Ottawa Amateur Radio Club

Groundwave

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Check out our Web Page: www.oarc.net

Mar 2002

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They say the winter is antenna season. I think this is said in jest as more Amateurs can't even get to their towers for most of the winter let alone put up an antenna. Not so the OARC Amateurs. The IRLP column tells of the raising of the IRLP antenna which took place on one of the many "good" days this winter.

One of the activities of Amateurs at any time of the year is in support of public safety and service. Local emergency awareness and action groups are gathering points for the communicators in our ranks. Just about every communication event that we participate it prepares us for the call to aid when disaster strikes. Ski Marathon, car rally and "bunny hunts' hone our skills and when the call comes we are usually the most prepared of all our radio cousins. George Sansom VE3GWS will fill us in on the OPP's use of radio at this month's meeting.

MOBILE OPERATORS TAKE NOTE: Don't be caught sitting on your microphone. On Sunday February 3rd VE2CRA and the IRLP Node were locked on by a mobile station coming from the west end of Ottawa to attend a local hockey game at Lansdown Park. The station was easy to track but too difficult to find. Hang your mike. Don't hang the repeater.

VE3EV

MARCH MEETING

7:30 Mar 13th, Ottawa City Hall, Richmond Room

In This Issue....

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Groundwave
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VE3TEN

Tuning in the beacon so that it makes sense requires you tune to **28.175** on **cw** and read the tone that is there . The spaces between the elements are the higher tone. If that doesn't work, tune to **28.175.28** on **lower sideband** for better results.

Articles may be submitted for use in this publication provided that they portray events or activities that promote Amateur Radio. Letters and comments are also welcome. Submissions may be made by mail addressed to the Editor care of the OARC, or by e-mail to "editor@oarc.net". Deadline for submissions occurs on the last Monday of the month preceding

Please support your local radio organisations. They support you!

Club Information

The Ottawa Amateur Radio Club Inc. is an association of Radio Amateurs devoted to the promotion of interest in Amateur Radio communications in the National Capitol Area and to the advancement and achievement of club members.

Regular Meetings of the OARC Inc. are held on the first Wednesday of each month (except July and August) in the Richmond Room (2nd floor of the Old Teacher's College) of Ottawa City Hall (formerly Regional Municipality of Ottawa Carleton Headquarters) on Lisgar Street. Meetings commence at approximately 19:30 hours. Further details about each meeting is elsewhere in this publication.

Executive Meetings of the OARC Inc. are normally held on the second Wednesday of each month at 19:30 hours. Contact the President to confirm the date, time and place of the next meeting.

The CAPITOL CITY FM Net meets every Monday at 20:00 hours on the club repeater **VE2CRA** to pass traffic and to make announcements of interest to Amateurs in the National Capitol Region.

The SWAP Net is a service provided and conducted by Dan Reardon, VE3GUU. This feature appears on the Capitol City FM Net. To list items and make inquiries, call Dan Reardon at 731-3339 or e-mail him at ve3guu@igs.net. Also available on the web: http://www.igs.net/~swap

The POT-HOLE Net is a SSB/HF net sponsored by the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club and is conducted every Sunday at 10:00 hours on **3.760 MHz**. All amateurs are welcome to check in.

The POT-LID CW Net is an informal slow-speed **CW** net sponsored and conducted by Ed Morgan, VE3GX, and meets every Sunday, except during July and August, at 11:00 hours on **3.620** MHz, to promote interest in CW and CW procedures.

The QCWA CHAPTER 70 Net meets every Thursday evening at 20:00 hours on repeater VE3TEL, **147.03** You do not have to be a QCWA member to participate.

The 2M SSB Net is sponsored by the West Carleton ARC. Look for it every Tuesday night (except the first Tuesday of the month) around 21:00 on **144.250**. It is very informal and vertical polarisation is encouraged.

The Ottawa Amateur Radio Club bulletin "Groundwave" is published and distributed to club members by mail. Publication dates may vary but it is hoped that the bulletin arrives at its destination before the events listed in it have expired. The bulletin is not published for July and August when meetings do not occur. Every effort is made to provide accurate information in the bulletin, however we are all human and mistakes can be made. The OARC accepts no responsibility for any damages that may result from this. The opinions expressed in n this bulletin are only those of the author.

Voice	(VHF)	146.94/146.34 100Hz output tone
	(UHF)	443.300/448.300
IRLP	Node 204	146.94/146.34 (VE2CRA/VE3RC) (Code 411 for info) (Code 2040 for activity)
Packet		147.07(sx) For QSO and Packet BBS
Packet 56 BPS		220.55/443.44
East Of Ottawa		145.69(sx)
Ottawa Centre		145.07(sx)
Hull		145.05(sx)
West of Ottawa		145.03(sx)
South of Ottawa		144.91(sx)
Nepean		145.59(sx)
West Carleton		144.97(sx)

For further information please contact the Repeater Chair.

Ottawa Amateur Radio Club
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Minutes of the OARC General Meeting February 13, 2002

The meeting was called to order at 19:35. President George VE3BNO welcomed everyone. There were two guests: Maciej Macieszczak and Branka Dzerdz, both of whom are investigating getting their amateur radio licence. Ernie VE3OEB roamed the room selling tickets for the 50/50 draw. Everyone received their Groundwave by mail this month but there was a delay with the e-mail version due to a technical problem encountered by editor Cary VE3EV. Rick VE3IHI requested he be added to the e-mail list so he had a copy to add to the club website. Tom VA3WTJ will ensure he is on the list. George asked that someone move to accept last month's minutes. Fred VE3IO made the motion. It was seconded by John VA3JBS. The motion passed.

Fred VE3IO complimented editor Cary VE3EV for the quality of The Groundwave. George reminded members to participate in the Capital City Net on Mondays at 20:00 on VE2CRA. He asked that members make use of the Swap Net hosted by Dan as part of the net. George announced the speaker for this evening would be Rick Bandla VE3CVG, who would be talking about his experiences in the higher bands.

Mention was made of the participation of some club members of the Ottawa Amateur Radio Club who assisted with communications at the Ski Marathon this year. Harrie VE3HYS made a quick report that everything seemed to operate well with no major snags. Rick VE3IHI commented that he thought the event went smoothly other than a few stuck vehicles and requests for first aid. The club repeater had been moved to Vankleek Hill and gave 95 % coverage of the Ski Marathon area. . The Ski Marathon was deemed a success.

Mike VE3FFK was asked to report on the details of operations at the Motocross Rally last month. Al VE3ZTU took over to ease Mike's voice and said that all went smoothly. Four club members, Mike VE3FFK, Clayton VE3CBJ, Al VE3ZTU and George VE3BNO assisted and by all accounts it was a success. The group organising the rally were pleased to have them aboard. Apparently VE2CRA was stuck on transmit that day which assisted in finding good reception and transmission areas.

George announced that Roger Swickis was in town for a few days and informed us that the field day group led by ex-member Brian Summers (British Columbia) had already enlisted him in their 2002 Field Day challenge to the OARC field day group. The call is out for some keen CW operators.

Secretary/Treasurer Liz VA3ELB gave a financial report. Finances are fairly static with income from memberships and 50/50 draw and expenses for the Groundwave, IRLP and annual fee for the postal box. Membership Chair Tom VA3WTJ reported we have 92 members of which 80 are single, six family memberships and 4 new amateurs.

We were reminded that Home Brew Night will be coming up in April so anyone with any projects in mind should gear up.

George made an announcement regarding the Electrathon to be held in June. Schools participating will need sponsorship this year. Information can be found at http://www.econogics.com/ev/otthon02.htm.
Note was made of upcoming speakers.

March- George Sansom VE3GWS- OPP use of radio
April- Home Brew Night
May- (To Be Determined)

The speaker for this evening was introduced and Rick VE3CVG proceeded with his presentation outlining his experiences on the higher bands. He provided a brief biography that included his employment history and some of the projects he had worked on. His participation in amateur radio returned when he retired and "had some free time"! Rick is very active in constructing such things as antennas and transverters. He apparently lives in a very noisy location and much of his challenge is maximising his operations in the higher bands. He outlined the idiosyncrasies of these bands from 10 GHZ to 6 metres. He finished by indicating that his future plans include such things as building more antennas, adding to his satellite capability, completing his work in progress and getting some switching equipment for his miles of feed line! A short question period followed. I am sure all present found his presentation informative and George thanked him for coming to this meeting.

Information concerning the topics of this presentation and other of Rick's activities can be found at
http://www.voicelogix.ca/ve3cvg.htm.

After a short coffee break, the next issue discussed was a problem with the VE3TEN beacon. It appears to be transmitting in the 20 metre band as well. A coupler is required and George asked for a volunteer to construct it, indicating the club would cover the cost of any parts needed. Anyone interested please contact him at ve3bno@rac.ca.

June is election month and a chairman for the nominating committee is required. George encouraged members to consider this and other positions to help in running the Ottawa Amateur Radio Club. Executive meetings are once a month as well and often prove interesting! Members were reminded to pick up a current phone list from the back of the room. (The current list is pink.)

The next meeting of **QCWA CHAPTER 70** will be Tuesday, February 19, 2002 at Green Valley Restaurant, 1107 Prince of Wales Drive, Ottawa.

The next meeting of the Ottawa Amateur Radio Club will be on March 13, 2002 in the Richmond Room, Ottawa City Hall at 19:30.

A question was asked regarding the repeater/pager problem at the repeater site at Camp Fortune. George and Sean VE3HXP investigated and were unable to eliminate the problem as it is a result of mixing with another signal at the site. They are attempting to find a solution.
The IRLP signal has not been very satisfactory lately due to a path problem from Cary's location and the repeater. George asked for a work party for Saturday, Feb 16 at 11 AM to assist in adding an antenna mast to Cary's chimney. This should help rectify the problem.

The next Bunny Hunt was announced by Clayton VE3CBJ (this month's winner). Start time on Saturday, March 2 is to be announced at a later date. The 50/50 draw of $20.50 was won by Fred VE3IO. Second draw for a map was won by Peter VE3LBW.
Attendance for this meeting was 26 and the meeting closed at 21:20.

Minutes compiled by Liz VA3ELB Secretary/Treasurer.

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From: RAC Headquarters

Date: February 20, 2002

Subject: VE9HC new AD

John Bartlett, VE1OZ, Director Atlantic Canada is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Hugh Clark, VE9HC, as Assistant Director Atlantic Canada.

Hugh was born in Hartland, New Brunswick and has enjoyed a long association with radio, both professionally and as an Amateur. In addition to a Commercial Operator's Certificate, Hugh obtained his Amateur Certificate in 1957, his Advanced Certificate in 1958 and his Digital Certificate in 1981, and he has been active from several locations across Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick.

Over the years, Hugh has acted as ARRL/CRRL Emergency Co-ordinator for various regions of Quebec and Ontario, and until recently was active with the New Brunswick Emergency Measures Organisation. He has been a net control station for most of the Maritime, Quebec and Ontario networks at one time or another and operates on all HF bands, and on 6 and 2 meters, SSB, CW and FM.

One of Hugh's Industry Canada assignments included Policy Officer where he assisted in the preparation of the new amateur certification and examination structure that was introduced in 1990. Then in 1994, after 35 years of service with the Government of Canada, Hugh returned to his beloved Hartland where he now resides with his wife Jean.

Hugh is a member of his local Carleton County Amateur Radio Club, Radio Amateurs of Canada and the ARRL.

From: RAC Headquarters

Date: March 3, 2002

Subject: VE7BFK IS NEW ARDF COORDINATOR

Joe MacPherson, VE1CH, First Vice President, Radio Amateurs of Canada is pleased to announce that the RAC Board of Directors has approved the appointment of Mr. Gordon D. (Joe) Young, VE7BFK as the RAC National ARDF Coordinator replacing Perry Creighton, VA7PC who has held that appointment for several years.

Joe is a native of BC. Born in Vancouver, he now lives in Victoria.

Joe obtained his Amateur certificate in 1960 with the call sign VE7BFK which he has held ever since. He became an Advanced Amateur in 1961 and obtained his 2nd Class certificate in 1963. An Electrical Engineer by profession, Joe has worked at a number of jobs developing instrumentation gizmos for the past 30 years. He enjoys operating CW and building radio projects. He is a member of RAC, ARRL, the Westcoast Amateur Radio Association and Friendship Amateur Radio Society Canada.

He first became interested in ARDF when the Friendship Amateur Radio Society hosted the 3rd Friendship Radio Games in Victoria in 1993. He has attended ARDF events in Russia, Japan, USA and was responsible for the RDF event when FARS again hosted the 7th FRG in Victoria in August 2001. According to Joe, there is a momentum building in the USA with national events in 1999, 2001 and 2002 and he hopes for similar growth in Canada.

Contact Information: VE7BFK@rac.ca

Please remember the following rules when operating the IRLP:

1. Make sure you have a good signal to CRA.

2. Identify yourself before opening an IRLP link.

3. Make sure you dial the codes in a continuous string.

4. Once connected, listen for any activity on the remote site.

5. Pause after pushing the PTT and before speaking.

6. Remember: if you are on a reflector then the whole world may be listening. Act accordingly.

RAC2002 National Convention on-line registration available

The RAC2002 National Convention Committee is proud to announce that online registration is now available on RAC 2002 National Convention website.

There are two easy ways to register:

1) Print the registration form available online, and mail it along with your cheque to the address provided.

2) Register online with your visa or mastercard number.

Please visit **www.rac2002.org** to register today!

Wilfried Mulder
VE7OHM
RAC 2002 National Convention Chairman

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MK's Words

Reflections

I recently had the opportunity to assist at a car rally up around Maniwaki. We used FRS radios and VHF mobiles running about 25 watts and capable of 3 simplex and 2 repeater "channels". Because the gear was so similar to the typical amateur set up, I was expecting communications to be about the same as if it were doneentirely by hams.

I was wrong.

Although there were a few hams on the air, most of those using the radios had no particular training in the art of communications, and it showed. The concept of a net control seemed foreign to them. As a result there was a lot of doubling at the very time that traffic peaked. Phonetics were interesting, but not very effective. Fortunately we didn't have to pass much traffic that required spelling names. Frequency changes were made, but without much advance planning. One was never certain that everyone was aware of the change, and there was usually someone who didn't get the message and wondered where everyone went.

All of this brought home to me what a difference there is between "people with radios" and "effective communicators". Peter, VE3BQP of the Emergency Measures Radio Group has tried to point out the difference several times, but such a demonstration really rubs ones nose in it.

In a car rally where the terrain is remote and rugged and the risks to participants are high, effective and timely communication is important. In an emergency these things become vital. How do we get across to people who need to know about these things that there is a difference in the results you get using real communicators versus using people with radios? At least as important is: How do we get the difference across to the amateur community so hams don't think they can communicate efficiently just because they have a ticket?

Putting another bean into the pot on the local yak net may be fun, but it does not in any way prepare one to be of assistance in a crisis. The beans in the pot who are in the habit of timing out the local repeater or worse, unkeying (without listening) for a half second to "reset the repeater" are a menace when problems arise. (the rest of the time they are just irritating) I'm sure you have heard hams who are in such a hurry to put in their two cents that they can't wait for the other fellow to unkey, much less wait for a courtesy beep. Such operators are unlikely to change their operating habits overnight in an emergency. If they are sensible, they will stay off the air at those times. If they are inclined to help out, I sure hope they will get out and practice, get training and get better at they part of the amateur radio SERVICE.

Those of you who do public service events know it is fun, exciting and rewarding. Give yourselves a pat on the back for doing what you do so well. So how do we get the rest of the hams to give it a try? At the least, how do we get them up to the point where they aren't part of the problem?

I have never claimed to be perfect, and still don't. I'm sure I have operating habits that bug the heck out of some people, but am unable to recognise them in myself. I promise not to bite if you let me know what they are.

73
mk VE3FFK

Internet Radio Linking Project

It is a good thing that this winter's weather has been moderate enough to permit some outside activities. Antennas and repeaters have needed some major loving care in order that they be available for use. This is especially true of the IRLP beam antenna. This device was an older model Cushcraft 4 element 2 metre beam which was held up by a steel fencepost strapped to a two-by-four nailed to the back shed. Fed by older RG8/U and pointed at the house next door, the efficiency of this system has been in doubt since installation. Even a flight over the house to visually spot the antenna direction resulted in few positive points. The signal to the repeater was noisy and the audio was worst. One gust of wind at high speed rotated the beam to the south which gave anyone with a 34/94 repeater in upper New York State a new IRLP link. Even clamping post to the shed didn't improve matters so it was decided, at the February meeting, that an antenna party would raise the beast to a proper level, and point it at the repeater wherever it was found.

I live in an area that has a strict, though not strictly enforced, outside structure bylaw. No antennas. No towers. No clotheslines. This bylaw is mostly ignored by Bell Expressview and StarChoice subscribers, and there is at least one resident with a 9 foot dish on his roof to capture other satellite signals. I didn't think anyone would mind a 4 element beam stuck to the side of a chimney and so far I have been right. The other half of the equation at my house is probably not as thrilled at the idea of having a porcupine on the roof. So much so that she went away for the weekend partly so that she wouldn't be witness to the raising of the antenna.

The first Saturday after the February meeting, George (VE3BNO) Mike (VE3FFK) and Alan (VE3ZTU) showed up at my door ready to work. Equipped with 2 FRS handhelds, an antenna analyser, a lineman's belt and a feeling of purpose, we all set forth to remedy the ailment. Our original intention was to rent a ladder long enough to reach the top of the chimney but decided that my ladder would do the job. It did but just barely. George climbed the ladder and fixed himself near the top using the belt. A rope was used to sent the appropriate tools and material up to him. We decided that the steel fence post that held the antenna onto the shed would be used on the chimney. A Radio Shack chimney mount was installed properly after 3 tries (upside down, wrong position) and the post was attached.

The beam turned out to be a dud. On closer inspection, once it was on the ground, the antenna resonated a good distance out of the ham bands. The matching stub had separated from the coax right where it entered the stub. No wonder the signal was poor. As luck, or planning, would have it, Mike had brought along a five element beam. It was quickly commandeered, tuned and mounted on the mast. Once properly installed, we turned on the link transmitter and, using the FRS system, we rotated the beam by hand while listening to the signal from the repeater. The quietest position turned out to be the one I had originally calculated using a compass and a map. This was 30 degrees north of

where the beam had been pointing. If you draw a line from the antenna to a point along the line in the direction that the antenna was pointing, it would go due west, putting it just south of centretown Ottawa. The repeater is at 300 degrees not 270! Again, no wonder the signal was bad.

Once completed, George fixed the direction of the antenna, everyone packed up and left after a job well done.

That is where the fun began.

Back down in the shack I noticed that the IC-25 wasn't putting out anywhere near full power. This reminded me of the situation I was in when I first set up the system. A bit of fiddling around with cables and the power returned.

To give myself a break I had supper and then went out to a movie. When I came out, I tried calling the IRLP and was greeted by static. Not good. When I got back down to the shack I discovered that if the rig was in high power mode, 25 watts, the rig would only put out less than 5 watts and even that wasn't guaranteed. Putting the beast down to low power resulted in a steady 5 watts so I left it there. The next day, George informed me that the rig would disappear into the static after a few minutes of transmitting. Still not good. So George loaned me a 10-70 watt amplifier. Installing that gave me a much better signal but the audio was really bad. In the background of the signal George detected a small audio signal, better than noise but worst than a tone. This turned out to be the power supply fan mounted over the pair of 2n3055 regulators. Can't do much about it for the moment.

Next came the power for the amplifier. I needed amps. I had none, so I put the amplifier on a small power supply attached to a storage battery. That worked until I was able to get a 14 amp supply.

While driving home one day shortly after we started connecting to a reflector on a regular basis, I discovered that the link transmitter would fail suddenly only to reappear a few minutes later as if it were being turned off at the source. When I got home, I went looking for this problem. It became obvious what was happening once I put my hand near the transmitter's heat sink. Ouch! A quickly jury-rigged fan taken off another computer and Velcro'd to the back of the IC-25 solved that one. Guess these rigs aren't designed for 100% duty cycle even at low power.

Now for the audio. After quite a few trips to the repeater site, along with rewiring everything in site, George found the right combination and improved the audio from the repeater. One has to remember that the repeater has been up there in one form or another since 1963, and is difficult to get to for 6 months of the year so no matter how hard you work at it, you will always find something going wrong at the worst possible time. Murphy.

Between the new antenna installation, the power supply and power amplifier upgrade plus the work done at the repeater site, the IRLP system is working better than ever. One of the next projects will be to use the 70cm link for the receive path to the link. We have the equipment; now we need the time.

Some of you may have already observed that the node is linked to Reflector 1 in Toronto every weekday morning from 0700 to 0900. This is a bit of an experiment to see if having a local Ontario array of nodes is worthwhile. Already I have benefited from this. VE3GFN, Mile Goldstein in Toronto, is friend that I have not been in contact with for at least 20 years. Now with IRLP linked to Ref 1, I have been able to renew this friendship. Sure makes the whole thing worthwhile.

Check page 8 for more details.

VE3EV

From DC to Green Light

2 Metre Hi-jinx and the Mountain

Cary Honeywell VE3EV

I became involved in the operation of VE2CRA about the time I graduated from being the Groundwave Editor the Vice-President of the OARC and I think this must have been in the fall of 1972. Lyle Ward, VE3CEZ and Sonny Gray, VE3BTS (along with a few others including Al Kirk whose call I have forgotten) were the operational crew for the repeater. I latched on only because the technology interested me and because Tony Vandenbalt, VE3FXG (now VK3BBD) challenged me to become more involved. Larry O'Brien was the club president at the time. Yes he is the same Larry O'Brien of Calian Tech fame, only he was working for Microsystems International Limited at the time. Larry was a pretty good president but he tended to delegate all the work to others including me. Almost every contract that was signed for the OARC at the time had my signature on it. He seemed to have a penchant for being "out of town" when legal papers were being signed. Probably just circumstance.

My first venture up the hill to the repeater site was quite tame. It occurred in the early fall and coincided with the installation of a few bits and pieces for the repeater power supply. A relay had been sticking so some work on it had to be done as well. I accompanied Sonny and Al up to Camp Fortune and was surprised to find the whole thing installed in a small generator shed for CFMO which was at the back of the compound. On entering the shed your first sensation was the smell of diesel fuel. Sitting right next to the big Buda generator was the 19 inch rack that housed the repeater. The repeater consisted of a Marconi DT-45 transmitter strip, a Rogers Majestic taxi band FM receiver, Motrac or Motran version I think, a rack mounted controller and a diode ring repeater CW identifier. All this connected by a myriad of wires hanging from every direction. Somewhere in this mass was a 70cm repeater as well but my lack of experience denied me the opportunity of identifying it.

Of course the diplexor was just a mass of cylinders and coax so I stayed away from that one.

Al and Sonny made the appropriate connections and adjustments to the equipment while I sat next to the generator, quaking on fear lest the thing started up. (I was never in the shed when the big Buda roared to life but we always knew it was on when we listened to the repeater from down in the city. As the shed warmed up, the CW identifier would speed up. Also, if you listened carefully to the audio out of the repeater you could just make out the sound of the generator in the background.)

That was the last time I was able to watch these gentlemen work.

Both were military and both were posted out to other locations.

That funny little relay problem seemed to get worst as the weather approached winter. About once a week it would lock the repeater on and I would have to drive up the hill to fix it. Since it was the main power supply lead voltage to the transmitter, unlocking it had its own hazards. I kept a Pepsi bottle near the rack so I could pop the relay out of its state without being toasted by the high voltage. Convenient.

The drive up the hill could be a little intimidating to the uninitiated. On entering the Camp Fortune area, you drove around the base of 3 ski hills including Marshall which is one of the more popular hills. Once past the first batch of hills you came to a fork in the road. If you go straight, or get lost and go straight, you end up in another area of ski hills. You have to turn left and start up what might seem like an impossible incline towards the top. It gets worst. About a third of the way up you come out into an opening in the trees. Looking to your left is another ski hill. It is not used and isn't particularly steep, but it looks imposing from your point of view because you are at the top of it. No fences. Next, you start up an even steeper part of the road, and you have to hope both your car's engine and the traction of your tires are up to the task. Before you finish with that climb, you cross a culvert which seems to be eating away most of the so-called road. After that, the rest is easy.

In the winter, with snow everywhere, you have to get to the top using a snow machine. My first winter trip had me huddled in the back of a small 2 tracked snow machine with an open cockpit. Bob Zeiman, VE3ATN, took me up to the hill is one of the worst snowstorms that year. For him it was routine. For me.....well.... I can still remember passing a skier who was standing at the bottom of one of the hills. I didn't see his expression as the snow was pasting my face with some degree of ferocity, so I still don't know which of us was the most curious. Him/her standing in the blowing snow looking miserable, or me sitting in the back of a snow machine looking just as miserable. I did appreciate the ride though.

In the days between the first cold snap and the blanket of snow that follows travel up to the top of Fortune can be a mixture of pleasure and panic. I don't think whoever named the hill knew how appropriate it was. Fortune could be for you or against you at the whim of mother nature. On one extreme was the beauty of the fall colours. On the other extreme was the possibility of rolling down the hill in a truck. (One of my co-workers at CBC rolled the company truck off the road one day when coming down the hill. He went to the up side rather than the down side and only bruised his pride in the process.) In my case, it was somewhere in-between.

The day was grey and damp. Temperature was just above the freezing mark and the hill had already been coated with a slight dusting of snow. And that darned relay was stuck again. Up I went in my own car, a Ford Falcon, with all the bravado of someone about to face an easy test of skills. Hitting a relay with a Pepsi bottle isn't rocket science. My first inkling of disaster came when I took the left fork in the road and tried to proceed up the hill. I might have gone 50 feet when I started to spin my wheels. Back down I came in a straight line with no traction at all. At the bottom of the road is a stand of trees, one of which saved me from backing the car into the deep water filled ditch which bordered the road. I wisely chose to park the car and proceed by foot.

Along with me that day was my first commercial 2 metre rig. A Kenwood TR-2200 which was a battery operated lugable 2 watt rig with a hand microphone. I shouldered the rig and started up the hill, slipping and sliding as I went. While doing this I decided to keep the repeater on the receiver so I could have some company, Since the repeater was on already, I didn't have to tolerate the kerchunking either. Keeping me company at the other end was Bob, VE3CDG. It was about 4:30 PM on a November day and I had started out with the idea that all this would be done before it got too dark. I hadn't counted on my having to footrace the hill. That wasn't all I hadn't counted on.

I guess someone decided that this day was a good day to re-build the culvert which had been eating away at the road. I came upon this sorry scene at a point in my travels where it was easier to go on than turn back. Or so I thought. The pit that faced me was about eight feet deep and eight feet across with water at the bottom. Bob, on the other end of the radio, seemed to think that turning back might be the better plan of action, but no; I felt it was necessary to continue. So off I went, or down I went as the case was. It probably took my fifteen minutes of delicate scrambling to traverse this obstacle and once done and with a feeling of accomplishment, off I went.

Shortly before 5 PM I arrived at the site. Of course no one was around (silly me, and why not?) and so I set to fixing the repeater. I did the normal thing of hammering the relay with the Pepsi bottle and then checked to see if anything else was going to fail.

There was light in the sky when I went into the shed, but there sure wasn't any when I came out. In fact it was so dark that I couldn't see my hand in front of my face. Around the corner of the shed, the light on the CBC building gave me some illumination but it was obvious that this light wasn't going to guide me down the hill. And I didn't carry nor could I find a flashlight either!

Bob, on the rig, didn't offer any suggestions either. Well, what could he say? "Take care of yourself." I had already done that. In spades.

Someone had left a threaded steel rod, about 5 feet long, in the shed, and so like some white caner with a radio, I started off down the hill. I can fully appreciate what white caners have to put up with. No one was more blind and helpless than I was that day. Step by step and inch by inch I picked, staggered and crawled my way down the road to the parking lot. It was only when the rod failed to touch anything in front of me that I remembered that the road ended in 2 ditches. One at the bottom and one right in front of me where the culvert used to be. At this point I thought it best to tell Bob to stand by in case I didn't succeed in crossing the crevice. Talking on a radio wasn't going to help me with this one, but might save my bacon in the long run. It probably took me 15 to 20 minutes to get across this pit and I remember getting very wet in the process but I obviously made it in one piece. The rest of the trip down was uneventful although a chance meeting with a Bear wouldn't have capped it all off.

I signed off with Bob as I got to my car. You don't know how precious communicating with another human being at a time of stress can keep you sane. And safe too.

Weeks later the relay was replaced.

Next month: More Repeater Tales ***Cary VE3EV***

Ottawa Amateur Radio Club
Groundwave

Mar 2002

Contest Calendar

March

ARRL Inter. DX Contest Phone	0000Z Mar 2
World Wide Locator Contest	0000Z Mar 9
SARL Field Day Contest	1000Z Mar 9
RSGB Commonwealth Contest CW	1000Z Mar 9
North American Sprint RTTY	0000Z Mar 10
UBA Spring Contest CW	0700Z Mar 10
Wisconsin QSO Party	1800Z Mar 10
Alaska QSO Party	0000Z Mar 16
BARTG Spring RTTY Contest	0200Z Mar 16
Russian DX Contest	1200Z Mar 16
Virginia QSO Party	1800Z Mar 16
Spring QRP Homebrewer Sprint	0000Z Mar 25
CQ WW WPX Contest SSB	0000Z Mar 30

April

MARAC County Hunters Contest SSB	0000Z Apr 6
SP DX Contest	1500Z Apr 6
EA RTTY Contest	1600Z Apr 6
Missouri QSO Party	1800Z Apr 6
	1800Z Apr 7
YLRL DX to NA YL Contest CW	1400Z Apr 10
JIDX HF CW Contest	2300Z Apr 12
QRP ARCI Spring QSO Party	1200Z Apr 13
EU Spring Sprint, SSB	1500Z Apr 13
His Maj. King of Spain Contest	1800Z Apr 13
Yuri Gagarin Int. DX Contest	2100Z Apr 13
UBA Spring Contest SSB	0600Z Apr 14
YLRL DX to NA YL Contest SSB	1400Z Apr 17
Holyland DX Contest	0000Z Apr 20
TARA Spring Wakeup PSK31	0000Z Apr 20
YU DX Contest	1200Z Apr 20
GACW CW DX Contest	1200Z Apr 20
EU Spring Sprint CW	1500Z Apr 20
Michigan QSO Party	1600Z Apr 20
Ontario QSO Party	1800Z Apr 20
Harry Angel Memorial Sprint	1100Z Apr 25
SP DX RTTY Contest	1200Z Apr 27
Helvetia Contest	1300Z Apr 27
Florida QSO Party	1600Z Apr 27

IRLP LINK TO REFLECTOR ONE IN TORONTO

From Randy, VE3RWN in Toronto

We have been having great fun on Reflector 1 now that we have decided to leave VE3YYZ (443.050+) and VE3MOT (147.180+) in Toronto more or less permanently on Reflector 1 in Toronto.

These repeaters are located on First Canadian Place (72 stories) at King and Bay streets in downtown Toronto and are large coverage repeaters.

The 6th Annual Ontario QSO Party sponsored by the Ontario DX Association takes place starting at 18:00 UTC on Saturday, April 20th, 2002 till Sunday, April 21st, 2002 at 18:00 UTC.

The Ontario QSO Party is a fun and friendly amateur radio contest where we try to get Ontario hams to "activate" as many of Ontario's counties, districts and regional municipalities as possible. You can operate from home or like many hams "take to the road" and go mobile putting Ontario counties on the air. Other clubs use the Ontario QSO Party as an "indoor warm-up" for Field Day.

This is a contest...so there are many awards big and small that folks can work on. For example, we award a certificate to the top entrant from each of the 48 "multiplier areas" in the province.

The "OQP" takes place on all of the HF bands (except the WARC bands) both SSB and CW and on the VHF/UHF bands either FM simplex, SSB or CW. There are even categories where hams with their "basic" no-code license can participate and have fun.

Complete rules and information (including logging software) can be obtained from:

http://www.odxa.on.ca/oqphome.html

They are not very busy. The busiest time is during the morning drive-to-work time when we often have a round table going with the regulars who drive into the city for work.

During the morning drive-to-work time we get often get drop-ins on Ref 1. Thunder Bay, Sault Ste Marie, and Cornwall are regulars.

We are intrigued with the idea of having an Ottawa area IRLP node more or less permanently connected to Reflector 1 also. We have found through experience with the traditional link systems that users will only dial up a link when they know someone at the other end, have a sched, or some other purpose.

We would like to know if any of the existing Ottawa IRLP nodes would like to experiment with this idea by leaving their node connected to Reflector 1 more or less permanently. (i.e. when the node isn't being used for other calls.)

This would result in mobiles travelling around in Ottawa and Toronto being able to chat as though they are on the same repeater.

I think we could have some great fun with this. Perhaps build a few new relationships. Failing that we could complain to each other about the traffic on hwy 4xx while driving to work.. hi hi!

Thanks,

Randy, VE3RWN

Node 227 VE3MOT/VE3YYZ

Node 277 VE3RWN

Reflector 1 - Toronto

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL

Ottawa Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
Box 8873
Ottawa, Ontario
K1G 3J2

O Renewal **O** New **O** New Ham (FREE if licensed in current membership year)
O Single ($20 ($15 after 1 Feb)) **O** Family ($25) **O** Junior ($10)

Family Name:_____ First Name/Initials: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ ext _____

E-mail address: _____@_____
Callsign(s): |_____| |_____| |_____| Fax: _____
Qualifications: **O** Basic **O** Advanced **O** Grandfathered
O 5 wpm **O** 12 wpm Year Licenced: _____

Other Family Members

Name: _____ Callsign(s): |_____| |_____| |_____|
Qualifications: **O** Basic **O** Advanced **O** Grandfathered
O 5 wpm **O** 12 wpm Year Licenced: _____

Name: _____ Callsign(s): |_____| |_____| |_____|
Qualifications: **O** Basic **O** Advanced **O** Grandfathered
O 5 wpm **O** 12 wpm Year Licenced: _____

Name: _____ Callsign(s): |_____| |_____| |_____|
Qualifications: **O** Basic **O** Advanced **O** Grandfathered
O 5 wpm **O** 12 wpm Year Licenced: _____

Interests: _____

_____

Comments/Suggestions: _____

_____

Would you prefer to have a mailed hard copy of the groundwave or an emailed PDF file?
Mailed Copy **O** Emailed PDF Copy **O** Email Address _____

BML Communications

(a division of Bytown Marine Limited)

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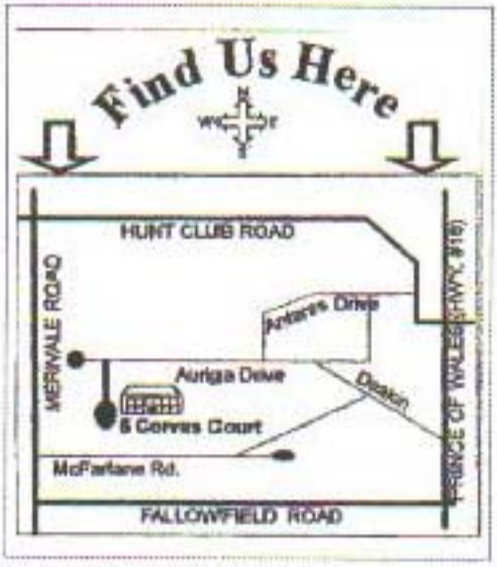
Web: www.bml.ca



FT-817

HF/VHF/UHF 5-WATT BACKPACK TRANSCEIVER

Product Concept: Fully Self-Contained Battery-Powered Low Power Amateur Transceiver for Portable/Camping/Mountain top Use.

TX Frequency Coverage: 160 - 10 Meters, 50 MHz, 144 MHz, 430-450 MHz, plus Alaska Emergency Channel (5167.5 kHz).

RX Frequency Coverage: 100 kHz - 56 MHz; 76 Ð 154 MHz; 420 Ð 470 MHz. (Exact frequency range may be slightly different)

Power Output: 5 Watts SSB/CW/FM with 13.8V External DC; 1.5W AM Carrier. 2.5 Watts SSB/CW/FM with 9.6V Ni-Cd Pack or 8 "AA" batteries (AM: 0.7 W); Up to 5 W SSB/CW/FM power (max.) programmable via Menu on Ni-Cd/AA cells.

Operating Modes: USB, LSB, CW, AM, FM, W-FM, Digital (AFSK), Packet (1200/9600 FM).

Digital Modes: RTTY, PSK31-U, PSK31-L, and User defined USB/LSB (SSTV, Pactor, etc.).

Case Size: 5.31" x 1.5" x 6.5" (WHD)

Weight: 2.6 lb (w/Alkalines & Antenna, w/o Mic.).

"The Ottawa Area's Ham Radio Dealer"