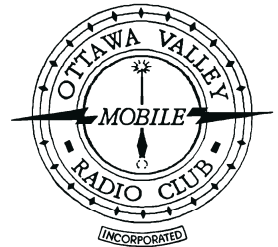


Rambler

Newsletter of the
Ottawa Valley Mobile
Radio Club Inc. (OVMRC)
Volume 49, Issue No 2



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QCWA ····· Oct 15-17
Convention

**Time to Renew
your membership !**

Forms available on-line at:

<http://www.ovmrc.on.ca/Membership%20Form%20P81.pdf>



Jake Guertin VA3TQX and youngster

**“VE3JW Lighthouse”
International Lighthouse/Lightship
Weekend
Saturday Aug. 21, Sunday Aug. 22,
2004**

photos and story by Larry VE3WEH

What a weekend! Who said Amateur radio is dead in the summertime? In conjunction with “International Lighthouse Days” at the Canada Science & Technology Museum, members of our club operated under callsign, “VE3JW Lighthouse” from the old 600-ton Cape North Lighthouse located in front of the museum, surrounded by green grass and seagulls! This lighthouse is special since it is considered a museum artifact and is designated as CAN-865(M) by the Amateur Radio Lighthouse Society (ARLHS) for purposes of the International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend which occurs annually over the third weekend in August.

In spite of poor HF propagation, we listened carefully, called “CQ, CQ, CQ, VE3JW Lighthouse” and made many International contacts with Lighthouses and several Lightships on 20m and 40m. We also made many contacts via the Internet

Rambler

Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club Inc.
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OVMRC Executive (2002-2003)

President	Ken McKenzie, VA3NEK 829-4884, va3nek@rac
Vice-President	
Treasurer	Ken Gill, VA3KJG 748-0218,
Secretary	Patricia Rowan, VA3PUR 744-1814, va3pur@rac.ca

Standing Committee Chairpersons

Amateur Radio Exhibit	Maurice-André Vigneault, VE3VIG 749-9010, ve3vig@rac.ca
Amateur Radio Training	Bob Shaw, VE3SUY 737-9443, lycott@istop.com Ernie Jury, VE3EJJ 728-3666
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Historical	Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH 747-5565, ve3weh@rac.ca
Flea Market	Vacant
Membership	Adam King, VA3PIP 831-9970, va3pip@rac.ca
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Publicity & Programs	
Radio Operations	Patricia Rowan, VA3PUR 744-1814, va3pur@rac.ca
Technical	Jake Guertin, VA3TQX 253-3732, va3tqx@sprint.ca
Emergency Preparedness	Ken Halcrow, VE3SRS 837-3261, ve3srs@rac.ca



OVMRC Repeater

147.300 MHz(+)
444.200 MHz(+)
53.030/52.030 MHz



OVMRC web page

<http://www.ovmrc.on.ca>
Webmaster: John Rodger,
VE3JR, jcr@magma.ca



Next Meeting

Sep 23

Rambler Deadline

Oct 8

OVMRC Life Members

Ralph Cameron	VE3BBM
Doug Carswell	VE3ATY
Doreen Morgan	VE3CGO
Ed Morgan	VE3GX
Bill Wilson	VE3NR

Club Website

The OVMRC **Rambler** is available on-line at the club website:

<http://www.ovmrc.on.ca/rambler.htm>

Sponsors

The OVMRC acknowledges the following organizations for their support of our activities by providing them with courtesy copies of the Rambler:

Bytown Marine, Ottawa, ON
Elkel Ltee, Trois-Rivières, QC
Kenwood Electronics Canada Inc., Mississauga, ON

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Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend *(Continued)*

Radio Link Project (IRLP) on 2m and with local amateurs.

During this two-day event, I believe the advance publicity given in the Citizen Newspaper, the Weekly Journal, and CJOH TV encouraged many more people to visit the Lighthouse this year. We had many more visitors than during last year's event. There were about 300 visitors who took the tour through the Lighthouse and it was our opportunity to introduce them to Amateur Radio for a few minutes while they were waiting for their turn.

Special thanks to Graeme Wilkes, Programs and Events, Education and Interpretation Officer for the Museum for organizing the event and for providing cold soft drinks and lunches which were much appreciated and enjoyed by our Amateurs! A very BIG thanks to all of you who took time out of your busy schedule to help with setting up and taking down the antennas and the two stations, Ernie Jury VE3EJJ, Steve Cochran VE3SBC, Jake Guertin VA3TQX, Bob Shaw VE3SUY and Patrick Tunney VA3CMD. And on behalf of Steve Cochran VE3SBC, Ernie Jury VE3EJJ, and Maurice-Andre Vigneault VE3VIG, Manager for VE3JW. I want to thank all the Amateur radio operators who made the weekend a success! Namely, Steve Cochran VE3SBC who was responsible for organizing the event with assistance from yours truly, Mike Joyce VE3LTN, his wife Gail and their grandson Christopher who, at the tender age of two, was our youngest operator (see photo), Jake Guertin VA3TQX, Bob Shaw VE3SUY, Patrick Tunney VA3CMD, Graham Bennett VE3GBD, and Duncan Schuthe VE3GXU who had volunteered, but

unfortunately, wasn't able to attend. If I have missed anyone, please forgive me.

Thanks to all the local amateurs that came to visit us in the Lighthouse also. To name a few, Paul Henry VE3CPH, Roger Gervais VE3NPO and his lovely wife Madeleine, Jay Mercer VA3TR and his daughters (see photo), and Duane Avery VA3ODD. We hope to see more of you assisting next year during this annual fun event in the summer time!



Jay Mercer VA3TR and one of his daughters



Mike Joyce VE3LTN, his wife Gail and grandson Christopher



Graham Bennett VE3GBD and Jake Guertin VA3TQX

QCWA International Convention

Convention time in Ottawa on October 15, 16, 17!

The Quarter Century Wireless Association's International Convention is being hosted by QCWA Chapter 70. **All Radio Amateurs** and their friends are invited to attend. QCWA is association composed of a membership of Radio Amateurs who have held their license for a minimum of 25.

The following sessions and speakers are on the agenda for Friday and Saturday -

<u>Sessions</u>		<u>Speakers</u>
Software Defined Radios for the Masses	· · · · ·	Gerald Youngblood AC5OG
Noise in Receiving Systems	· · · · ·	Dave Conn VE3KL
Top Band Reversible Beveridges	· · · · ·	Bert Barry VE3QAA
Living with Your Neighbours or EMC(101)	· · · · ·	Ralph Cameron VE3BBM
Rechargeable Batteries	· · · · ·	Dick Bonnycastle VE3FUA
Field Day 2000	· · · · ·	Brice Wightman VE3EDR
What's That Racket - HF Digital Modes 101	· · · · ·	Ken Asmus VA3KA
		Richard Bandla VE3CVG
Truth and Untruth about Electrically Small Antennas	· · ·	Jack Belrose VE2CV
Amateur Satellites; Past, Present and Future	· · · · ·	Clare Fowler VE3NPC
Moonbounce, Basics and Beyond	· · · · ·	Ken Oelke VE6AFO
Super-Regenerative Receivers	· · · · ·	Lea Barker
Forums: QCWA – QCWW – RAC		

For those who just want to see more of our Nation's Capital or are non-Amateurs, they too will find arrangements have been made for their enjoyment. The Lord Elgin Hotel, newly renovated and located in downtown Ottawa, is a great location situated just steps away from the Canadian Parliament Buildings. Within walking distance are the National War Memorial, the Centennial Flame, the Rideau Canal Locks and the National Arts Centre. Shoppers have a choice of walking to the Sparks Street Mall, the enclosed Rideau Centre Mall or the Byward Farmers' Market. The Market is also the centre of Ottawa's night entertainment district, with restaurants, nightclubs, bistros, etc. On Friday, there is a bus tour of the city followed by a Meet & Greet evening. Saturday begins with a buffet breakfast and concludes in the evening with the Annual QCWA Banquet. Astronaut Dr. Robert Thirsk **VA3CSA** may be our guest speaker.

Travel back in time on Sunday after brunch by taking a trip on a steam engine train. A short bus ride to the Quebec side of the Ottawa River, then all aboard for 4 ½ hours of entertainment while viewing the colourful countryside along the Gatineau River with a stop in quaint Wakefield. Enjoy the camaraderie of others in our hobby. QCWA invites you to join us in Ottawa at the QCWA International Convention!

Place: Ottawa ON Lord Elgin Hotel, 100 Elgin St. - Reservations 613-235-3333 QCWA Guest

Registration: Amateur \$20, Spouse/Guest \$5

Pre-registration required to attend the following -

Sat. buffet breakfast \$15; Sat. Banquet \$42; Sun. Brunch \$25; Friday City Bus Tour \$15;

Sunday Steam Train, 4 1/2 hr. up the Gatineau River Valley, Quebec \$53 (from and to hotel).

Talkin: 146.34/94 More info at www.qcwa.org or

Contact: Donald Heaslip ve3njh@rac.ca phone (613) 727-2769

Financial Report

Ken Gill
VA3KJG

INCOME

	Budget 03/04	Actual 03/04	Proposed Budget 04/05
50/50 Draws	400	255	250
Course	2400	2580	2000
Donations	0	440	100
Flea Market	2500	0	0
Interest Income	30	161	75
Manual Sales	0	152	0
Membership	2300	1611	2850
Misc. Revenue	200	459	200
Total	7830	5658	5475

EXPENDITURES

Administration	1160	1127	1530
Special Events	2300	*250	500
Publicity & Programs	2975	1212	2150
VE3JW	1000	1114	1000
Repeater	1325	724	1325
Jerry Wells Award	250	207	250
Course	1300	981	2500
Emerg. Preparedness	6532	5500	600
Total	16842	11115	9855

*Not yet finalized

Income less Expenditures -9012 -5457 -4380

Amateur Radio Course

Starts 7:00 P.M. 5 October

Green classroom - Canada Science &
Technology Museum

Tuesday and Thursday Evening
7:00 - 10:00 P.M

Cost \$250.00

For further information contact:

Bob Shaw, VE3SUY

737-9443, lycott@istop.com

Expenditures Breakdown

Admin

Insurance	730	816	950
Office Supplies	200	105	200
Museum Facilities	0	0	150
Bank Charges	30	21	30
Miscellaneous (incl. DARF Gifts)	200	185	200
Total	1160	1127	1530

Special Events

Field Day	650	*250	500
Flea Market	1650	0	0
Total	2300	*250	500

* Not yet finalized

Publicity & Programs

Rambler	1950	902	1500
Variety Show/Other	250	0	0
Door Prizes	250	151	250
Speakers' Gifts/Expenses	200	45	200
Membership & Other Publicity	200	114	200
Hospitality/Refreshments	125	0	0
Total	2975	1212	2150

VE3JW

Maintenance	#500	750	#500
Capital Improvements	#450	309	#450
Admin Supplies	50	55	50
Total	1000	1114	1000

- Flexible Allocation

Repeater

Maintenance(including SLVRA & Willen Web)	600	36	600
Phone line	725	688	725
Capital Improvements	0	0	0
Total	1325	724	1325

Jerry Wells Award 250 207 250

Course Supplies
& Publicity 1300 981 2500

Emergency
Preparedness 6532 5500 600

GRAND TOTAL 16842 11115 9855

Our club may be facing some challenging times ahead. Our general membership is decreasing year by year – partially through the loss of members as SK's, and partially due to work pressures and the general reduction of free time in our modern society. And as well, the costs of many things keeps rising – but not the discretionary spending capability of our members. So how do we balance membership numbers, membership dues, club services and club responsibilities?

The OVMRC is fortunate to have had several profitable undertakings in the past. The annual licensing course has always added a couple thousand dollars per year to the bottom line, but enrollment has been declining over the years. The flea market was another source of revenue for the club, but no-one stepped forward last year, and so we did not hold the OVMRC flea market for the first time in many years – and it appears that this year will not see another OVMRC flea market. Our manual collection is getting older, and the choice manuals have already been sold, so again we are seeing decreasing revenues.

What about expenses? Well, the largest expense is the publishing and distribution of the Rambler. Paper, copying and postage have all escalated, and now consumes a large portion of the club's budget.

And our obligations under our charter require the OVMRC to maintain the VE3TWO repeater and the VE3JW demonstration station. The repeater in particular is getting older and will some day need replacement. Last year, the OVMRC undertook to obtain and equip the emergency trailer. This trailer and the field day activities absolutely require the club to carry insurance, not only against the equipment, but liability for meetings and events, and as everyone knows, insurance costs have skyrocketed because of increasingly severe weather, world terrorism, and the increasing propensity for people to sue over the smallest of situations. Your executive needs protection against such suits, and so insurance is absolutely mandatory.

Well, should we spend more money each year than we "take in"? Let's look at the "revenue" side. The courses are getting smaller, books more expensive, and we even now have to pay for the museum space we use. The flea market is defunct. This leaves donations, 50-50 raffles at meetings and membership dues. Even our coffee at the monthly meetings brought a small profit, but no-one has come forward to run this

function since the very sad and untimely loss of Tom VE3OFD.

As the Rambler is deemed essential to keep the club together, we will continue to produce and mail out this publication, but the cost per issue is at least \$1.00 considering the 8-10 pages to be copied, the envelop and labels, postage and ink cartridges consumed. Additionally new software, computer and printer are occasionally needing repairs or replacement. Thus, one approach is to charge members an additional \$10.00 per year in the membership if they wish a paper copy of the Rambler mailed to them. This almost covers the incremental cost, and is a nice "round number".

Last year, the OVMRC ran a deficit budget – spending almost \$5000 more than it took in. We were able to do this because of the previous revenues from former courses and flea markets. But to continue this pattern, we risk not being able to replace aging equipment, or surviving a year that may not have as many students in our course. We cannot count on the course instructors being available, nor for the costs of maintaining equipment to stay constant, nor the cost of the museum space to remain constant etc. And we can only run about one more year with a deficit like that of last year. We must either cut our expenses or increase our revenue, or we will loose our "reserve funds" altogether.

The executive have tried to reduce our expenditures, keeping only a modest amount in the budget for each activity – field day, monthly meetings (door prizes and small speaker gifts). They have eliminated the December social meeting (talent show) and the free refreshments at that meeting.

There are some "ideas" for increasing revenues. Perhaps we can sell some advertising in the Rambler (but we only have a distribution of 80-100 copies and a very limited number of potential advertisers). Perhaps we can find sponsors for some events, like Field Day. Is there any volunteer to try to sell these ideas? Sale of coffee cups, license plate frames, OVMRC badges etc. brings only a very modest amount of money in, so I don't think there is much opportunity to invest in more "OVMRC merchandise".

That leaves the general membership dues to be explored. It has always proved difficult to recruit new members to the OVMRC. Many of the course students do not continue with the OVMRC as their main interest is boating, and not radio. They view the course as necessary for their boating activities, and never take

up membership after graduation. Our membership numbers remains at best, constant, and at worst, slowly dwindling. The time has come, I believe, when we must recognize that the membership dues have not increased for at least seven years – but our costs have. We run the risk, however, of losing members if the membership dues increase too much or too fast. But we will lose our club if we don't increase the dues, just as surely as we will lose our club if we don't find people willing to run for the elected offices to run the club.

The executive have proposed a membership increase from \$20.00 to \$30.00, with an additional \$10.00 if the member wishes a copy of the Rambler mailed to them. The Rambler would be available to all members via email or available on the OVMRC website. This increase, it is hoped, will not be large enough to cause any appreciable decrease in membership, and still will result, with the currently proposed budget in a deficit in 2004-2005 year of \$4,000, which is still not feasible for more than one more year. Revenues will have to increase and expenditures decrease next year if the club is to survive.

The executive would like very much to have any suggestions for increasing revenue or decreasing expenses. They have explored all avenues they can think of, and still retain our current membership, existing services and current obligations.

So, please be sensitive to these matters when the discussion of the proposed budget comes up in a future meeting, or nominations are asked for executive positions. Let's all be creative but realistic and keep the OVMRC something other than a memory of the good old days!

de Bob VE3SUY



Steve Cochran VE3SBC

Elections! Elections!

Better late than never! Come to the September meeting and vote on your new Executive.

The following members will be standing for Executive positions;

Directors;

President: Paul J. Henry VE3CPH

Vice President: Ken McKenzie VA3NEK

Treasurer: Dan Caracaleanu VA3XYO

Chairperson;

Publicity and Programs Duane Avery VA3ODD

All other committee chairs are remaining the same.

Any member in good standing may serve in an Executive position. If you are interested in running for a position, please, make your intentions know to any member of the Executive. We will be happy to hold an actual election.

We are still looking for a chairperson for the Flea market. It is an event greatly missed but we have not been able to have one in two years as we have not had a chairperson. In addition, Patricia Rowan, VA3PUR, has been holding down two positions as Radio Operations Chairperson as well as being Corporate Secretary.



Patrick Tunney VA3CMD, OVMRC
Secretary & Radio Operations Chair

Fast route to Linux

I will do something different for this web resources. Instead of different websites I will look at one resource for amateurs that is available for download on the web.

Many, if not most of you, will be aware of the rise in popularity of the Linux operating system, as an alternative to Windows on PCs. Linux is at its heart a form of Unix, which is a well established and robust operating system. Linux is also open source which means the source code that makes the system run is available uncompiled and is there for anyone to develop further. This is different to Windows. Oh, and one other difference, Linux can be obtained for free legally! So why are we all not moving to Linux? Well, moving to Linux requires a conscious decision and an acceptance that there will be challenges. Installation can be a nerve wracking (especially if you are a newcomer) as you need to have some knowledge of your equipment for example, you video card, as drivers need to be loaded. However, different types of Linux, called distributions, are tackling the driver issue and automatic driver selection is getting very good. When you get the installation sorted on your hard disk, then there is still the learning curve to understand the operating system. Again, this is getting better and there are some very good graphical desktops that are used with Linux. Still, to the uninitiated things can look very intimidating and a lot of work with installation if you want to just try it out and see if you like it. Well, that was until recently when 'live' CDs of Linux became available. What is a 'live' Linux CD? This is a Linux distribution that uses the CD drive as the main disk drive with the operating system on it, not your hard drive, so the hard drive can remain untouched. So you pop in the CD and boot from the CD and Linux is loaded onto your computer, but NOT your hard drive. You can use software provided on the CD and when finished power down, remove the CD and your computer is ready to run again with your usual operating system.

The live Linux CD I have used since Spring is Knoppix. The web site for this live CD distribution is at:

<http://www.knopper.net/knoppix/index-en.html>

Here you will find links for downloading Knoppix and other information.

I have been very impressed with it and it is amazing to think everything is running off a CD.

Now, Knoppix includes many programs including office programs and disk utilities (be warned just because you are running from a CD does not mean that you cannot run disk utilities that could format your hard drive!) In fact one of the arguments for using a live CD like Knoppix is that you can use it to get a computer going if there is a hard disk crash. There is plenty of software with Knoppix, but there is no amateur software. It would be very useful if you could have a live CD with plenty of ham software on it. Well one German ham has modified Knoppix to include a fair selection of Linux ham software and this is the main focus of this article.

AFU-Knoppix is the live Linux CD and it can be found at: <http://www.afu-knoppix.de>

The first thing that will hit you when you visit this site is that most of it is in German. Do not be put off, the live CD will work with English, more about that soon. If you want to download the iso image of the CD you will see a clear link on the left hand panel. Selecting that link will give you a list of servers to download AFU-Knoppix from.

At this point I should stress that the download will be about 600MB or so in size so if you are on dial-up it will take a long time to download, or you can talk to a kind friend with high-speed access. Knoppix and AFU-Knoppix will require 96MB of RAM and 128MB is recommended, plus a bootable CD drive. So if you do not have these spare yourself the download. Once you have downloaded the iso image of the CD to your hard disk (using Windows or whatever operating system), you need to burn the iso image to CD. Before doing that it is worthwhile checking that the download is fine by using md5sum. This does a clever check on your download and returns a series of characters, for AFU-Knoppix, these should match the series of characters at the bottom of the download page.

For detailed information on md5sum see

<http://www.linuxiso.org/viewdoc.php/verifyiso.html>

If the md5sum matches the one on the download page then go ahead and burn the iso image to CD. For advice on how to do this see

<http://www.linuxiso.org/viewdoc.php/howtoburn.html>

There are links there to instructions if you are using Toast or Nero.

So if the burn CD goes well you should have a bootable CD (if not you have another coaster!)

To run AFU-Knoppix, put the CD in the drive and boot up your computer. You will then get an initial splash screen saying it is 'Knoppix 3.3'. At the bottom will be "boot:". Here you will **type** in knoppix lang)us what you should see is the ')' being displayed as an '=' sign. This is because initially the keyboard is configured for a German keyboard. By telling the you want the language to be 'US' AFU-Knoppix will respond to your key presses as you normally expect. Press return and the CD will go into auto detection of your hardware. This is very robust and I have found Knoppix is very good at detecting hardware and configuring correctly.

Another Knoppix 3.3 splash screen appears and you want to wait as the windows manger KDE is loaded. When KDE is being loaded you will get a smaller inner splash screen with flashing icons as the loading process continues. Finally you will get the main desktop set up and a Konqueror window opens with an information screen. (Konqueror is a file manger and web browser too). You can close this and then you are off with your loaded Linux operating system, which should have desktop like that shown in figure 1. Don't forget this is running off your CD so you will hear the CD regularly being accessed.



Figure 1. The main AFU-Knoppix window.

Explore the desktop at you leisure and investigate the software.

You can run programs from the icons (usually with a single left mouse click) or look at the menu accessible by clicking on the cog with the K on it (for KDE) at the bottom left of the desktop. You will find a separate submenu for ham radio software.

Here are a selection of software that I use on my own Linux system.

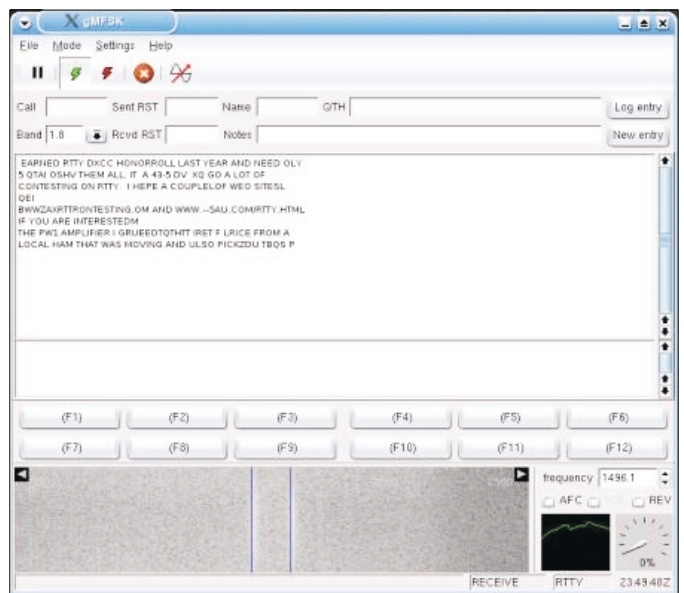


Figure 2. gMFSK decoding an RTTY conversation.

Figure 2 shows gMFSK running under Knoppix. This software allows a number of digital modes to be decoded including BPSK31, QPSK31, BPSK63, RTTY, Hellschrieber, Throb and of course MFSK, amongst others. Note, if you run the software and have an interface connected you may need to use the mixer for KDE to configure levels and activate the right channel. The KDE mixer is kmix and is found under the 'multimedia' and 'sound' submenu.

Another digital mode program is kpsk. This is shown in figure 3.

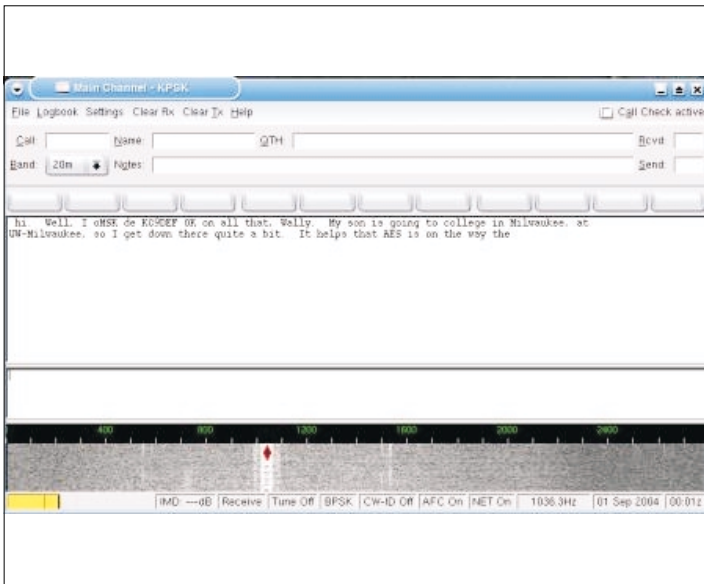


Figure 3. A BPSK31 conversation decoded using kpsk.

Kpsk only decodes PSK31, both BPSK and QPSK, but does it very well. Note, all the conversation screen captures were done using AFU-Knoppix.

For logging xlog, figure 4, provides a simple and effective logger. Indeed it can be linked to gMFSK so when you make a log entry in gMFSK it can be sent directly to xlog at the click of a button.

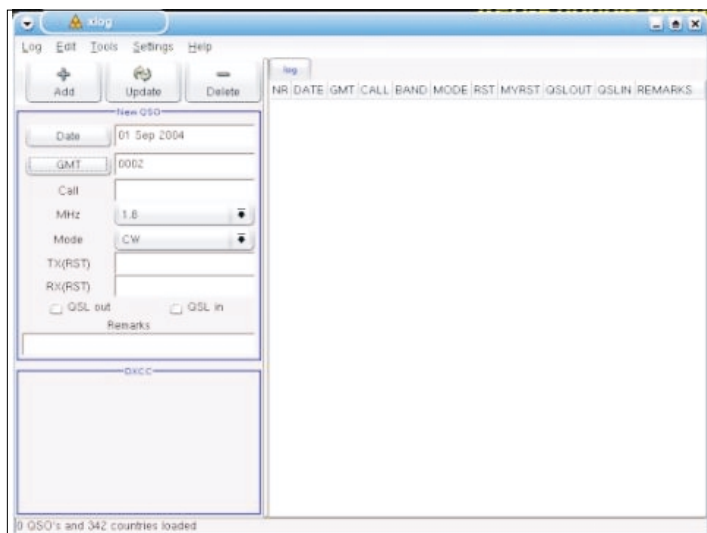


Figure 4. xlog.

There are lots of other software available and I encourage you to explore. Perhaps a fun and useful one is xccircuit that helps you draw electrical circuits, figure 5.

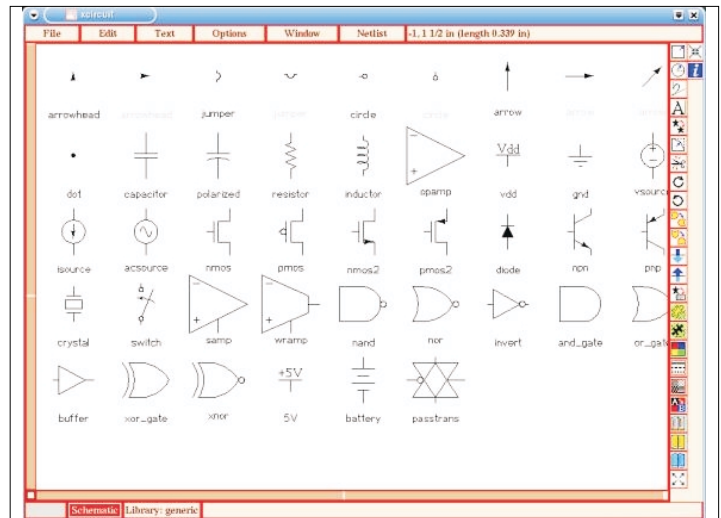


Figure 5. A sample xccircuit screen.

Now, here is the problem with Knoppix and AFU-Knoppix, you must save to a floppy. You will likely only have read access to your hard drive. See the following link for Knoppix details of saving the configuration.

http://www.eleli.de/knoppix/docs/tutorial/english/knoppix_configuration.html#7

An alternative solution is to use one of the USB memory sticks (you will have to format it for Linux, Knoppix or AFU-Knoppix should help you there). I have tried a USB stick and it works, you can even store your user configuration too of the memory stick too.

Well I need to wrap this up. So let me leave you with the final link that gives some clear advice how to run AFU-Knoppix.

<http://montevideocomputers.com/ham/linux4hams.html>

See half way down the page for a link to AFU-Knoppix information.

As a final word, I would say AFU-Knoppix is a great way to try Linux and some of the available ham software. It is also great if you are traveling to somewhere there is a computer and you don't want to take a laptop with you. Take the CD and a floppy or USB memory stick and you are very portable. Should you want to permanently want Linux in the shack then my preference would be to install a distribution on your hard disk.