gave practical recommendations on buying a computer.

In the February issue of *The Groundwave* the Ottawa Amateur Radio Club reported that CARF and CRRL are compiling information on municipal bylaws which override the

See Mailbox..... page 10

The "other" modes by Ian Kennedy, VE3SNX

Strange signals? Many modes make marvelous music



New author, new series, new ideas! Join Ian every month for info on everything but voice.

So you've got your basic license and are now on the VHF/UHF bands using FM voice. Hopefully you are busy beavering away at Morse so you can upgrade to the magical world of HF.

Most amateurs, when they think of HF think about SSB voice or Morse. They don't stop to consider that there are other modes of communications that are available to them on these bands. In this series of articles, I will attempt to introduce you to the various modes that are available to you on HF other than voice. These articles are not intended to make you a pro in

each of these modes but to give you an understanding of the signals themselves and their internal makeup.

The modes I will discuss in future articles include:

- Morse
- Radioteletype (BAUDOT)
- Amateur Teletype Over Radio (AMTOR)
- ASCII
- PACKET
- Slow- and Fast-Scan Television (SSTV/FSTV)

Since I will be using terms that may be unfamiliar to you, I am including the following list of definitions:

Baud

The smallest element of the transmitted stream.

Baud length (BL)

The length of a baud, normally measured in milliseconds (ms).

$$BL = CL / BPC$$
$$BL = KS / 1000$$

Keying speed (KS)

The number of bauds sent per second.

$$KS = 1000 \times BL$$

Bauds per cycle (BPC)

The number of bauds required to send one character of information and its associated start, stop and error checking functions.

$$BPC = CL / BL$$

Cycle length (CL)

The length of time required to send 1 cycle, normally measured in milliseconds (ms).

$$CL = BL \times BPC$$

$$CL = 60\,000 / OPM$$

Operations per minute (OPM)

The number of cycles sent per minute

$$OPM = 60\,000 / CL$$

$$OPM = WPM \times 6$$

Words per minute (WPM)

The number of "words" sent per minute

$$WPM = OPM / 6$$

That's all for this article folks. I hope that you will enjoy this series. Any feedback (good, bad or indifferent) would be most graciously accepted.

-73-

Winterlude run wrap-up

by Leonard Chodat, VE3LPH

I would like to thank the following people for their help with communications during the Winterlude Confederation Boulevard run: Jake VE2TQX, Mike VE3UMC, Ron VE3MUD, Tim VE3USL and his wife Lorna, Doug VE3UTF, Chris VE3CUZ,

Maurice-André VE3VIG, Peter VE3BQP, Jacques VE3TSC, and Ian VE3SNX.

Special thanks to Jacques for coming out in the snowstorm, Ian for transporting Jacques and for loaning a 5/8 antenna, and Tim for loaning a power supply.

Congratulations to Tim for his quick thinking in getting the

RCMP to transport an injured runner.

I hope you all enjoyed yourselves. We impressed the NCC Winterlude people and the TBM Sport & Fitness people. Both groups thanked us very much for our help at this event and have asked us back next year.

-73-

CIDA-IDW ... Students send signals skyward

by Ron Clément (VE3UWR) and Roger Rose (VE3XRR)

Any excuse is a good excuse when it comes time to put the hobby in the foreground. This time around, we offered our services to operate the Scout HQ's amateur radio club equipment on February the 3rd.

The day was dedicated to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) International Development Week (IDW). Our objective was to communicate with third-world countries participating in this developmental assistance program. A special prefix (CI) was assigned to any Canadian amateur radio station wishing to participate. Ron Clément (VE3UWR) made a point of visiting the grade 8 classroom of Mme Domingue, at Broadview Public School, a week earlier where he introduced amateur radio to the students and demonstrated the use of 2m. He invited them to visit the station and participate in this event. Dan Holmes (VE3EBI), Robert Michaud (VE3PAD), Roger Rose (VE3XRR) and Danny Vuk (VE2KAA) took turns calling CQ on 15m and 20m with the special event call CI3SHQ.

While at the Scout's HQ radio station, the students were shown antennas, keyers and other paraphernalia used in amateur radio. Then came time for them to get on the air. The operators were frantically calling and trying to get possible contacts.



Ron VE3UWR

Things were rather slow at first, but we talked to a few Canadian stations:
Jim CI4ACN in Brandon MB
Bill VE4WU in Winnipeg MB
Joe CI4JK in Carman MB
Clay CI5NN in Regina SK
Wally CI6CBJ in Medicine Hat AB
Ralph CI7DV in Mission BC
George CI3GGB in Ottawa ON

Some American stations responded to our calls: John KD0JL in Missouri and George KK4HC in Enterprise. There was a joke passed around as to whether they should be considered third-world countries or not.

Anyway, by the time we got around to some serious calls overseas, we got lucky with responses:

France

FE5PS, Alexis in Saint-Aubin-Ormeaux
FD1RHE, Jean-Pierre in LaRoche

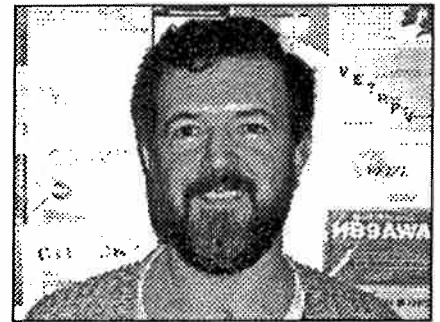
Spain

EA4KT, Antonio in Madrid

Portugal

CT1DVV, Sam in Coimbra

This was enough to pump some excitement in the students and they were able to have some



Roger VE3XRR

good QSOs with a couple of generous and very patient ham operators. The students had to leave in mid-afternoon to return to class. We continued our general calls and got some stations from Zambia:
9J2BO, Brian from Lusanka
9J2DS, Daniel from Lusanka
9J2FB, Fred in Kitwe
9J2GA, George from Luanshya
9J2FR, Renjo from Luanshya

We wrapped things up with a nice QSO with TJ1GA, Piero in Cameroon.

All in all, a good day of hamming. The students showed an interest and we felt we had accomplished our objective. We made nineteen contacts in all. Some of those were quite long to accommodate many of the students. We all enjoyed ourselves and were happy to have made contacts to show these students what amateur radio was all about.

It was a job well done by the operators. Many thanks to Ron for putting it all together, we're looking forward to next year.

-73-

Review..... from page 8

Most stereo stores in the Ottawa area carry it. Although it is slightly more expensive than some of the other portables on

the market, the B65 is well made. I especially appreciated the B65 after seeing how poorly some of the other models were constructed.

The RF-B65 lets you bring a

piece of ham radio to the office, the garage or the pool. It may not replace your FT-1000, but it can be a useful supplement to your radio inventory.

-73-

Product review: RF-B65 portable shortwave receiver



by Ed LeBlanc, VE3VLF

The RF-B65 portable shortwave receiver is not your typical piece of ham radio equipment, yet it may satisfy operators who want a "piece" of ham radio when travelling. Have you ever been on a trip in a foreign land while you had to leave the TS-950SD at home and wondered what propagation was like in this part of the world? Curious about the state of the Blue Jays as you are riding a camel in the Sahara? If you have ever suffered from any of the above maladies, something like the RF-B65 may be for you.

The RF-B65 is a portable shortwave receiver manufactured by Panasonic. It covers 1.615 to 29.999 MHz in the shortwave band, 153 to 519 kHz in the long-wave band, 520 to 1610 kHz in the AM broadcast band and 87.5 to 108 MHz in the FM broadcast band. It receives AM and SSB for all bands except the FM broadcast band where it's strictly FM. The unit measures 198mm wide, 118mm high and 34mm deep and it weighs 625 grams without batteries. This makes it easy to slip into a kitbag or briefcase.

The B65 has a telescopic whip antenna and a small kickstand that tilts the radio when it is laid on a flat surface. This makes it very easy to operate and quite stable. I wouldn't buy another portable without this feature.

The B65 comes with a leather carrying pouch, wrist strap, earphone jack and long wire antenna. Although the pouch is a nice accessory, it doesn't have any carrying handles. It would have been better to forget the wrist strap and put grip handles or a shoulder strap on the pouch.

Panasonic should have included a set of light stereo earpieces. A pair of inexpensive (\$15) headphones that I bought are far superior to the lone earjack that is included.

The radio is powered by four AA-size batteries or a 6 Vac adapter (not included). A second compartment in the radio holds two more AA batteries for memory back-up. These batteries preserve the memory channels and the clock during loss of primary dc power.

The B65 front panel has an internal speaker, a numeric keypad, 17 control keys, an LCD display and a rotary tuning dial. On the radio's right side are the volume control, tone-selector switch, fine tuning control and tuning step selector.

The keypad provides direct frequency entry, and each key acts as a direct access to one of the programmable memories. The B65 has 36 memories in total, nine for each of the four frequency ranges. Unfortunately, you can't transfer memory channels from one band to another. I never use the 153 to 519 kHz band (listening to air navigational beacons really doesn't turn me on) so the nine memories dedicated to that band go to waste.

In conjunction with a function key, each key gives direct access to each of the main SW broadcast bands. For example, pressing the function key then "5" tunes the radio to 5950 kHz,

the bottom end of the 49m broadcast band. You can also tune with the rotary tuning dial or the up and down slewing buttons. Many portable shortwave radios only have slewing buttons, and it's nice to be able to do some old-fashioned tuning with the rotary dial. The radio can scan, but its limited capabilities are nothing to write home about.

The B65 LCD shows frequency, band, memory channel, time, time modes and a bar S-meter. The display is not backlit, making the radio useless for operating in your hotel room or tent in the middle of the night.

A small slide switch on the front panel selects AM or SSB, but the LCD does not tell you if you are in AM or SSB. The smallest tuning step using the rotary dial is 1 kHz. The fine tuning knob tunes in smaller steps (needed for SSB) and it performs well. Unfortunately, the frequency display does not show fine tuning adjustments.

The B65 has two 24-hour format clocks. They are not displayed simultaneously – you can select one or the other. I set my clocks to local and UTC times. You can set the radio to come on at a preset time (handy on business trips) and the sleep function keeps the radio on for sixty minutes before shutting off automatically.

The RF-B65 performs quite well even with the telescopic whip antenna. I did a listening comparison with my ICOM tabletop receiver and the B65 was surprisingly sensitive. I could copy ham SSB signals quite nicely with good clarity.

The B65 is a popular model – it sold out during the Persian Gulf war in radio stores across southern Ontario.

See Review..... page 7

Quantum leap – take a time trip with the Prez

by Jerry Wells, VE3CDS

In our rapidly changing world, it is useful to look at how technology (and everything else) changes with time. There have been many changes in amateur radio over the past 40 years. I chose a period of 40 years because I was licensed in 1952.

When I first became interested in amateur radio, it was a mysterious hobby with few sources of information for outsiders. I had my first exposure listening to the shortwave bands on those beautifully made receivers that were popular in the late 1930s – big console models that stood in the living rooms of many homes during the golden years of radio, long before the advent of television. I remember listening to amateurs and trying to imagine their stations as they talked about their antennas and transmitters. It all sounded very interesting and it got me into the world of amateur radio.

In the late 1940s I started to work as a technician. My first goal was to make enough money to buy a communications receiver. I was quite familiar with what was on the market and I knew what I could afford. It wasn't much by today's standards but it cost a month's pay – a Hallicrafters S-40. What a marvelous receiver! After playing around with odd bits of surplus gear from the war, this was a major step into amateur radio.

I listened every night on all the HF bands and learned where to get information and what the requirements were for a license. It seemed to take forever, but I got my license on a nice day in January 1952. What a sense of achievement and pride. I even got the call I wanted. It had previously been assigned to my brother – a commercial operator

for MOT. (In those days amateur radio came under the department of transport.) My call was and still is VE3CDS. Now to get on the air.

I didn't even consider the prospect of buying a commercial rig. Amateur radio meant building your own rig. Various magazines and radio amateur handbooks were filled with articles on how to do it. I built my first rig on a piece of masonite with a 6AG7 crystal oscillator and a 6L6 amplifier. That was it. I had two crystals for the 40m band, one on 7013 and one on 7073. My dummy load was a 40 W light bulb and my frequency measuring device was an absorption wavemeter with a crystal detector calibrated against a signal generator. My first contact was a W8 in Ohio. I was on my way in amateur radio.

I went to a meeting of the Ottawa Amateur Radio Club shortly after I got my license and I met many other amateurs for the first time. A lot of these people are still around – some in our club can tell of those fascinating times in amateur radio.

My early interests lay in building equipment. At that time there was a lot of surplus equipment available and building transmitters and such was relatively inexpensive. It was not uncommon to build a transmitter on a Saturday morning, have it on the air in the afternoon, take it apart the following Saturday and then build another one. Of course we didn't worry about harmonic suppression or anything like that. We didn't have to! There was no TV to contend with and the only interference problems were broadcast interference. Those were different times.

There were as many sides of the hobby to be pursued then as there are today. I knew amateurs

who seldom went on the air, their interests lay in the construction of antennas, transmitters, speech amplifiers, modulators, single sideband (then a new mode), and transistorized circuits which had just come on the scene. There were many fascinating things to explore.

Many other amateurs devoted their time to developing their operating skills and making contacts all over the world. There were some marvelous operators who could copy code through two or three levels of interference.

My first experience with one such ham was on Field Day. I was teamed up with an old-timer by the name of Bert Coy, VE3GI. The first half hour of our operating time I never identified a single station that Bert was working – all I could hear was several stations one on top of the other. As our operating period progressed, I learned to just listen to the station I wanted to work.

It is amazing how selective your hearing is. Of course today the receivers are very sharp and it is much easier to separate the signals, but nothing can compare with the feeling of achievement in working someone on CW under adverse conditions.

Today, much of the romance and pleasure of amateur radio has been replaced by an emphasis on sophisticated technology. We no longer rely on operator skills to the extent required when communicating by means of the simplest method, CW. I encourage all new amateurs to at least give CW a try. You may like it. It's a different world.

I have rambled on for quite a while and I can think of all sorts of other things to tell you about. However, I will save them for a future issue.

Upcoming Events, Help Wanted

HELP the flea bitten!

Sue VE3SLC is looking for volunteers to staff the Flea Bite at this year's flea market (see May 15, below). She is also looking for donations of squares, cookies, muffins, sandwiches and so on. The loan of a couple of 30-50 cup coffee urns would be greatly appreciated. To help with any of these items, please call Sue at 839-5854 after 17:00.

Contributed by VE3SLC

Sunday nights

Al VE3TYJ is interested in starting up a local 2m SSB net on Sunday evenings. This will give local operators with vertical antennas a chance to try out the SSB features on their rigs.

Contact Al at 746-5994.

Contributed by VE3TYJ

January 15, 1993 to March 26, 1993

VE3TWO (147.300+) Wise Owl qualifying nets Fridays at 20:00. Certificates are awarded at the May OVMRC club meeting.

Contributed by VE3NVL

March 27, 1993

Laval-Laurentide Hamfest, Ste Therese, Quebec. Details in February *Rambler*.

Contributed by CARF

April 14, 1993

Class of '92 dinner & reunion. For information contact Lorraine VE3VAT at 228-7111.

Contributed by VE3NVL

May 15, 1993

OVMRC flea market. Canadian Forces Reserve Barracks, Dow's Lake, Ottawa, Ontario. Free admission. Doors open to vendors at 08:00, to the public at 09:00. Tables (\$20 for commercial vendors and \$10 for all others) can be reserved by contacting Ken Barry, VE3KJB at 746-4823. Wheelchair accessible. Refreshments. Talk-in on VE3TWO, 147.300+.

Contributed by VE3NVL

June 26-27, 1993

Field Day! Contact Vic VE3BSV evenings at 726-9270.

Still (always!) looking

Net controllers needed to relieve the regulars. The Wise Owl net, the Pot Hole net etc., etc. No experience necessary. Contact Ian VE3SNX at 747-8387.

Contributed by VE3SNX

To put a notice in here,
call Leo VE3NVL
at 225-0902.

Mailbox..... from page 5

DOC's jurisdiction. Amateurs are encouraged to send copies of such bylaws to Antenna Bylaw Watch, c/o Earle Smith VE6NM, Box 412, Grande Prairie, AB, T8V 3A5. The January meeting featured Paul Coverdale VE3ICV who gave a presentation on mobile telephony, covering cellular radio and low-power wireless telephone systems. Fred Green VE3IO offered to loan a receiver, transmitter and 2m rig

to a new amateur. The OARC advanced amateur course has 14 students enrolled.

From *TelePARC*, the January meeting of the Pioneer Amateur Radio Club (Ottawa) had as its guest speaker Lynda Jenkins, manager of 911 emergency service, Bell Canada. Lynda gave a comprehensive presentation on the 911 emergency service in the Ottawa-Carleton area.

-73-

For Sale

Monitor

Paper-white monitor for \$100, negotiable. Call Jim VE3GJY at 733-5770.

Jackets

Really!! See below.

Memberships

Get ready to renew early!

-73-

**Leonard &
Moe's jacket
emporium
taking orders**

Limited time offer!

Leonard VE3LPH and Moe VE3JTD are now taking orders for high-quality jackets with OVMRC on the back and your first name and call on the front. Place an order with Leonard or Moe at the next meeting.

For a measly \$28.75 (all taxes included) you get your choice of color and size. Bring cash or a money order payable to Leonard Chodat. Sorry, **no personal checks**. To order by mail, send your specifications and a money order payable to:

Leonard Chodat

Box 5530, Station F

Ottawa, ON K2C 3M1

All orders with funds must be in by April 2, 1993. If enough people order, the price may be lower and you will get a refund. If fewer than 50 people pony up the dough, all funds will be returned and the order will be cancelled. For more info call Moe on VE3TWO or call Leonard at 733-5122.

-73-