THE OVMRC RAMBLER

Volume 40, Number 6, January, 1996

Meeting Cancellation Procedure

Now that winter is officially here and with it the unpredictable weather, the Executive felt it necessary to establish a procedure whereby regular Club meetings can be cancelled when a severe storm hits the area. Rather than ask members to travel city streets to attend Club meetings and thus risk accidents or becoming stuck in snow drifts etc., the Executive has decided that if a storm hits the area on the day of a scheduled Club meeting members are asked to listen to the Club's repeater, VE3TWO between 4 and 6pm for possible meeting cancellation announcements. It is proposed that the cancellation announcement will be made every 30 minutes during the two hour homeward bound period.

OVMRC Raffles

The Club is conducting two separate raffles. The first raffle is the 50 - 50 draw which takes place at each OVMRC meeting. Tickets are $1 each and are on sale at the registration desk as you enter meetings. The first of the 50 - 50 draws was held at our December 14th meeting and the winner shared $51 with the Club.

The second raffle is for Windows '95 software. Tickets for this prize will be available at our January and February meeting at a cost of $1 each or 6 for $5. The lucky winning ticket will be drawn at our February meeting.

VE3JW Operators Take Note . . .

If you are an amateur operator at the Museum of Science and Technology or would like to become an operator, please note that you first must become a Registered Volunteer at the Museum.

At the present time, there are over 20 amateur operators who are Registered Volunteers. Please contact Jerry Wells, VE3CDS, at 225-7374 to get the necessary papers to register as a volunteer. IF YOU ARE NOT A REGISTERED VOLUNTEER THE SECURITY STAFF AT THE MUSEUM WILL NOT ALLOW YOU ACCESS. Those who are registered may escort non-registered amateurs to visit the station.

Don't be embarrassed or disappointed, contact Jerry and register as a volunteer and receive training on the amateur equipment at the Museum.

Kit Building

You can build your own VHF SWR meter at the "Kit Building Party" scheduled for late January or early February. The meter measures 1" x 2" x 4" and has a 10 LED display which indicates forward/reflected power with another 2 LED which indicates the direction being measured. A version with audio output is available for the sight impaired and will be built for you at the building party. All participants will receive assistance in constructing their meter and final adjustments, if necessary. Total cost is $25. Kits order after the party will cost $50. Please register with Jacques, 748-6597, evenings.

The Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club

RAMBLER

The Rambler is published monthly by:
The OVMRC
Box 5530, Station F
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K2C 3M1

Mark Your Calendar !
Next general meeting:
Thursday, January 18th at 1930 hours in the main auditorium of the Museum of Science and Technology. Details regarding the guest speaker are not available at press time.

Deadline for next Rambler:
Friday, January 26th1996.

OVMRC's Repeater:
VE3TWO , 147.300MHz (+)
444.200MHz (+)

The 1995-1996 OVMRC Executive

President:	Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ, 728-3666
Vice-President:	Steve Middleton, VE3RUU, 731-6749
Treasurer:	Colin Finlayson, VE3UZU, 722-4452
Secretary:	Roger Rose, VE3XRR, 741-9847

Standing Committee Chairs

Amateur Radio Exhibit:	Jerry Wells, VE3CDS, 225-7374
Amateur Radio Training:	John Moffat, VE3NJ, 224-5204
Field Day:	Jake Guertin, VA3TQX, 744-2717
Flea Market:	Ed Strange, VA3CEJ, 828-7435
Historical:	Mike Beausoleil, VE3BGP,739-8871 & Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH, 747-5565
Membership:	Gordon Beatty, VA3GRB, 722-4675
Newsletter:	Dan Doctor, VE3XDD, 745-9214
Publicity & Programs:	Moe Cluff, VE3CTD & Leonard Chodat,VE3LPH,733-5122
RadioOperations:	JacquesChoquette.VE3TSC,748-6597
Technical:	Bob Shaw, VE3SUY, 737-9443
Novice:	Joe Donneley, VA3JJD, 488-3299

OVMRC Life Members

Ralph Cameron,	VE3BBM
Doug Carswell,	VE3ATY
Gerry King,	VE3GK
Fred Noble,	VE3BAJ
Jerry Wells,	VE3CDS
Bill Wilson,	VE3NR

Joining or Renewing RAC Membership

When joining or renewing your membership in RAC, remember to quote "OTT-101" on your application. This will reimburse the OVMRC $3 of your RAC membership dues which will be passed back to you in the form of a credit on your next year's OVMRC dues.

Affiliated Clubs

The OVMRC exchanges newsletters with the following organizations:

Algoma ARC, Sault Ste Marie, ON
Augusta Amateur Radio Assoc.Augusta,ME
Border City Radio Club, Windsor, ON
Chatham-Kent ARC Inc. Chatham, ON
Calgary Amateur Radio Assoc. Calgary AB
Comox Valley ARC, Comox, B.C.
Halifax ARC, Halifax, N.S.
Heritage ARC, Cobourg, ON
Kingston ARC, Kingston, ON
Lambton County ARC, Sarnia, ON
London ARC, London, ON
Metroflex ACA , New York
Ottawa ARC, Ottawa, ON
Pioneer ARC, Nepean, ON
RAC, Kingston, ON
Scarborough ARC Inc. Scarborough, ON
Seaway Valley ARC, Cornwall, ON
Smiths Falls ARC, Smiths Falls, ON
Sudbury ARC, Sudbury, ON
Surey ARC, Surrey, B.C.
Saskatoon ARC, Saskatoon, SK
Thousand Island ARC, Brockville, ON
West Island ARC, Dorval, PQ
Winnipeg ARC, Winnipeg, MAN

Sponsors

The OVMRC provides newsletters to the following organizations for their past support of our activities:

Bytown Marine, Ottawa, ON
Kenwood Electronics Canada Inc. Mississauga, ON
Corel Corporation, Ottawa, ON

OVMRC CODE PHONE - 737-0197

The OVMRC gratefully acknowledge the support of the Corel Corporation in producing the Rambler.

Ramblings

Our President, Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ, would like you to know...

Welcome to 1996, may this year bring everyone health, happiness and prosperity, and whatever it was you wanted for Christmas and didn't get. The December meeting was surprisingly well attended, in spite of the miserable weather. The history of amateur radio as presented by several speakers was most interesting and informative. The reception after the meeting was most successful and included the display of some rather old equipment and some very knowledgable amateurs on hand to discuss it. I would like to thank Anne, VE3TSB, and Evelyne, VE3ECW, for picking up the arrangements for the reception. Because of the very bad weather, consideration was given to cancelling the meeting, but there was no mechanism in place to do it. The executive has adopted a simple procedure to cope with similar circumstances in the future. In questionable weather listen to the club's repeater, VE3TWO, on the hour and half-hour from 16:00 to 18:00 on the day of the meeting. If there is a cancellation, it will be announced at the indicated times. In the absence of any announcement, the meeting goes ahead as scheduled.

As I indicated at the last meeting, we will be presenting a revised budget at the coming meeting. Upon getting the revised budget information from the committee chairs, we found that anticipated income is about $1600 greater than originally forecast, while expenses are expected to be about $200 less than anticipated resulting in a surplus of about $2000. Most of the increase in income is due to the imposition of an entry fee for the club's flea market, donations and club draw proceeds.

Each year the OVMRC receives a solicitation from the CNIB for support of their program for blind amateurs accompanied by a list of supporting clubs. To date we have not supported the program because of the way the "objects" section of our bylaws are phrased. However, the new "Winkman" SWR meter project will be available in an audio output version for sight impaired users. Since this is a devise newly developed by a local amateur, it could be considered as advancing the progress of the science of amateur radio. The initial kits are to cost $25 each, and it has been proposed that the club assemble 4 and present them to the CNIB. I plan to open this topic for discussion at the January meeting.

It has been pointed out by one of our senior members that there are only one or two accredited delegated amateur radio examiners in the OVMRC. The feeling of the executive is that there should be one or two more sponsored by the club. Qualified amateurs interested in becoming an accredited delegated examiner contact Jerry Wells, VE3CDS, for details.

You may recall that at a recent meeting I noted that the executive feels that the club should be taking a more proactive role in identifying and participating in public events where our communications skills may be of assistance. To further enhance our ability to serve at such events, Ed, VA3CEJ, has volunteered to train a small group of club members in Operational Voice Procedures, so that they can act as highly effective net controllers. If you are interested in being a member of this select group, contact Ed for further details.

We are still looking for a Rambler editor understudy to take over from Dan next July when he steps down. Working with Dan now will certainly smooth the way later for anyone succeeding him. If you are interested in becoming the Rambler editor, contact Dan, VE3XDD, or any other member of the executive without delay.

Minutes

OVMRC Regular Meeting, 14 December, 1995.

The meeting was called to order at 1940 hours by President Ernie. Larry, VE3WEH, is recording tonight's meeting on audio and video tape for the historical committee. The theme of tonight's meeting is "History of Amateur Radio and the OVMRC".

The membership welcomed guests Brian, VE3DHS, Conrad, VE3EHE, Alain, VE3UIA, Doreen, VECGO and Ed, VE3GX. The President expressed special recognition to Doreen and Ed for their presence.

Mike, VE3FFK, asked the membership to let him know if they hear of anyone looking for a technologist. His job at the university has been declared redundant.

Pierre, VE3QWC, is experiencing difficulty reaching the local packet repeater and is looking for someone with know-how to help solve his problem.

Bob, VE3SUY, announced that a silent auction will take place to sell a Club owned TNC 2V 1.17 MFJ1274, VHF 12000 Bd. HF 33Bd. requires a terminal, Xerox pages of instructions, retail value approximately $250. Bids will be accepted during meeting, with the winning bid announced at the end of the meeting.

Leonard, VE3LPH, introduced the speakers.

Bill, VE3NR, licensed in 1940, an electrical engineer who worked for DOC and retired in 1980, currently the liaison between RAC and IC. He spoke about the early history of amateur radio, especially in the Kingston area, beginning with the transmission of electromagnetic waves in 1897 in Montreal which led to the Marconi tests in 1901. He went on to speak about the spark transmitters, flat top antennas, coherer, crystal receivers and peanut tubes.

Larry, VE3WEH, spoke on behalf of Jerry, VE3CDS, about the early years of amateur radio and the OVMRC, giving some impressive facts about some of the first events in various categories like field days, CQNRs, CW proficiency code, etc. He also expressed his personal thanks to Ed and Doreen for all their work and support of the amateur community and our Club over the years.

Ralph, VE3BBM, licensed in 1947 in North Bay, a career in electronics and with much experience with EMI, spoke about the history of the museum station, VE3JW, which described as " Symbolic of the Spirit of the Hobby". He said the original owner of this call, Jim Cotter, was a highly dedicated and sightless amateur operator who was licensed in the 1920s and had the call C3EN. Ralph also described his experience with the 19 Set and its packaging, the 'B'Set and how he had to repeat his grade 11 because of his involvement with amateur radio. He spoke about AFARS and showed some memorabilia and copies of old 1926 publications.

Gerry, VE3GK, entertained the group with stories about sidebands, the early days of the Club, especially the "Mobile" aspect and building SSB transceivers. His message to amateur radio operators is quite clear - Just Do Something - just do it. One of his famous quotes " Don't use illegal power, use illegal antennas !"

Ernie thanked all the speaker for a wonderful job and a very interesting and informative program.

On behalf of Jerry, VE3CDS, Ernie reminded everyone that Santa On The Air will once again take place at the Museum, Sunday, 17 December from 1 to 4pm. Please contact Jerry if able to help.

Dan, VE3GUU has taken over from Ed, VE3GX as Net Control for the Swap Net. If you have items for the net please contact Dan at 836-2633.

Ernie reminded volunteers operating the museum station that they must sign in and out when going to the station. Rick, VE3IHI, pointed out that volunteers must leave to museum at 5pm when the museum closes.

Ernie asked the membership to be on the lookout for community events which could use communications help. The Club must become more pro-active in the community. Anyone having knowledge of such community events is asked to pass the information along to one of the executive members

Continued on next page

Minutes

Continued from previous page

Ernie advised that there is a new magazine available which might be of interest to members. It is CQ -VHF. Look for it at your neighbourhood newstand.
A reminder to the Club's Executive members that the next Executive meeting is Thursday, 21 December. The meeting will deal with a supplementary budget.
Richard, VE3UNW, informed the membership that once again this year, a course for the advanced licence will be given, starting on the 23rd of January at Carleton University. Admission is free. Tere is limited space available and the course will last for about 15 - 17 weeks. If interested contact Rick, VE3IHI, Mike, VE3FFK or Richard, VE3UNW.
A collection of old issues of the CQ and 73 magazines have been donated by Arlin Ewart, VE3KMR. Anyone interested can pick them up at the front of the auditorium after the meeting.
Ernie asked that the owners of the older equipment being displayed in the social room be on hand during the social hour to describe their equipment or answer questions from inquisitive hams.
The first 50 - 50 draw totaling $51 in ticket sales took place. Joe, VE3JJD had the winning ticket but being the ticket seller he turned the prize down. Another ticket was drawn and was won by Al, VE3ZTU. In the spirit of the season, Al shared his $25.50 prize with Joe.
Two door prizes were drawn. John, VE3NJ, is now the proud winner of the latest version of the ARRL Handbook. Leo, VE3NVL, won a copy of the ARRL Antenna book.
An interesting video, provided by Kenwood Electronics, on their new TS - 870S HF Transceiver was shown .
The meeting adjourned at 2147 for a Christmas Social. Ann, VE3TSB and Evelyn. VE3ECW, arranged a beautiful buffet of cake and cookies, brought from home by Club members, for a very special Christmas Social hour which was enjoyed by everyone.

A Very Merry Christmas Everyone

AMSAT On TV

A film about the Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation (AMSAT) and Amateur Radio is tentatively scheduled for next spring on the TVDiscovery Channel Network.
The program, set for around March 15, 1996, will be called "Eyes in the Sky," and is planned to be a two-hour evening special. A crew of six spent two days filming during the recent AMSAT Annual Meeting and Space Symposium in Orlando, exposing more than four thousand feet of 16-mm film during some 86 takes, said AMSAT Executive Vice President Keith Baker, KB1SF. Baker appeared on camera, as did Dick Jansson WD4FAB, Stan Wood WA4NFY, and a number of other Phase 3-D satellite volunteer workers.
Filming was done in three parts:
In the first, Baker, Jansson and Wood stroll an Orlando surplus house, Skycraft, looking for parts for the spacecraft.
In the next, Jansson roams the aisles of a local K-Mart store, looking for P3-D "antenna" parts, complete with a "blue light special" announcement giving a price reduction on the "hardware" Dick is pulling off the shelf.
The crew finished with shots at the P3-D Lab.
Baker said the theme the producers were looking for was "High Tech Doesn't Need To Be High Cost." Other themes touched on AMSAT's "Keep it Simple, Stupid" approach to spacecraft design and the idea that the paperwork needed to document a spacecraft need not necessarily weigh more than the spacecraft itself.
Some time also was spent discussing Amateur Radio in general: who hams are, and why it's important that their continued access to spectrum be preserved. The three also discussed the spirit of adventure and commitment that's part of the "glue" that holds AMSAT people, and hams in general, together, Baker said.

Battery Alternatives For Handheld Radios

The following is the second, and final part, of this series reprinted from Sport Aviation magazine.

The recommended charger for rechargeable alkaline cell has a device programmed to meet the special needs of the cells. Don't recharge a ni-cad in the alkaline charger or vice-versa. It is fully anticipated that universal chargers will soon be introduced with a switch to select the type of battery to be charged. Some smart chips will be built right into the portable product to shut off an appliance when battery voltage drops to 1.0 volts per cell. This new technology is going to give battery powered, hand tool business a real boost; watch for them to show up in handheld radios as well. In the meantime, there are reasonable techniques for promoting longevity you can implement right now.

Figure 1 is a schematic for a precision, constant-current charger suited to refuelling a variety of ni-cad packs. All part numbers are Radio Shack catalog numbers. This design delivers three switch selectable charge rates of 1.0, 50 and 150 milliamperes. The 1.0 mA rate is for holding a pack on long term storage . . . just enough to overcome any tendency to self-discharge. The 50 mA rate is good for slow charging of AA cells. The 150 mA rate is used to slow charge C cells or fast charge AA cells. This design includes a voltmeter as an aid to ensure proper connection and charging. By charging in a constant current mode, this circuit can charge from 1 to 15 cells in series. With the charger unplugged, connect cell(s) to be charged. The voltmeter should read approximately 1 volt per connected cell. Plug the charger in and select the desired charging current. If the voltmeter pegs, the battery connection is bad or the output fuse is blown. During charging, the voltmeter will read between 1.3 and 1.6 volts per cell. The voltmeter is used only to diagnose bad connections between battery and charger or to spot a cell array with a dead or shorted cell, not to indicate state of the charge.

To properly use this charger, you need to compute a time to recharge based upon the cell's rated capacity. If you are recharging 2200 mAh C cells, then you need to put 2640 mAh back into them (120% of 2200). 2640 divided by 150 yields 17.6 hours. You might want to add a time-of-day controller to your charger's AC wall power so that accurate unattended operation is possible. Virtually any size ni-cad can be recharged with this charger . . . just stuff 20% more juice back in than you took out.

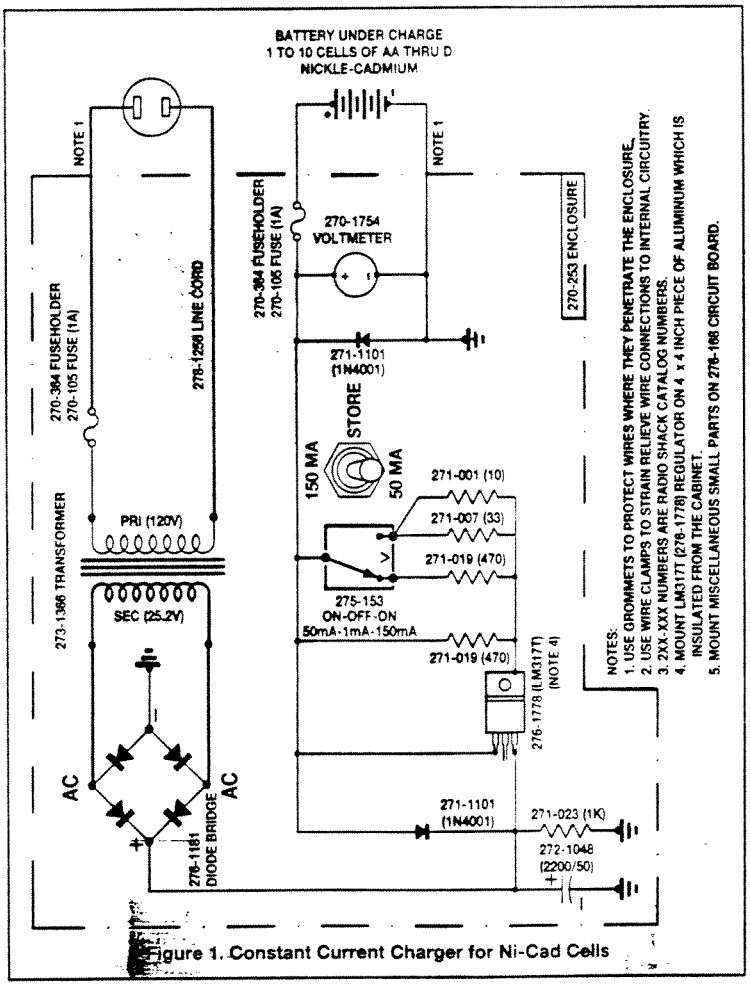

Figure 1. Constant Current Charger for Ni-Cad Cells

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Battery Alternatives

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The final item to discuss is the nickel-cadmium "memory" phenomenon. If a ni-cad cell is not cycled over 100% of its capacity, its apparent capacity appears to drop. There is a good explanation of this but too long for this article . . . besides, it doesn't matter why it happens, we just need to know how to work around the phenomenon. The best way is to have at least two rechargeable packs for your radio and to use each pack up before putting it back on the charger. This means you may well launch into your QSOs with a battery holding only 30% of its rated capacity. So, if it takes two packs to fully service your average needs, then you'd better have three packs. Put a piece of masking tape on each battery pack as you take it off charge. When the pack is installed on your radio, pull the tape off. When you reach into your bag of supplies for a "full" battery pack, you'll quickly know which one is charged.

If you arrive home with a bag of really dead battery packs, put each on 150 mA charge for about 10 minutes then take turns charging them up with a timed replenishment cycle. Just don't let ni-cads lie around in a discharged state. In the old days, it wasn't uncommon for a single cell in a pack to go belly-up many cycles before its brethren. Many amateurs have repaired lots of haandy-talky, 6 to 10 cell arrays with replacement of a single cell. Today, battery quality has advanced to the point where if a single cell goes bad in over a year of service, it is probably time to replace all the cells. The only time to replace a single cell is if the cell obviously died prematurely . . . say within a month or so of new. With little attention to details, you should be able to get 2 to 3 years from battery packs that are used, say at least once a month. Using them once a week shouldn't reduce their service life by more than a few months. And , again, don't forget the venerable ol' alkaline cell.

Who Should Be Recognized ?

The OVMRC Executive is extending an invitation to all members to submit nominations of local amateurs who they feel are deserving of recognition by the OVMRC. Nominees do not necessarily have to be members of the OVMRC. Each nomination must be in writing and include a short resume describing the reason(s) why the nominee is deserving of recognition. Nominations should be mailed or given in person to President Ernie, VE3EJJ no later than March 31st. Nominees chosen for recognition will be invited to the Club meeting in either May or June and will be given an appropriate plaque.

Special Interest Group Endorsed By Executive

The first Special Interest Group to receive Executive endorsement is being organized by Ed Strange, VA3CEJ. Ed plans to share his expertise by offering to train those who are interested in the FORMAL procedures of voice Net Control. Ed hopes to hold two or three training sessions at Algonquin College. For those amateurs who are relunctant to assume Net Controller functions on the various OVMRC nets because they"lack experience" , this training package will provide you with the know-how and confidence to do the job. Ed stresses his training program is for formal voice nets but the principles involved can be used for rag chew nets as well.

Inasmuch as class room space is limited the number of participants to be accepted for this training will be limited to first come - first served. Interested amateurs are asked to contact Ed at 828-7435 evenings.

OVMRC members will be asked to consider and approve the following revised Club budget for the present operating year, 1995 -1996, at our January 18th, 1996 meeting.

Revised Budget For 1995 - 1996

Item	Actual 94/95	Proposed 95/96	Revised 95/96
Club Operations			
Income			
Membership Dues	3330	4500	4850
Flea Market - Sales	1310	1300	1800
- Raffle	712	700	700
Donations	0	0	650
Sale -Surplus Equip.	623	0	100
Bank Interest	30	40	40
TOTAL	$6005	$6540	$8140
Expenditures			
Insurance	929	1080	956
Stn. Lic. & Retr.			
Council Membership	72	100	100
Rambler	4383	2500	2100
Code Phone	343	0	0
Repeater	1596	650	650
Field Day	500	500	750
Office Supplies	100	50	100
Name Tags	133	0	0
Flea Market	1021	1000	1000
Flea Mkt. Raffle	0	0	0
Promotion & Publicity	739	350	350
Misc. - QSL cards. Etc.	100	50	100
Bank Charges	30	50	50
TOTAL	9946	6330	6156
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(3941)	210	1984
Course Operations			
Income			
Course Regist., material sales and royalties	4918	4840	4840
CW Course	900	0	0
TOTAL	5818	4840	4840
Expenditures			
Courses - Basic	5662	4837	4837
- CW	100	0	0
TOTAL	5762	4837	4837
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	56	3	3

"True" Ham Adventure Stories:

Contacts With The Space Shuttle Atlantis

Written by Elaine Fortin VE3UXZ

On Sunday, November 19th, I chatted with Major Chris Hadfield, the Canadian astronaut on board the space shuttle Atlantis, in orbit over Winnipeg, using amateur radio. The shuttle was traveling at 28,000 km/hr, 400 km. above the earth. Since 1983, NASA has operated SAREX, the Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment, to test amateur radio, packet and slow-scan TV communications worldwide. These days, every astronaut is a licensed ham.

The ham community is notified through Internet of the shuttle missions, the call signs of the astronauts and the details of the orbits. We use satellite tracking software, into which we enter the orbit information known as "Keplerian Data Elements", to simulate the real-time orbits across a map of the planet and to calculate to the second when the spacecraft is within our communications airspace. Each time the shuttle fires a burn to adjust its orbit, new data is placed on the Internet. During this mission, however, the budget cutbacks at NASA prevented this, but we were fortunate that the Air Force stepped in and posted the details.

I spent that Friday night asleep, fully clothed, in front of my computer and then every 90 minutes drove my car over to the roof-top parking lot of Bayshore Shopping Centre to wait for the shuttle orbit. I could hear the astronauts speaking with various Americans, but they would not reply to my call "Atlantis, this is VE3UXZ in Ottawa, Canada" from my 50 watt mobile radio and roof-mount antenna. Sunday though, was my lucky day.

The Internet information was correct, the software had calculated the orbit times precisely, and when a fellow ham Dennis VE3ASO offered to let me try the contact using his 1000 watt yagi beam antenna, I jumped for it! We heard nothing during the first 2 orbits on Sunday morning but when we heard a crackle at precisely the time we expected the shuttle to rise on the western horizon, I called out and was blown away to hear Major Hadfield speak back to me. The reception was as clear as a telephone call, which is surprising, given that he was operating with a Motorola 1 watt handheld radio and antenna mounted either on the inside window or in the payload bay. "Hey, it's good to hear from someone in Ottawa. We'll be over there in a couple of minutes". Then, after exchanging "73's", I heard him speak over the next 9 minutes to others in Montreal, P.E.I. and the eastern U.S.A.. During this session my friend wondered if my exhilarating screams were something he should worry about !

As a ham, this contact is about as exciting as it gets but it does come close to another rare aspect of amateur radio in which I participate. This is Earth-Moon-Earth transmissions, also known as "moon bounce". Operating the 46 meter radio telescope dish in Algonquin Park, we transmit Morse Code and voice to the moon. As the planet rotates, the message is reflected back down to earth in a band from eastern Russia to China and Australia. A crazy way to spend the weekend, given that it usually means we operate through the night! This is very challenging, working with so many factors of complexity such as an unreliable 30 year old site, using mostly homemade equipment (which IS part of the fun!) and propagation problems such as solar flux, aurora, libration, Doppler and polarization. We get to climb, in all kinds of weather, up a very high tower to the feedcabin at the focal point of the dish to install electronic components.

One night the computer tracking device broke down and we had to steer the dish using the azimuth and zenith coordinates calculated by our lap-top computer. Just imagine driving your car without windows, by turning 2 knobs in opposite directions, to match the longitude and latitude of the route to your destination! The odds of failure are so great that our successes have kept us returning time and time again. Like the moment when Major Hadfield called to me :VE3UXZ, this VA3OOG, Atlantis", my heart skips a few beats when I hear the Morse Code from the moon replying to ours. I strain my hearing to copy it, wondering where in the world it is coming from and what crazy things it's maker had to do to reach us.

Potpourri

A sampling of news and comments from newsletters and newspapers from across the country - written by Jacques Choquette, VE3TSC

Windsor - The Amateur Radio Newsline has info that will cause more furor in the code/no-code debate. The radio regulatory agency of the United Kingdom says that it will back worldwide no-code licensing for HF ham radio operations. The UK intends to support the New Zealand proposition to abolish the international requirement for radio operators to a pass a Morse test. It now appears as if several of the worlds prominent governments care little about what the ham radio community wants.

W5YI - Windows 95 being out for only a few months already requires some software fixes. The flaws involve file and printer sharing on networks. Corrective patches are available at Microsoft's Web page -> http://microsoft.com/windows

Calgary - A simple multimeter can be used in the ohms position to test transistors. This test works best with an analog meter and is most reliable if the transistor is out of circuit. Disadvantages: works only on bipolar transistors and does not yield gain information. Advantages: the test is very fast, requires no specialized equipment and you get no "defective" results. The only good results are from thermal sensitive failures and it may be used as a first step to identify lead configurations

Winnipeg - In September it was reported that the VE6HWY repeater at 9744 feet was the highest in Canada. Apparently this is not completely correct. A message was sent stating that VE7KNP at 9748 feet is the highest by 4 feet!!! Anyone wish to take sides in the "dispute"?

Winnipeg - A method has been noted on how to simplify construction of a 2M j-pole antenna. Consider that in a standard j-pole, the main (long) element when clamped to a mast or pipe is simply an extension of the mast itself. Instead of making the long copper tube, try clamping a drive stub 19" long to the side of the mast with the open top of the stub 38" (a 1/2 wave) down from the top.

Pioneers (Ottawa) - A reminder that the Pioneer net is till active on 3740, 2000 hours local.

Pioneers (Ottawa) - A W5YI report states that the Tucson Amateur Packet Radio (TAPR) have installed a digital voice " Virtual Meeting Page" on their Internet site (www.tapr.org). This virtual meeting/workshop/seminar page uses the Real Audio system to make available information from certain events that many amateurs may have missed. Real audio is software that transmits audio over the Internet World Wide Web.

London - Amateur Radio Newsline informs us that the AMSAT Phase 3D satellite launch has been set back to Sept. 96. The reason is that the Ariane rocket launcher has certain tests to be performed which are not yet complete. This in turn delays any launches. AMSAT itself is already to go in that contributions from organizations and individuals from around the world have helped cover the first portion of the launch bill.

Sarnia - From the Internet comes rumours that in early 1996 Motorola would introduce to the US market amateur radio equipment. Motorola Asia is launching an amateur radio product for 2M/60 cm under model # AP-150. The rumours are that the same radio will be sold here in North America in 1996.