

IARS THE IARS PROPAGATOR

The monthly newsletter of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society Inc.

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday each month
(except January) at 7.30pm in the State Emergency Services
building in Montague St. North Wollongong.

Visitors are most welcome

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**** Editorial ****

Depression

Do you ever get depressed? Sorry, a stupid question. We all get depressed at different times for different reasons. I'm depressed at the moment. I turned Phred (my computer) on the other morning and was greeted with HDD Controller failure. Now, if you're into computers, you'll understand my anguish. If you're not, I won't explain, but it's enough to make a big man cry.

Strange thing though, even though it was only one thing that happened, it spoilt the whole week. Can you imagine that, one crisis spoils your whole week. I mean, that's ridiculous.

Then again, I guess it works the other way too. If you're feeling very elated it tends to cheer up your whole week. Wouldn't it be nice if we could be elated all the time?

Maybe we can if we practice all the time what we practice some of the time **Christmas Spirit.**

A time of good cheer, family and friends.

A time to forget the trials and tribulation of the past 12 months, put on a happy face and wish happiness on all you meet.

A time when happiness abounds and feelings for our fellow man exceed all expectations.

A time when it's very hard to bear a grudge even when it is fully deserved. Why?

Why change your attitude just because it's Christmas?

You haven't changed - your problems haven't changed, but somehow, your outlook on life has changed.

It's because of your mind. Your brain. Your thoughts. There is a famous and very true saying

Anything the mind of man can conceive and believe it can achieve.

Think about it.

***** Moon Bounce *****

Last meeting, Lyle VK2ALU (he who writes the historical report) said he was able to listen to the USA via the moon and wanted to know if any one was interested in being there. Well, I said YES straight away and waited

I was sitting at home a few days later when the phone rang and a voice said Hi Peter, it's Lyle. I'm going to try that moon bounce experiment are you Well, I knew he was going to say 'are you interested in coming over' so I dropped the phone, hopped in the car and rushed over before he had finished speaking. Oops, I was 3 days too early! He was setting it up for the weekend. Anyhow, to cut a short story long, Actually, it's hard to do that since I haven't really started the story yet so I can't cut it short can I. What I have said before is what we writers call a pre-amble. Pre-amble comes from 2 words - pre which means before and amble which means walk so it's a walk you have before you have a walk. Sort of like a Claytons walk! Now why we talk about walking when we should be talking about writing is a bit beyond me. I guess it is what we writers call poetic licence. Why they call it Poetic Licence I don't know since the only poetry I know starts with 'There once was a man from Rangoon'. Since this is a family newsletter, I can't continue with the other verses, but it shows the limit of my poetic ability - sort of matches my writing ability. Oops, looks like the end of the column. Sorry I can't continue with the story

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***** OoPsss *****

Just above this article, you'll see an ad for Newtek. It looks ok to me, but there is a small problem with it. Newtek is spelt with a 'K' and not with a 'c'. I've been promising Jack for the past 6 years (give or take a few months) to fix it, but something always comes up and I don't get around it. Next time you go in and see Jack at Newtek, make sure you tell him you know Newtek is spelt like Newtek and not Newtec since Newtec is not the right way to spell Newtek.

Sorry Jack.

***** Project Moonray *****

During the last few annual meetings at Project OSCAR Headquarters, a decision was made to revive Project MOONRAY. Have you ever heard of it before? Then read on...

Nick Marshall (W6OLO), dreamed up the idea of putting an Amateur Repeater on the surface of the moon in 1965 during the APOLLO manned Lunar exploration program when he met Owen Garriot (W5LFL), astronaut in training. He was scheduled to go to the moon on forthcoming APOLLO 18 or 19 or 20. Nick used Project MOONRAY, short for "Moon Relay", as an identifier for the concept.

The idea was to build a package that could fit under the seat of the Lunar Rover vehicle. Nick had contacted NASA with this concept & they agreed to accept a package that would fit a space vacated by batteries that were to be replaced by fuel cells.

Owen was to be the driver & would have been the astronaut to erect the MOONRAY package on one of the Lunar Rover's excursions. An arrangement was to be made to allow a special connector that would mate with Owen's space suit headphone/microphone connector, so that he could plug into the MOONRAY package & make a few contacts with Amateurs back on Earth. He would then leave the package in repeater mode & continue with his routine assignments.

Numerous articles were published about Project MOONRAY & Amateur Radio enthusiasts world-wide were

intrigued & very excited about the idea of having a repeater that could be accessed by any Amateur anywhere on the Earth's surface as long as they could see the moon.

Unfortunately, Congress cut off funding for NASA for any further Lunar landings beyond APOLLO 17 & the MOONRAY Project had to be shelved. Lunar exploration, Lunar habitation or Colonies & numerous other Lunar projects have recently re-surfaced. No specific dates or schedules have yet been set, however, it is not too early to plan for Amateur participation in one (or more) future Moon visits.

(From K5ARH via CCARG Smoke Signals).

*****Way Back Then*******

Episode 25.....1979.

(i) RTTY arrives - Clunk!

(ii) Storm damage to 2m Repeater.

It was agreed that club members should wear name badges for the benefit of new members and visitors (and others!). Further supplies of badges were ordered at the start of the year and when it was found that some members came to meetings without them, one of the committee members offered to hold them for production at meetings.

This was the year that RTTY machines became easily obtainable. Sure, they were all of the "clunker" variety, but no one seemed to mind (wives excepted!). The local "junk shop" was awash with Creed 7B's and Model 14's were there for those who preferred them - or got landed with

one before finding a 7B with tape reader etc. Digital modes had taken off!! Of course eventually, when "all electronic devices" hit the scene (for those with enough money to invest in one) the old clunkers became a "drug on the market" but in 1979 that was some way off.

In April a Radio Teletype column commenced in the Propagator, produced by Gerry, VK2APG. It included operating notes and information on the various machines in use.

The general election in March saw the election of - Pres. Keith VK2OB, VP John 2BHO, Sec John 2NHA, Treas Geoff 2ZHU, Committee 2CAG, 2DAN, 2ALK, 2APG and 2AXI.

It was reported in March that the club 10 metre Net was continuing to grow, with 10 to 12 stations reporting of recent times.

WICEN was still going strong, with another exercise being carried out on 31/3 and 1/4.

In March it was also reported that the club's 70cm Repeater was continuing to operate on a limited basis during the evening hours.

While on Repeaters - the club's 2 metre Repeater had a rough time of it during 1979, with repeated lightning damage during the summer of 1973/1974. It had to be removed from site for a period in March for repair to corrosion damage. It's most traumatic experience occurred at the end of the year when, in December, a savage storm saw a direct lightning strike in the vicinity as well as extra

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large hailstones which penetrated the top of the equipment cubicle and let water into equipment. Graeme, VK2CAG, reported that "many hours of work were required to repair the damage".

In times like these "the life of a Repeater Officer (and his offsiders, if any) is not a happy one"!!

With the IARS affiliated with the WIA - Geoff, 2ZHU, was appointed as the representative to attend the Conference of Clubs, which was held on 26 May. He provided a report of Conference proceedings in the June Propagator.

"Novice Notes", prepared by Ron, 2NUF, appeared in the May issue of the Propagator. The first column included an article on a mod to the TS520/820 for reducing power output to the maximum permitted for Australian Novices and the June column included an article on "Converting CB Sets to 10 metres.

The "Microwave Notes" by 2ALU also reappeared in May and continued for some months.

Lest it be thought that the Propagators of this period were full of Columns on this and that, unfortunately most did not last long - maybe as was found by 2ALU, because there appeared to be a general lack of interest in their contents. ie Nothing's New!!

In fact, from July onwards technical articles taken from various journals were used to "pad out" the Propagator.

That old favourite, the Foxhunt reappeared in June, with a two band affair, on 10 metres and 2 metres, but like many such events, no mention was made of results.

One or two talks were given at club meetings during the year, including - Microcomputers - by Rod Witworth in June.

MICROCOMPUTERS!!! What was the Amateur game coming to !!!!!

Lyle VK2ALU.

New Editor.

Well, it looks like my reign has come to an end. Michael VK2GNV has volunteered to produce the next issue on a trial basis. Please, support him. If you don't like the content of the propagator, put in something that interests you. There is no chance that every article will please every reader. However, the more articles there are, the greater the chance that more members will see something interesting. If you don't like my inane waffle, don't whinge, contribute. Michael has undertaken quite a task, and I sincerely wish him all the best, and plead with you to give him some support, at least until he gets into the routine - or is that rut?

The IARS

Christmas Field Weekend

A major event on the IARS calendar for the year is the Field Weekend. This year, to make an even more stupendous event, it was combined with our Christmas get together.

Well, I turned up, bright and early (about 10am) on the Sunday with a car load of 10GHz portable equipment, ready to set it up for a field test with VK2AXA/P on the north side of Sydney and VK2ZAC/P, up near Wentworth Falls. (Just another event in the crowded program) - and what did I find - two rather shellshocked looking individuals (apologies to Steve and Vic - actually Steve looked quite smart in his WICEN overalls). Well, it appeared that WICEN had been almost required!! was given a

graphic description of a Saturday so hot that the "dozen or so" who were on the top of Saddleback were getting around in their shorts and not much else because of the heat - but working the DX nevertheless.

"At the end of the day", whenever that was, four, now somewhat cooler individuals (because a cold change had arrived) set about staying on for the night to knock over what DX may remain.

Sadly, it seems that it was they who were knocked over - the wind got stronger and stronger, till it became necessary to drop the tents or have them blown down (did this, in fact, happen to one of them?). Two of the four departed for safer places while the remaining two retired to the comparative safety of their vehicles - there to pass the remainder of the night peacefully? at rest.

Well at 10am there were reinforcements on the way - not many, but as it turned out just enough for my purposes!

VK2ALU's gear was set up, as planned, down at the lookout. A few spots of rain were falling, but "she'll fine up for sure"- so the test commenced. I won't bore you with details of what happened, but at least VK2's ALU and ZAC had a 10GHz contact - while the rain became heavier. Umbrellas were found and some of our more hardy individuals stood, in the wet without raincoats, shielding the 10GHz gear from the damp. Thank you fellas for a fine effort, in the cause of microwave communication!!

Then, just as it was time to carry all the gear the 100 metres or so back to the car, now in steady rain, who should appear but another arrival - with a golf umbrella - just what we needed to get the 10GHz transceiver back to the car in dry condition!

Well, after this it was time for a VERY welcome hot cuppa and a bite to eat.

As anything else would have been an anticlimax, it was unanimously decided to pack up tent and to depart.

**ALL THOSE OF YOU WHO DID NOT
ATTEND OUR CHRISTMAS FIELD
WEEKEND REALLY MISSED
SOMETHING.**

Actually those who did attend said that they enjoyed it, but why did so few turn up? After all the weather "further down" was OK!!

Finally, I take no responsibility for errors of reporting. I wasn't there for long - and as one of the others said to me "If they were not here they wouldn't know whether you were right or wrong"!

Lyle VK2ALU.

*** Repeater Report***

29/10 - 4/12/93

Since the last report, I've been to Cairns (for my sister's wedding) & spoke to a few of the local VK4's re their rptr systems. I was mainly on the VK4RCA (6950) rptr on top of Mt Bellenden-Ker (where the region's TV TXers are located). It had good TX coverage but very ordinary RX performance. I had to have a "full-scale" reading on RX before I could just crack the system. Even then I was reported to be noisy & occasionally cutting out. (Compare this to 7275 & 6850 where on the same handheld the rptr sig strength need only be "2 S-points" to be able to access cleanly). I discussed this with a few of the locals & they were aware of it, but were apparently happy with the performance. On this rptr they have occasionally had P29's & JA's coming thru when conditions have been good.

I also made a "Maritime Mobile" contact (me being the MM), when I was on the "Big Cat" tourist boat while pulling out from Green Is., (about 25 klms off Cairns). I spoke to Henry (VK4JHF) who was mobile on the Atherton Tablelands, via the VK4RTA (6675) rptr at Longlands Gap. According to Henry, the rptr was close to 200klms away from me & this was on the rubber duck antenna on my handheld. The only reason he had to finish the QSO, was because he had arrived at his destination, the local Pub!

I also managed to trigger quite a few rptrs while heading up the coastline while 10,000 feet up, but no one came back to make an "Aeronautical Mobile" contact unfortunately...

Anyway, I was hoping to learn some rptr info from the VK4's to put to good use back home, but they were more interested in our systems!

VK2RAW (146.850) - Not much to report re the rptr itself, all working fine except for the slight amount of previously reported desense. On Sunday (14/11/93) Peter (BIT) & myself went to Mt Murray to install a small TXer to feed the WIA Sunday Broadcast, received at Mt Murray, across to Knights Hill & be re-transmitted on 8225, the Goulburn link to VK2RGN & also onto the 10m Gateway output.

The Txer is an exciter board from a Phillips 828 UHF Hi-Band radio bought at Cavions for \$15. (The same 828 supplied the noise-mute that is on the 10m Gateway's Rxer & also the PA stage has been modified as a 40W Amplifier for the UHF band for my little handheld, so the radio has been put to good use!).

The low-powered Txer was connected to the existing Broadcast RXer & also to the DTMF controller allowing us to have the following settings:

- 1) - 6850 & 8225 Normal
- 2) - 6850 Broadcast/8225 Normal
- 3) - 6850 Normal/8225 Broadcast
- 4) - 6850 & 8225 Broadcast

Normally the broadcast will go to both systems, but if there are unusual circumstances, one or both systems can be put back to "normal" (ie: no B/cast). For instance, 6850's batteries may be flat so we'd just use 8225, or as what happened last Sunday on our Field Weekend, 8225 was being used to liaise with other stations for 10GHz experiments, so we elected to put the B/cast on 6850 only.

So from now on, (barring Murphy's intervention), the Broadcast can be heard locally on 29.290, 146.850 & 438.225MHz.

Unfortunately, Murphy has been around & the little TXer has occasionally failed. (The Broadcast on 8225 was still maintained via a back-up method). On Saturday (27/11/93) went back up again to try & rectify the problem, but would you believe it, the damn thing didn't fall once in the two & half hours I was on site. Checked all connections & joints & everything appeared sound. Left site to go to Knights Hill & then on to Saddleback. By the time we got to the Field Site it was acting up again. After a lot of head-scratching we think we may have figured out the problem & this will be tested with a visit by VK2BIT later today (Saturday 4/12). Here's hoping...

We have also had some visitors at the site again, the kind that are definitely not welcome. They met with considerable resistance from the security measures we recently installed (because of previous visits) & consequently, left with no success.

If anyone hears anything over the airwaves (in particular 63cm), the Warilla Police would be happy to follow-on from their previous investigations.

VK2RIL (147.275) - The poor old rprr is still copping it from the Pagers. Last month I reported we had received no help or response from the VK2 Division of the WIA regarding the Pager problem to our rprr. This was after writing 3 letters to them, dated 12/3/93, 10/6/93 & lastly on the 20/10/93. At the time of writing still nothing has been received. This, from the current Council, who time & time again publicly promote themselves on the WIA Broadcasts as being so much better than the previous Council, some of whom they are actively trying to remove from the WIA (eg: VK2's AAB, ZTM & KFU). As it is, I'm very angry that we have received no help from them after all this time, but what makes me furious is that in the meantime they keep publicly telling us how good a job they are doing!

There will be readers that will take great offence to my comments regarding the WIA & of course they are quite entitled to their own ideas, (as am I), but they aren't the ones who have made over 100 phone calls & spent countless hours speaking to DOTC, Telecom, Motorola & others; or have carefully documented these conversations over 3 years for future reference; or for that matter made many, many fruitless trips to Sublime Point (even at 11pm at night) trying

different things, only to eventually having to admit defeat & look for help & assistance from the organisation that supposedly exists to help & represent us, but then receive no help what-so-ever. Thank you WIA...

Now, to other matters regarding our rprr. As is the case on most nights, 7275 was remotely shut-down on the night of the 21/11/93. (The rprr is shut-down late at night to stop all the spurious Pager crap it has to endure). The next morning it failed to return to air. Went up to the site before work & found the rprr's TXer to be in continuous Inhibit mode, even though the DTMF controller was off & then disconnected. Found one of the 4081 Quad AND gates to have a faulty gate. Having no IC's with me, elected to swap it with another 4081 that didn't need that particular gate. This worked & the rprr was returned to air around 9.45am. Why it failed is a mystery. According to one of the Park Trust workers I was talking to, there was a very bad lightning storm 2 nights before. Possibly the IC got damaged somehow but didn't cause any problems until the inputs were changed, ie: when the DTMF controller shut the system down for the night.

VK2RIL (438.725) - Nothing to report, all OK.

VK2RUW (438.225/29.290) - The rprr system is working fine at the moment. On Sunday (7/11) Ken went to Knights

Hill & removed the Goulburn Link radio. We suspected it was in need of some attention as it wasn't performing 100% & occasionally causing interference to 8225. Ian (AIJ) at Goulburn, volunteered to look at it if we could get it to him. Fortunately, we have a free "courier service" between W'gong & Goulburn. (A friend of my wife's works at the same place Ian does at Goulburn & frequently comes back to W'gong for weekends...very convenient). Ian found that the radio did need a "tune-up" & it was returned the following weekend. Returned it to Knights Hill after installing the Broadcast Link TXer at Mt Murray on the 14/11.

The 10m Gateway has been working well. There has been lots of DX stations coming through including JA's, KH6, 9M2, ZL's & all states & territories of Australia (besides VK1). A lot of the stations are so clear that you have trouble believing they are thousands of miles away, (sometimes their signals are better than the locals on UHF!). On one evening alone, the local UHFers had one VK3, two VK4's, two VK5's, one VK7 & one ZL all calling-in & having a QSO. (The ZL was in contact for over an hour). It doesn't happen all the time, but when you put out a CQ or just listen, you may be quite surprised who calls in.

A lot of stations have worked the Gateway recently after reading the "Repeater Link" column in November's AR magazine.

VK2RUW (4775 digi) - Michael (XCE) has worked on the ROSE digipeater since it was removed from service on the 12/10 due to a RF failure on the VHF port. He checked the system at home for days & was unable to fault it. He was about to return it Knights Hill when the VHF port suddenly went spurious. He was unable to find the problem, so volunteered his own VHF TXer to get the system back on the air. He also installed the DR-200 TNC inside an RF-shielded box to help prevent CPU failures. The digipeater was re-installed last weekend (27/11) without a problem. It appears to be working fine.

Once again, I call into question the need for this system. It was off the air (unfortunately) for 6 weeks, yet as far as we know, no one missed it. Did you??? If it benefits no one, we won't bother supporting it, so tell us if you want to keep it. The same goes for those who feel they have a better idea for a Club-supported Packet digi, tell us.

Till next time - Rob VK2MT.

***** Snippets *****

The following reports have been sent by Jim VK2ZWG. Originally on a C64 disk, they were converted to ASCII by Phil VK2TPH to whom I'm deeply indebted (I also him \$17 but don't tell him as I think he has forgotten). Thanks a lot Jim, it's little bits like this that can make The Propagator a great

magazine and worthwhile reading. If only we had a small 5 line article from half our members each issue, I'd have to employ and extra 3 staff to produce it. Thanks Jim.

NEW REPEATER PACKET RULES PROPOSED.

The FCC has taken a long-awaited step towards establishing new policy for Ham stations involved in automatic message forwarding. The Commission has adopted its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking-a message which foreshadows new regulations which will hold repeater control operators harmless for any prohibited communications instantly retransmitted through the repeater. Under the new rules, only the originators of instantly-retransmitted communications are to be accounted for content violations flowing through a repeater. But when it comes to packet, the FCC wants to hold both the originating and first forwarding station licensees responsible for prohibited communications. The idea is that a packet message could be reviewed, but repeater traffic is instantaneous.

Under the rules currently in effect, each Amateur station is fully responsible for assuring that the contents of every transmission from his or her station complies with the rules. Generally speaking, this was never a problem for Hams until the advent of high-volume, high-speed digital message forwarding systems.

DETAILS RELEASED ON 219-220 Mhz ACCESS.

The FCC has fleshed out its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to "....provide a secondary allocation for the Amateur Service in the 219 to 220 MHz band to be used for Amateur auxiliary station (point to point) packet backbone and other Amateur point to point fixed communications." In response to a petition filed by the ARRL, the commission is proposing to allocate, on a secondary basis, the 219-220 MHz band for inner city wideband packet radio networks and other point to point fixed operations. According to the commission, this will (a) relieve the congestion in the 222-225 MHz band, (b) encourage the development and implementation of a packet network that can be used for emergency and National Defence Communications, (c) facilitate connection of local packet nodes to form such a regional or nationwide network, and (d) provide spectrum for exploration of new technology.

SENATOR EXTOLS AMATEUR SERVICE.

A Joint Resolution (S.J90) has been introduced in the United States Senate recognising the achievements of Radio Amateurs. Senator Charles Robb of Virginia drafted the bill, Which calls for a National Policy supporting Amateur Radio. The Resolution urges adoption of rules and regulations that encourage the use of new technologies within the Amateur Service. It also requests that any regulations which are necessary

at any level of Government be crafted in ways that encourage Ham Radio as a public benefit.

JURY FINDS 60 Hz EMF NOT CANCER CAUSE.

In a case that has caused considerable interest among Radio Amateurs nationwide, a jury ruled on April 30th that high voltage power lines which transversed the home of a couple with a nine-month-old daughter did not cause the child's rare kidney tumours. The debate over the danger of high intensity 60 Hz electromagnetic fields has been going on for well over two decades, with several carcinoma experts suggesting that prolonged exposure to these elevated EMF fields could be the source or trigger for several different medical problems, especially in children and pregnant women. Fear of these fields has caused warnings to go out for women carrying children to avoid working near high current machinery or even using electric blankets during their earliest months of pregnancy. Although more than 100 studies have been conducted in the past 20 years on EMF effects on human tissues, no conclusive evidence for a direct link between the high power fields and cancer has been proven, though several of the studies suggest an elevated incidence of certain tumours.

The jury took only four hours to reach its verdict, and although this is believed to be the first case of its kind involving an action against a public

power utility, legal observers believe that it won't be the last. This above information by courtesy of W6RCL. 73 Amateur Radio Today. Jul. 1993.

My small input to this decision is how can a none technical qualified jury make a decision in regards to this case?????

73's Jim. VK2ZWG

*** Moon Bounce ***

Earlier on, I started to tell you about the moon bounce project that Lyle VK2ALU is working in. In his back yard is a 6' dish, a couple of radios, an assorted collection of boxes, wires and meters. Also there was John VK2XGJ, myself and someone else who for the life of me, I can't remember his name of call sign - sorry. Anyhow, also there at the same time was the moon. Just sitting up in the sky, although why it was there in the middle of the afternoon, I don't know - everyone knows the moon is supposed to come out at night. Personally, I believe Lyle organised it. That man is brilliant. Do you know he is one of about a dozen amateurs involved in microwave development. Recognised in the microwave community as a very knowledgeable and well respected man. But I digress, unusual for me I know, but I did. For that, I am extremely sorry as I know how much you want to hear the rest of the story. And what a story it is - let me tell you about it one day when I have a bit more than two lines left at the end of the column. Such a pity space is such a premium since it is so interesting. Maybe next issue.

Ha! got you there, you thought you had read the last of me didn't you. No way Jose! Back to Lyle.

There we were standing around, aiming the dish at the moon and watching the needles on the meters - you could actually see when we were aimed at the moon because the noise level increased about 1 db. Incredible. Even in this age of high tech, when nothing seems to amaze us, I was in awe. The moon - how far away is it? I don't know, but you'd want more than a cut lunch to go there. Anyhow, we were standing around listening to the noise, not sure if the USA station was there or would be transmitting, or the cloud would cover the moon and we'd lose it, or the signals would be absorbed by the rain clouds or anything.

We listened on schedule, but nothing came through - a few more adjustments and more listening - nothing - a few more adjustments then John said 'Wait, I can hear something.' We all listened, but it was the faint tinkling of th ivories coming from next door! Rats. More aligning, more measurements - more discoveries about spurious signals and noise and birds flying in front of the dish. All very fascinating stuff. We were getting restless and edgy, but still we couldn't hear anything. After about an hour, we came to the conclusion that the USA operator hadn't received the letter from Lyle, or had a problem, or the weather conditions over there were bad, or one of a million and one things that can go wrong with such a project had.

Then we heard it, not loud, and not distinct, but the unmistakable sounds of morse code coming out of the speaker. Only about 0.5 db above the noise, but it was definitely morse. we managed to pick up Lyle's call sign VK2ALU and the call sign of the US operator, Jim Vogel WA7CJO.

If Lyle is in the mood, he might give us some details on Jim's system. I believe it is so good, he can select which part of the moon he aims at - his beam with is less than the moon's diameter!.

Anyhow, we heard it - the USA via the moon - how far? 700,000 km, but it made it. Thanks a lot for the invite to the afternoon, Lyle, I take my hat off to you.

*** Field Weekend ***

No, I didn't go either. Why not? Hell, if you want some excuses, I have dozens - my back was sore - it was too hot - it was too cold - it look liked rain - it was too windy - my mate didn't want to go - I had to wash the car - mow the lawn - wash the dog (oops, I can't use that one, I don't have a dog, - you may as well have it) - the car wouldn't start - I'm a bloody fool.

Ah yes, the last one is the most appropriate. A bloody fool! A chance to spend a few hours with good blokes who enjoy the same things I do and I have to find a dozen excuses not to go.

Maybe they didn't have the best of weather, or the ultimate in radio contacts or the best cuisine or the coldest beer, but I'll bet they had one

thing that's more important than all those put together - comradeship.

Yes, the joy of having friends close by and enjoying the good times as well as the bad. The joys of sharing an 'experience' together. Fellows, please forgive me, and if I start making excuses for not attending the next one - kick me!

***** Reward *****

I have mentioned this before, and I have brought it up at club meetings but no decision has been made so I'm going to ride this subject to death until I get a definite yes or no.

One of the problems in Our Club, and you can tell by reading Lyle's historical reports, is that there has been no recognition for services rendered. Sure we have three life members, but who know what they have done? I'm sure I don't, and I'll bet that more than half our members don't so I think we should start rewarding members for service 'Above and beyond the call of duty' (to steal someone else's phrase).

Maybe we should go back over the past 10 years and see who deserves recognition - there are a lot of members who have done more than their fair share. Since I don't know who or what they did (which goes to prove my point), I am not prepared to nominate anyone I don't know, although I'm sure someone does deserve recognition. I do know however that our repeater committee, mainly Rob VK2MT and Ken VK2TKE have done a lot more than their fair share. Maybe not more than others

in the club, maybe not as dramatic as others and maybe not as important as others, but they definitely have done more than could reasonably be expected of them. Personally, I don't believe it's enough to justify life membership (although I don't know what the criteria is for that) but they surely deserve some recognition for their efforts. I also believe that Rob has done the most, not that I'm belittling the amount done by Ken - maybe Rob has the higher profile and Ken is the one who deserves the recognition. I'll leave the final decision up to the club.

What is all this leading to?

The Rob McKnight award has been proposed for anyone who uses the 10m gateway and makes contact with 5 overseas countries or all Australian states.

Maybe the qualifications are too low but they are a proposal. Maybe the award name is wrong, but it's a proposal. Maybe Rob will be embarrassed and others upset, but that doesn't alter the facts. Maybe the whole concept is wrong, but you'll have to talk very long hard and loud to convince me of that.

We must recognise the efforts of our members before their deeds are lost in our memories, just as the deeds and efforts of our past members has been forgotten. Please committee, return this issue to the agenda and give it the full consideration it deserves. It won't go away. The memories of our members is in your hands.

***** Ginini Access Point *****

This is an article lifted from "Amateur Radio" February 1978, which in turn had been lifted from "The Lyrebird" October 1977. It's quite interesting what the boys on the Mid-South Coast were up to in those days regarding repeaters....

"The Mid-South Coast Amateur Radio Club has made an unusual contribution to Mobile VHF Operators travelling the Princes Hwy on the South Coast of NSW. This is the planned provision of "access" points in various locations to enable Amateurs to reach repeaters not normally accessible when mobile. The first of these points giving access to VK1RGI on Mt Ginini has been installed in the Milton-Ulladulla district, 233kms south of Sydney. An 8 element beam antenna (a "Quagi" refer QST April 77) has been mounted on a convenient tree & the coax feeder brought underground to a strong steel box fastened to a fence post on the side of a little used track. The gain of the antenna is estimated to be 12-13dB. The loss in the coax feeder is about 2.5dB. The SWR is less than 2:1. Provided propagation conditions are reasonable, the 10 watts or so from the average transceiver should get a good noise-free signal into VK1RGI.

The box is padlocked, but Amateurs can by-pass the lock by pushing a pencil or small stick through a hole in the front lid. Inside the box there is about 4 metres of coaxial feeder terminated with a PL-259 plug for connection to your rig.

A log book is supplied to measure the degree of use.

The box is painted green with the letters G.I.N.I.N.I. printed to give an official appearance (not that such would stop determined vandals). To find the box, turn off the Princes Hwy at the Ulladulla Post Office (opposite the harbour) & travel west along Green St for about 1.5kms. At the end of this street are white "termination" posts, skirt around these & continue straight on about 100 metres following the power lines. The box is on the right side fence opposite the first power pole.

Prospective mobiles should make a note of the above against the time they may be in this area.

The Club is making surveys to provide more access points for Mt Ginini & Wollongong repeaters at several locations along the coast.

It would be appreciated if visitors would fill in the log book & securely lock the box.

Information from Frank VK2HQ."

I wonder what ever happened to that little green box & the Quagi in the tree? Was it a success? Did they build more access points?... There's probably a block of flats or a McDonalds there now! Anyway, Frank still calls in on 6850 Sunday mornings after the WIA broadcast, so I'll have to ask him...

Rob-VK2MT

*** Illawarra Packet ***

Well much has happened since my last column, we have a New Packeteer in the shape of Norm VK2ZXC who lives in the perfect location overlooking the ocean at Pt Kembla. VK2ZXC is well known on the 6Mx freq's and some "interest" has been shown in his foray into Packet. I have heard a few little stories about Norm VK2ZXC, now I don't mean to let any cats out of any bags but, I hear he is an excellent interior house painter. The walls, the ceiling, the doors, the windows (glass included), the light bulbs, the door knobs, all the one colour. White. I also understand that during a party at a "friends" QTH he will souvenir the house fuses from the fuse box. I wonder how many he has now??? But I understand that that was in his "formative" years, he has now become an upstanding member of the Packet Community here in the Illawarra. He makes an excellent Digi too as some of the Packeteers in the Northern suburbs have found. Welcome to Packet Norm de VK2ZXC.

Over the last few weeks the Call VK2AMW-2 has been seen on 144.700 Mhz, this is the tests of the Illawarra Gateway/Wormhole at the University. It will not be fully operational for about another month or so, after all the tests etc have been concluded. Also, in preparation for the Gateway / Wormhole a few more TCP/IP stns have appeared, myself included. It really is an interesting side of Packet and still have a lot to learn on the subject. One thing though, I do wish

the stns sending out NetRom broadcasts on 144.700 MHz would turn them off, we are a close-knit LAN and I feel they are not needed. At least not as often as one stn puts them out ie every six minutes, or less, three minutes if you count the AX25 beacons as well! If you must broadcast, then just your own stn's ID and once every hour is quiet sufficient I feel.

I have included in this month's issue a file that I have sent to some of the Sydney BBS's re the sending of mail through the Satellite Gateway, I the new PRG on the BBS plus the explanation text should fix a few problems. Other than that all seems to be AOK. I'd like to wish you all a very Merry Xmas and all the Best for the New Year.

73, John de VK2XGJ

*** For Sale ***

One 3.5 meter dish, two 1.5 meter dishes, two 1 meter dishes, including feedpoints and mountings, aluminium, plus one 2 meter mounted fibreglass dish, with helical feedpoints, all for 421 Mhz. (70 cm). 2 50 foot rolls 1 inch helix coaxial cable, one 3 el HF beam (15, 20, 40 M), one 3 el 6 Meter Beam, 25 100A/H (5Hour Rate) nickel cadmium batteries, \$15 ea, 32 310 A/H (5Hour rate) nickel iron batteries, \$10 ea, one Apple III computer (An apple II series with the 10 meg hard disk), \$200 ONO, 2 63 CM UHF/VHF colour tv sets, \$25 ea, 1 VHS, and 1 betacord recorders, offers, all in good nik. If not sold, you could pick up a bargain at

Cavions soon !!!!

Peter Laughton VK2XAN, (042) 566186, (Work) (042) 753836.

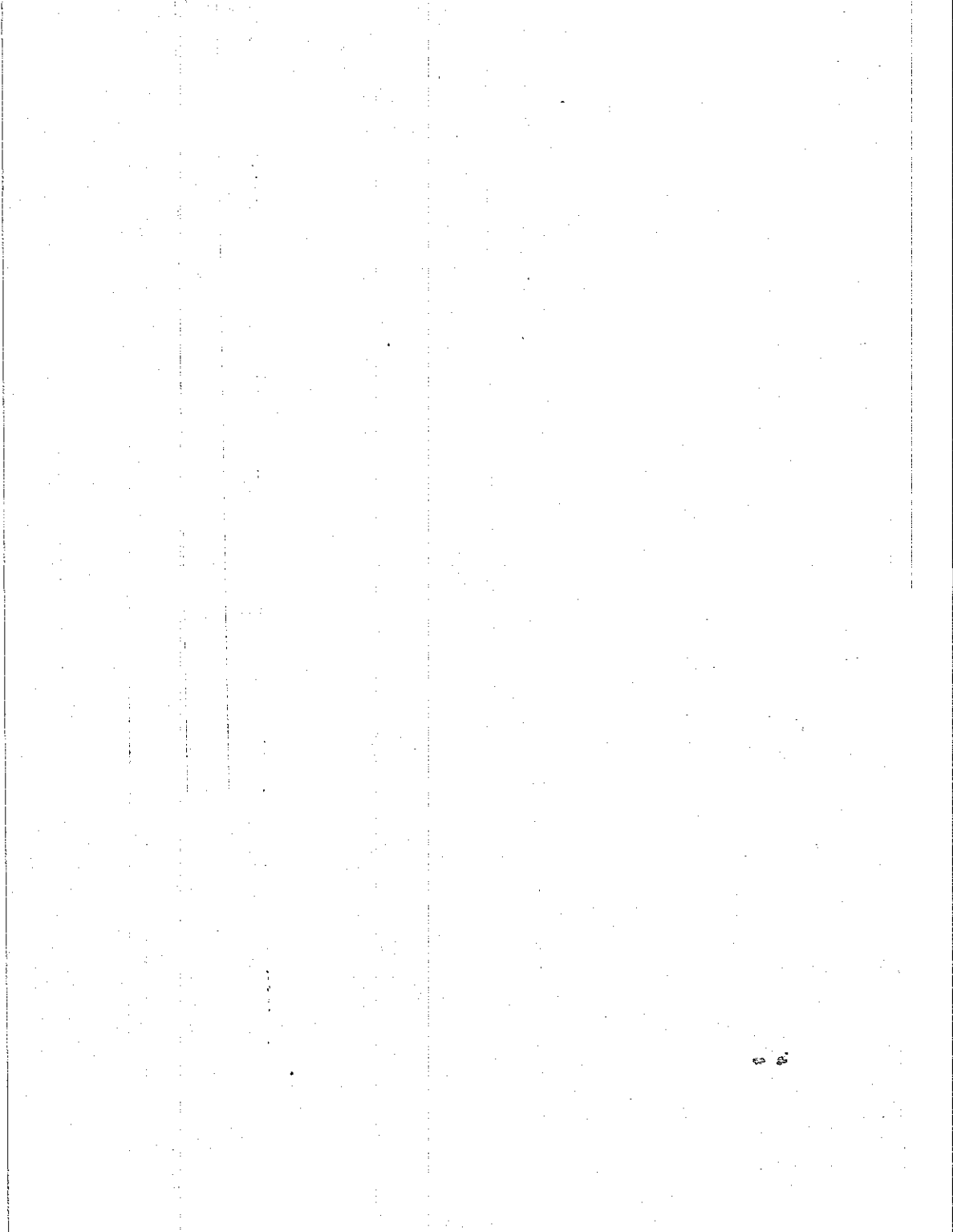
***** Excuse *****

Here's one more excuse you can have for not attending the field weekend at Saddleback. You didn't know how to get there. Why didn't you know - because I forgot to put in a map. Brian VK2UBF spent a lot of time producing a map to explain how to get there, and some fool forgot to put it in the Propagator! What can I say but sorry Brian.

***** Unpaid Ad *****

Accompanying this issue, you'll also receive an odd looking sheet called Quest. This is a free start in one of my games that I run for hundreds of players throughtout Australia.

It won't mean much to you, and it's hard to explain in a short time, but if you pass it onto your kids or grand kids they'll explain it to you. It is suitable for children 12 and up and adults 110 down. My oldest player is 57 and my youngest is 7.



***** Racket Column - ReqSat *****

The VK2XGJ BBS has been set up specifically to provide a fast means of sending personal mail on long haul routes via the Packet Satellites. BBS SysOps are being contacted to ask them to forward mail to me for the countries that are served by the SATGATE mail system. If your local BBS sends mail to me automatically, then you do not need to do anything special in addressing your messages. (If you are in any doubt about message routing from your local BBS then please contact your local BBS SysOp or myself.) If you are in a part of the country not yet served by me, then you can use the REQSAT server on VK2XGJ to route your mail through me automatically. REQSAT is courtesy of Chris G6FCI @ GB7FCI.

The countries available so far are:-

Israel, Japan, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Finland Canada, Spain, Greece, U.S.A., etc, the list is enormous as most countries are covered.

So if your local BBS is not yet set up to forward mail to me then you will need to format the message you wish to send in a particular way. As an example, you want to send a message to Jim N6ABC whose mailbox is K6XYZ. At your BBS prompt send your message to:-

SP REQSAT @ VK2XGJ

Rig problems.

SP N6ABC @ K6XYZ.#NOCAL.CA.USA.NA

Hi Jim the rig has been...

text text text

text text etc.....

/ex

[REQuest SATellite at VK2XGJ]

[Enter the subject as normal]

[Enter REAL address as the

[FIRST line of the message.

[A SPACE MUST exist between

[SP and the first callsign.

If you add the full Hierarchical address, as shown above, it will aid in the correct routing of your message.

So to sum up, check that I CAN forward mail to your destination country by requesting a REQFIL of this message (\VK2XGJ\REQSAT.DOC) and check the countries currently available, then at your BBS prompt enter;

SP REQSAT @ VK2XGJ

when asked for the subject enter whatever you like;

TNC problems again!!!

When asked for the Message the **VERY FIRST LINE** must contain the real address including the Hierarchical Address, if known;

SP N6ABC @ K6XYZ.#NOCAL.CA.USA.NA

then enter the rest of the message as you would normally ending with the usual;

/EX

POST BOX

"THE ILLAWARRA AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY Inc"
PO Box 1838, Wollongong, 2500.

REPEATERS	VK2RIL	147.275	Voice/RTTY	Sublime Pt
	VK2RIL	438.725	Voice/RTTY	Sublime Pt
	VK2RAW	146.850	Voice	Mt Murray
	VK2RUW	438.225	Voice	Knights Hill
	VK2RUW	29.290	UHF Gaterway	Knights Hill
	VK2RUW	144.775	Packet (ROSE)	Knights Hill

BROADCASTS - The Wireless Institute of Australia, N.S.W Division broadcast is relayed to 29.620 MHz and 146.850 MHz at 10.45am and 7.15pm each Sunday. Callbacks after the broadcast. RTTY broadcast in the week before the Club meeting, Sunday evening, 6:45pm on 147.275 MHz, relayed onto 3.618 MHz +/- QRM and 29.620 MHz, with callbacks immediately after.

NEWS LETTER - The "PROPAGATOR" is published each month to reach all financial members in the week preceding the Club meeting. Articles and letters are always welcome. Commercial advertising is \$60 per ad per year, member's classifieds are free. See Peter VK2FPN for details.

MEMBERSHIP - \$20.00 P.A, concessions \$15.00 P.A, expiring immediately after the Annual General Meeting in July.

LAWRENCE HARGRAVE AWARD - VK stations require 10 contacts with IARS members. Overseas stations require 5 contacts. One contact with the Club station VK2AMW is suitable. Details of contacts are to be sent to the Club secretary.

***** COMMITTEE *****

President	VK2KWG	Ken Grimm	
Vice Pres	VK2XQX	Simon Ferrie	
Secretary	VK2UR	Ron Hanks	84-2691
Assist Sec	VK2SRB	Robert Bonella	
Treasurer	VK2UBF	Brian Farrar	
Assist Treas	VK2GTJ	T. Jepson	
Committee	VK2ZWG	Jim Beaver	VK2KLH - Brian Clarke
	VK2GMC	Phillip Klower	
	VK2MT	Rob McKnight	VK2TKE - Ken Goodhew
Repeater	VK2XGJ	John Simon	
QSL Cards	VK2XQX	Simon Ferrie	
Publicity	VK2XGJ	John Simon	VK2MT - Rob McKnight
Broadcast	VK2TKE	Ken Goodhew	
Editors	VK2FPN	Peter Read	(042) 61-7148
Social			
Canteen	VK2GMC	Phillip Klower	
WIA Liason	VK2XGJ	John Simon	VK2MT Rob McKnight
Life members	VK2ALU	Lyle Patison	VK2CAG - Graeme Dowse
	VK2OB	Keith Curle	