



Cam Milne, VA3FO new OVMRC Technical Chairman

Photo courtesy of Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH

VA3FO

While his call may not be familiar to most of you, his face will be, even though Cameron Milne has joined us only recently. You will surely come to know him better and the kinds of things he likes to do. We were very pleased to see him take his chair among us on the Executive Committee, particularly since he brings a rather special kind of expertise: he knows his way around repeaters. When matters relating to VE3TWO come up at meetings - that seems to happen quite a lot - all faces turn to Cam as our new chairperson of our Technical Committee.

Many hams are not just outgoing but quite voluble, and, given the nature of our hobby, why not. But not so, Cameron, at least on first encounter. For those who have been pressing keys and pushing buttons for a while, Cam's quiet demeanor tells its own story, conveying the impression of one who likes to tinker more than talk. Forty-seven, busy father of eight-year-old Ryan, full-time employee at Nortel, he has much to keep him occupied. An electronics specialist, trained at Algonquin, Cam spends his work day as technical support for some of Nortel's well-known telephone products. When I asked him about interests outside family and ham radio, he said "high-end audio". Having dabbled in this myself in years

past, knowing this to be an expensive pass time, I was curious about the kinds of equipment he preferred. His answers did not surprise me. Disinclined to spend money he does not have for costly commercial equipment, he likes to build his own, use it for a time, then tear it all apart and begin again. I occasionally encounter dinosaurs in amateur radio who still do this but, oh so rarely. Cam explained that his interest in construction and testing of equipment goes back to his teens, tutored by his father, Alexander, VE3KIY, a long-time member of the Pioneer Amateur Radio Club. Cam followed his father to meetings but a bit in the background since he did not work for Bell, apparently a requirement at the time.

Since he has lived in this area for years and certainly not new to the hobby, I wondered why we had heard so little of him on the air. Like more and more people these days, because of severe antenna restrictions where he lives, Cam operates strictly from his car. The hazards in using scopes, meters and soldering irons while on the road doubtless explain why VA3FO doesn't ring many bells. Cam would like to become more involved with digital communication, encouraged by growing interest in this area.

We ended our chat with some discussion about OVMRC. Having been chiefly responsible for significant improvements in the performance of the VE3TEL repeater, he looks forward, with some assistance, to good things for VE3TWO. Cam expressed appreciation for the learning orientation of the club, saying that it provides incentive and a comfortable environment for new people.

Welcome, Cameron. We're glad to have you with us. ❖



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Sponsors

The OVMRC acknowledges the following organizations for their support of our activities:

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The *Rambler* is produced using Corel's Ventura™ 8 software.

The club's web site is hosted by Magma Communications Ltd.
www.ovmrc.on.ca

OVMRC Repeaters

147.300 MHz(+)
444.200 Mhz(+)

Amateur Radio Exhibit VE3JW

Web site:

<http://ve3jw.tripod.com>

Canada Science & Technology Museum

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jerry.neufeld@rogers.com.

RAMBLINGS

For not an insignificant number of us, amateur radio is very different from what we once knew. No, no — I'm not about to do onto you something that, too often, happens to me, forced to listen to someone carry on about how much better life was way back when. Complain, I promise, I will not do. I would share some thoughts with you, though, about some of the reasons that very probably account for some important changes in our hobby, not because I think you unaware of them, but because of implications some of these changes may have for clubs like ours.

The most obvious, perhaps most relevant difference in amateur radio between 1957 and 2007 is the average age of hams. That average, one hears, is between 53 and 55, truly remarkable when compared with the situation a half century ago when the figure would have surely been much, much lower. Of the varied factors that underlie the disparity in age, the intellectual and technological challenges that personal computers offer to young people must rank as number one. Nearly every high school I knew of when in my teens had active amateur radio clubs. Do any still exist? Related to the age issue is that many operators in their fifties and sixties have been licensed for a relatively short time, a fact that highlights another important change, reasons for having taken up the hobby.

Whatever the explanations for major changes, we continue to enjoy the hobby, perhaps as much as in the past, perhaps more. At issue here is the potential impact that modern amateur radio has upon the aspirations and diversity in radio clubs like ours. Is it uncharitable to suggest that we of "middle age" have less energy than we once did for activities that fall outside the routines we know and love? Are we sometimes less worried than we should be about the need for new blood and new ideas? Do we do enough to attract and maintain the interest of young amateurs in our clubs? While changes in the hobby are certainly not unhealthy, we do find fewer and fewer young faces among us at our gatherings. Although more likely drawn to things digital, they are out there. Unless our focus in our club is to be primarily social, I urge our members to be intergenerational and innovative in outlook. I preach assuredly to converts when claiming that is no accident that many clubs like ours complain of falling off attendance. ❖

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For those of us with three-minute timeout settings available on our transceivers, we no longer need fear being unceremoniously turfed off our repeater VE3TWO. The VHF timeout message will now sound at 190 rather than 180 seconds.

Contrary to rumor, the December 20 regular meeting of OVMRC WILL take place. Read next month's issue of The Rambler to find out why you should be there.

Lots of you have not yet renewed your membership for this year. There'll be someone waiting to make this easy at our upcoming anniversary dinner and at our November 22 meeting.

You'll understand better why some of us old-timers have bad backs when you heft some of the gear to be displayed on nostalgia night at this month's meeting. If you've got something from the sixties or before that you think we'd like to see, do bring it along, on a dolly if you must.

As the first part of our November meeting's program, Maurice-André VE3VIG will share some of his summer's experiences while opening up locks in commemoration of the 175th anniversary of the Rideau Canal. Hopefully, he'll tell us about some of the interesting antenna experiments he ran.

Finally, a reminder about The Rambler. Please e-mail any announcements or articles that you wish to appear in the newsletter to me at:

Jerry.neufeld@rogers.com.

If received during the first few days of the month, chances are good that your item will show up in The Rambler for that month. ❖

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Could he have anticipated what was to happen? Could he have guessed, before a few of you were born, that Americans, then we Canadians soon after, would all but sound the death knell for morse code in amateur radio? Respected as he is for his unceasing work and support for our club, few of us who know Ed Morgan will consider him a psychic. Practical, outspoken and, happily for us, a staunch defender of the code key, yes. On February 4, 1973, at 11:00 on 3725, had any of you been tuned in, you would have heard the launching of the Pot Lid Slow Speed CW Net. Some of the

people who checked in will be familiar to you, VE3CGD, Art, VE3FFK, Mike, VE3GLU, Bud and, of course, Ed, VE3GX and XYL Doreen, VE3CGO.

Nearly 35 years later, the Pot Lid Net is more alive than ever. How many of these regular checkins do you recognize: VE3GX, VE3CGO, VE3GM, VE3XL, VE3ZBB, VA3ZBB,

VA3TJP, VE3BNO, VE3VK, VE3XK, VE3CBE, VE3NJH,

VE3LC, VE3VIG, VE3QSO. Those of you who have controlled nets will nod in appreciation to hear that rarely less than 75 percent of us answer to role call every Sunday on 3620 KHZ. First, the call to regular participants, then, comes "QNI", the call to anyone who wishes to join us. At 8 to 12 words per minute, each has her/his chance to comment, all normally over before noon. Different "fists", different speeds, different CW sending styles: a first class way to improve your code. Lurk and listen or, better still, dust off your key and have a go. ❖

JUNKBOX CORNER

In response to several inquiries about placing for sale and wanted items in The Rambler, I decided to include a small section in the next few issues of the newsletter in which members of the club can list equipment they wish to sell, buy, trade or simply give away. So that this service does not become a chore for me or anyone else who assumes the task, an ad or request will be listed only once unless resubmitted. Also, sufficient contact information must be included such as e-mail address or phone number since I do not wish to be involved at all with transactions. Info should be sent to me at ve3qso@rac.ca; no phone calls pertaining to this matter, please. I will initiate this provisional feature of The Rambler with some equipment of my own.

Yaesu FT-817 all-mode, all-band QRP transceiver with CW filter, six months old, in excellent condition, \$500.00. Icom 25A 13.8vdc switching power supply, new, \$60.00. G5RV junior, complete, good condition, \$40.00. Solid-state RF amplifier, 14 - 30Mhz, 5 watts in, 200 out. In very good condition. \$120.00.

For any of the above, contact Jerry at 613-828-0959 or at ve3qso@rac.ca. ❖

“Happy Halloween Hams Hunting the Halloween Hares”

Story and photos by:
Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH

This years “Happy Halloween Bunny Hunt” was held on Sunday, October 28, 2007, 2-4pm. If you missed out on it, you missed out on a lot of fun! The “dressed up participants” can be seen in the photos in this issue. The winner of this hunt was a very “Happy Clown” who finished with the fewest kilometers driven, only 7.8ks. He spent about 90 mins tracking us down

which wasn’t the shortest time but he had the fewest K’s driven so was declared, “1st place winner.”

The honour of arriving in the shortest time goes to Steve VE3SBC and his son Michael. They used up only 45 min. and drove a total of 9k. Of course, third place went to Mark VA3UMP and Mathew VA3MHB dressed as “Elvis the Pelvis” with 25.1k and an arrival time of 81 mins. Last but not least, was the “Ghost” participant that none of us saw at all! Of course you have to be specially equipped to see a “Ghost” and you have to have special equipment to capture a photo, so we don’t have one! However, the “Ghost” with the “most” showed up for coffee and

some “bits” at our traditional coffee stop following the hunt where we swapped lies and eventually told the truth about why we couldn’t find the elusive “Happy Halloween Hares.”

Of course, many thanks go to the “Happy Hares” who were hiding out at the strangest Halloween Haunt in town! There they were, casually sitting in the parking lot at Remic Rapids and the lovely Ottawa River, only 5k away from the start line at 580 Booth Street. Patrick VA3CMD, Jerry VE3QSO, our esteemed President, and last but not least, yours truly, Larry VE3WEH. ❖



Photo courtesy Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH



"Halloween Hares"



"1st Place Winner"
Roy VA3CKD

VE3BNE
dressed in "Ham" costume



2007 OVMRC amateur radio operator course students.

Photo courtesy of Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH

OVMRC 50th ANNIVERSARY TRANSMITTER AND BUNNY HUNT

Saturday 17 November 2007

from 2PM to 4PM

**#1 - 80 metres - 10 watts Transmitter
Locate for 10 points.**

**#2 - 2 metres - 1 watt Bunny in the Bush
Locate for 10 points.**

Note: find the 80m TX, and the 2m Bunny is in the same Grid Square.

Frequencies: 3.760 and 146.580 MHz

Additional points:

**First arrival at the TX = 10, then 8, 6, 5 1.
First arrival at the Bunny = 10, 8, 6, 5 1.**

Start anywhere Coordination on VE3TWO 147.300 (+)

Boundaries as follows: within Grid Squares FN25dk, FN25ek, FN25dj, FN25ej

Contact Coordinators: VA3CKD, VE3VIG