

From the Gavel...



It's official, solar cycle 24 is here, and propagation has no where to go but up! In order to be ready for all those sunspots and trans-Atlantic and Pacific openings, Thomas VA3TMB

and Basil VE3JEB are busy teaching the Advanced Course. A number of club hopefuls are looking to upgrade their license to get in on the HF action before the solar peak.

Paralleling the increase in solar activity is club membership with yet another bumper crop of new hams arising from the basic course. Earl VE3XEL organized Pizza night at the club station and the turnout was great. In addition to stuffing our faces with all that pizza and pop, the executive and Elmer's had the opportunity to get to know the new members. We all took turns introducing ourselves and swapping stories on how and when we got our licence. A number of the new recruits are associated with the Red Cross and the City of Mississauga and will be a great asset to our ARES group. You can also look forward to a presentation by Dale Payne VA3AJE on his and the city's involvement with the New Orleans Katrina disaster on April 10, 2008.

It appears that interest in amateur radio is resurging within the Scout community. Reg VA3JQA and Bob VE3XBB provided a presentation of Ham Radio to the 140th Etobicoke scout group. This turned out to be quite a success generated some interest. I also got a call from Bill Reid VA3QB to do another presentation for the Meadowvale 5th Scout troop. One of the leaders there is a Ham with a son who is keen on getting help to obtain his license. It sounds like a few of his buddies are interested as well. Hopefully we can rustle up a few new young members from

the effort. If that isn't enough, Brad VE3ZRT asked to do a presentation for the 3rd Meadowvale group.

Now that we have received the remote antenna switch and two multi-band bandpass filters, the next step is to procure a used radio for the second position. I will be putting forth a motion on the first meeting in February to purchase a FT-847 for \$1000. We have a lead on a used model in excellent condition. Funding for the radio is possible from the sale of existing Radio Station assets as described in last month's Gavel.

The FT-847 is an all-mode HF/VHF/UHF base station with satellite capability. In addition to HF (1.8 MHz to 30MHz) it covers SSB/CW/FM on the 2m, 440cm and 6m bands. For all you ICOM fans, you can sit back down in your seats before you have an aneurism. ICOM does not make a comparable model, so it wasn't considered here. Another example where Yaesu engineering reigns supreme!

Future plans include placing horizontally polarized beams for 6 meters and up on one of the towers. Once we have this in place, this station can be used for HF/ VHF contesting, contest training and satellite work.

So, as you can see we are ready for Solar 24. Bring it on!

73 ... Rick Brown VE3IMG.

This Month

2. Commentary
3. Club Calendar
4. Web site report
4. Education update
6. The New VE3MIS Club Station
9. The Roving Reporter
11. RAC Application Form

Sunday Brunch

Sunday brunches are held on the first Sunday of each month. Time is 9:30AM at Shopsy's, 6986 Financial Drive Unit 5 Mississauga (at the corner of Mississauga Rd and Derry Rd). All are welcome to come out and have an opportunity to chat in an informal setting.

Club Nets

2 Metre Tuesday Night Phone Net Join in on the chatter starting at 8:30PM every Tuesday on the club repeater. Hosted by various net controllers. 145.430MHz Tone 103.5 Minus (-) offset. Contact our VHF Net Manager, **Lorne (VE3CXT)**, if interested in becoming a net controller.

75 Metre Sunday Night Net Starts at 8:30PM every Sunday. Hosted by various net controllers. Contact our HF Net Manager, **Michael (VE3TKI)**, if interested in becoming a net controller.

Commentary



Let me start this month's commentary with a question: How did you come to be a ham? While the most obvious answer might be "by writing the exam, of course" that is not what I am getting to. Think about it for a moment. Is it

not said that from a tiny acorn a mighty oak grows? When we pass the exam we are but a tiny acorn. Now look at where you are. I can bet that somewhere between passing the exam and where you are today, an Elmer played a big role. Time and gain the Roving Reporter is told about a great Elmer who made the difference. Some of you were lucky; you had more than one Elmer. I consider myself very lucky indeed. For without the help, support and encouragement of my Elmers I would have dropped off the hobby long back. From lending me a 2M radio, power supply and J-pole antenna to helping me choose a radio to putting up my antenna and setting up my rig, my Elmers were there. Thanks a ton Michael VE3TKI and Lorne VE3CXT.

I often wonder where most of my classmates went. There were about 10 of us in the class of 2006. But we don't hear most of them on the air or see them at club events. Why? Would things have been different if they had Elmers who constantly nurtured their interest and helped them on their journey? I am convinced that the answer is yes.

Being an Elmer is not easy. It takes patience & time. Perhaps it involves answering stupid questions, going out of your way to help or taking longer to finish something because of all the explaining you have to do. But, for a moment think of your Elmer, who made it possible to turn a tiny acorn into a mighty oak.

It is now your turn.

73

Thomas VA3TMB

Executive Directors

President	Rick Brown, VE3IMG
1st Vice President	Asim Zaidi, VE3XAP
2nd Vice President	William Bressette, VE3WPJ
Treasurer	John (Sr) Lorenc, VA3XJL
Secretary	Dan Goodier, VE3NI
Past President	Dave Harford, VA3DFH

Club Managers

Membership Manager	Dave Harford, VA3DFH
Education Manager	Earle Laycock, VE3XEL
Basic Theory Courses	Earle Laycock, VE3XEL
Basic Theory Courses	Bob Hawkins, VE3AGC
Basic Theory Courses	Jody Levine, VE3ION
Basic Theory Courses	Don McPhee, VA3BOW
Basic Theory Courses	Basil Burgess, VE3JEB
Basic Theory Courses	Robert Dutton, VE3ZZF
CW Courses	Frank Lamb, VE3HTX
CW Courses	Earle Laycock, VE3XEL
House / Visitor Host Manager	Robert Humphreys, VE3HOW
Newsletter Editor	Thomas Bernard, VA3TMB
Researcher	Kim Cheong, VE3KTC
Net Managers HF Net	Michael Brickell, VE3TKI
VHF Net	Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT
Repeater Manager	Michael Brickell, VE3TKI
Assistant	Bryan Jay, VA3BLJ
Assistant	Bob Boyer, VE3XBB
Assistant	Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT
Assistant	John Duffy, VE3DRZ
Assistant	Asim Zaidi, VE3XAP
Assistant	Tony Champion, VA3QC
Assistant	Robin Stubbs, VE3VVS
Assistant	William Bressette, VE3WPJ
Club Station Manager	Stefan Bejusca, VA3OBR
Assistant	Rick Brown, VE3IMG
Assistant	Asim Zaidi, VE3XAP
Assistant	Alex Malikov, VE3MA
Assistant	Bryan Jay, VA3BLJ
Field Day Manager	Open
Assistant - Documentation	Tony Champion, VA3QC
Assistant - Logging	Jody Levine, VE3ION
Assistant - Refreshments	John Duffy, VE3DRZ
Assistant - Site	Thomas Godden, VE3TWG
Assistant - Press and Publications	Reg Vertolli, VA3JQA
FSV Manager	Dave Stubbs, VA3BHF
Assistant	William Bressette, VE3WPJ
Programs Manager	Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT
Webmaster Manager (Source Code and DB)	Dave Harford, VA3DFH
Assistant	Dan Goodier, VE3NI
Assistant	Rick Brown, VE3IMG
Graphical Support	Alex Malikov, VE3MA
Legal Consultant	Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT
Public Information & Media Relations Manager	Tony Champion, VA3QC
Photography	Reg Vertolli, VA3JQA

Audit Committee

Auditors Coordinator	Basil Burgess, VE3JEB
Assistant	Robert Humphreys, VE3HOW

Public Service

ARES Emergency Coordinator	Dan Goodier, VE3NI
Past Coordinator & AEC	Sean Conlin, VA3MED
Assistant EC - 1st Day	Michael Brickell, VE3TKI
Assistant EC - 2nd Day	John Duffy, VE3DRZ
Assistant EC - 3rd Day	Bob Boyer, VE3XBB
Assistant EC - 1st Night	Sean Conlin, VA3MED
Assistant EC - 2nd Night	Dave Harford, VA3DFH
Assistant EC - 3rd Night	Lorne Jackson, VE3CXT
CANWARN Manager	Peter Mosher, VA3PKM
Special Events / Walks Manager	Bob Boyer, VE3XBB

CLUB CALENDAR FOR 2008

January, 2008

31 Thu NEWS
31 Thu NEWS
31 Thu ARES Meeting

February, 2008

03 Sun Sunday Brunch - Shopsy's
03 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
04 Mon Advanced Class 4
05 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
07 Thu Exec Meeting
10 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
11 Mon Advanced Class 5
12 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
14 Thu Club Meeting
15 Fri ARRL International DX Contest
17 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
19 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
21 Thu Radio Night at Club Station
22 Fri CQ WW 160-Meter Contest
24 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
25 Mon Advanced Class 6
26 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
28 Thu Club Meeting
29 Fri ARRL International DX Contest

Provisional Schedule Below...

March, 2008

02 Sun Sunday Brunch - Shopsy's
02 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
03 Mon Advanced Class 7
04 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
06 Thu Exec Meeting
09 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
10 Mon Advanced Class 8
11 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
13 Thu Club Meeting
15 Sat Russian DX Contest
16 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
17 Mon Advanced Class 9
18 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
20 Thu Radio Night at Club Station
21 Fri CQ WW WPX Contest
23 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net

24 Mon Advanced Class 10
25 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
27 Thu Club Meeting
29 Sat Ham-Ex 2008
30 Sun HF - 75/80 Meter Net
31 Mon Advanced Class 11

April, 2008

01 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
03 Thu Exec Meeting
05 Sat SP DX Contest
06 Sun Sunday Brunch - Shopsy's
07 Mon Advanced Class 12
08 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
10 Thu Club Meeting
14 Mon Advanced Exam
15 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
17 Thu Radio Night at Club Station
19 Sat Ontario QSO Party
22 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
24 Thu Club Meeting
29 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net

May, 2008

01 Thu Exec Meeting
04 Sun Sunday Brunch - Shopsy's
06 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
08 Thu Club Meeting
13 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
15 Thu Radio Night at Club Station
20 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
22 Thu Club Meeting
27 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
29 Thu ARES Meeting

June, 2008

01 Sun Sunday Brunch - Shopsy's
03 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
05 Thu Exec Meeting
10 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
12 Thu Club Meeting
17 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
19 Thu Radio Night at Club Station
24 Tue VHF/UHF - 2 Meter Net
26 Thu Club Meeting - Pot Luck Dinner
28 Sat ARRL Field Day
29 Sun ARRL Field Day

NOTES

1. Meetings start 7:30PM at St. Thomas A Becket Church Hall, 3535 South Common Court unless otherwise noted.
2. Brunch is at 9:30AM unless otherwise noted.
3. Classes are from 7:00PM - 9:00PM at Meals On Wheels at 2445 Dunwin Drive

Visit our website: <http://www.marc.on.ca> for any updates of the calendar.

Web Site Report

By: Dave / VA3DFH, MARC Webmaster



As many of you by now know, we now feature RSS news feeds. On the main menu select HAM NEWS then pick from currently one of the four options. Currently RAC does not have an RSS news feed, we are hopeful that they will have one in the not too distant future. Surprisingly, I have observed that most of the RAC news items end

up on the Southgate RSS feed (they are located in London, England). Also, please note that just like any other news source, it changes (often daily or more). Each time you personally select one of the pages, it goes and gets the news feed at that moment – so if the source added an item a minute or two after that, you would need to reselect the page (or use your browser refresh feature).

Although this next item is not a new page, some of the items on it are new. Our Site Map page now shows more general details in the introduction, as well we now have the number of page hits being displayed on the fourth column. We are expecting that the page hits will indicate to us all just how popular our web site is throughout the region and for that matter the global amateur world.

Speaking of the world, we have a page that has just gone through a major rewrite – Other Clubs and Organizations.

The purpose of the rewrite was to change the content from being hard coded to that of being sourced from the database. With this change, we now can add, update or remove listings much easier. Over the next couple of months, I hope to do the same change for all of the links pages we host on our web site. One other feature on this page which should also help others, is that there is now a link to tell us that a listing is no longer valid – simply click on the green chain logo at the far right of the listing and then after you confirm (please do not abuse this feature as this presents more work for the executive) that the link is not valid, click on the continue button.

Other changes to the web site include more pages for the administration, as well as ground work being done to allow the Pay Pal payment for memberships. As well you will soon be able to personally manage your email subscriptions for the newsletter etc. As the IRLP is not at this point totally back on line, look forward to that page also being updated when that is complete.

Don't forget that even if a page is not marked new, that if the content is from the database it may very well have updated information. Check back often, even daily for the latest in information about the Mississauga Amateur Radio Club.

2007-2008 Education Update

By: Earle Laycock, VE3XEL, Education Manager

The Basics...

MARC has been providing quality education for nearly 20 years! When I first joined MARC in 1990, Tony VE3FTA (SK) was the Education Manager. Today our course offerings have grown and we drawing students not only from Mississauga but Toronto, Brampton, Georgetown and Oakville.

The Basic Class for 2007 started in mid-September and ended just before Christmas. This year was special in that for the first time, Red Cross sent a list of 11 students, anxious to become HAMs. The Red Cross is becoming more intent on having volunteers trained in various facets of emergency services, including communications. The Red Cross has allowed us use of their Meals on Wheels classroom for our courses, so it was gratifying to be able to offer our course to their volunteers. Susan FitzGerald,

Disaster Management Coordinator for the Red Cross attended many of our classes when her busy schedule allowed.

We are so lucky to have some excellent teachers for our classes including two college instructors! Bob VE3AGC provided his usual encyclopedic knowledge of ham radio and is also one of our Industry Canada accredited examiners. Jody VE3ION, demonstrated her passion for the basics of electricity and reactive capacitance! I see Jody as an inspiration to the younger crowd and especially YLs although when I mentioned this to Jody, she seemed surprised at such a thought. Basil VE3JEB has a real love of the hobby and provides the quiet in-depth knowledge across a vast spectrum of topics. Since the MARC repeater plays such an important role in our club, Michael VE3TKI has done a special presentation for the class on our repeater system. And finally, Brendon Hodges

"volunteered" to help teach the basic course. Brendon was licensed in England and spent time in the merchant marines with lots of stories to tell.

To supplement our classes, we also matched students up with Elmers. This provided an opportunity for some one-on-one practical experience on the air. Thanks to all who volunteered as Elmers including Don VA3BOW, Michael VE3TKI, Lorne VE3CXT, Asim VE3XAP, George VE3YV, Rick VE3IMG and Michael VA3MRB. On our registration night in September, we also had everyone talk over our repeater. John VE3DRZ does a great job at helping students overcome any mike-shyness.

We had our graduation ceremony (aka "Pizza Night") at the Club Station in January and celebrated 9 new hams with several more yet to write their exam. The new hams are: Scott Gregory VA3NMI, Kihup Boo VA3PEN, Peter Mack VE3DAL, Stephen Delong VE3SVW, Lynne Hutchison VE3LMH, Dale Crangle VE3YKW, Andrew William Motyliwski VE3UKE, Dale Pyne VA3AJE and Ken Midorikawa VA3CBS. Lynne deserves mention for tackling the course with no background in electronics or radios and achieving honours. Dale VA3AJE, manager for the City of Brampton, was sent by the Red Cross to help in hurricane Katrina and will be doing a presentation to the club later this year about what really happened in New Orleans.

We had prizes for top exam scores. Scott VA3NMI won a 2008 ARRL Amateur Radio Handbook and Ki VA3PEN won the Radioworld \$25 gift certificate. Peter VE3DAL actually tied with Ki but graciously settled for a RAC notepad after a flip of the coin. I would like to acknowledge the support we get from Radioworld each

year by way of the gift certificate for top score and discounted education materials. Thanks Jack VA3XR.

Advanced...

In January we started our Advanced course, thanks to Thomas VA3TMB and Basil VE3JEB. I must say that Thomas and Basil are doing a superb job teaching. They are using Powerpoint presentations with emphasis on what you need to know to pass the exam. (Not to worry, there are enough side-tracks to other topics to keep the pot stirred.) Both instructors compliment each other very well and I think our 10 students are thoroughly enjoying each class. I know I look forward to every Monday night as a highlight of my week. The classes must be pretty interesting because Frank VE3GUF drives in from Burlington to attend!

Finally...

We are having an exciting year thanks to the students, instructors, Elmers and MARC supporters. My thanks to the Red Cross and to Barb Chumski in particular for use of the classroom and to Radioworld for their unflinching support of our education program. A BIG THANK YOU to all the instructors, you are doing a great job and I sure appreciate your efforts as do the students. And remember, "Learning keeps life interesting!"

Examinations...

For those who wish to write either the Basic or Advanced exams, we will be having another examination night on February 25th. Watch our club website for details.

If you have comments or questions about this newsletter, email them to the editor Thomas at va3tmb @ rac.ca (spaces deliberately inserted to defeat email address harvesting robots. Please remove the spaces on either side of @. Thanks)

We are hoping to start a letters to the editor section soon.

The New VE3MIS Club Station

By: Michael Brickell VE3TKI

Background

Mississauga Amateur Radio Club meetings were held for many years at a small Scout Hall on King St in Mississauga. Some of our members were involved in the scouting organization and as a result we were offered the shared use of a small room used by the Scout leadership for our club station, VE3MIS.

The ownership of the Scout Hall later changed and the new owners needed the station space, and our meeting space. We were able to find a new meeting location at St Thomas A Becket Anglican Church, but we were without a club station. VE3MIS was to all intents and purposes off the air for about two years.

The New Location

We had asked our members to keep eyes and ears open for possible new station locations. For a long time this was a fruitless search. However, one of our members, Alex Malikov VE3MA, is a web developer, and did some work for Jerry Maksimowski, owner of Danmax Electronics. Jerry happens to hold a Polish amateur call, and very generously offered the club the free use of part of his unused second floor space in his industrial unit (Figure 1).



Figure 1: The VE3MIS station is located on the second floor, to the left of the tower

Our adventure began with a visit to Danmax. We found to our delight that the available floor area we were offered was about 600 square feet, and included a washroom. We were given a free hand to do whatever we wished in terms of construction. Also we had a free rein for mounting antennas on the roof, and putting towers up on the property.

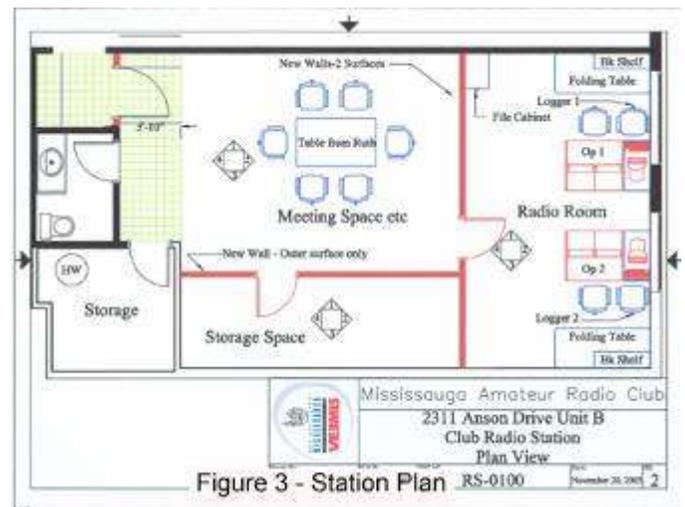
Construction

The space as we found it is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Station interior before construction began

Our resident autocad expert, Tony Champion, VA3QC, set about doing a number of station layouts. The final design (Figure 3) included a 20 ft x 12 ft two position operating area, a separate 14 ft x 12 ft meeting room, and a small storage room.



Tony prepared a complete set of plans, including framing, electrical, and layout drawings, which proved to be very useful for construction.

Once the plans were finalized, construction began. John Grimmitt, VA3JSG, volunteered to be our construction coordinator. The first order of business was installing the steel wall studs, followed by the

electrical panel and various 240v and 120v circuits. The electrical team was led Ed Fedorowski, VE3TXN.

The drywall installation was next. Then the laminated panel floor was put down (Figure 4),



Figure 4: Laying the floor in the meeting area

the walls were painted, and the suspended ceiling and fluorescent and task lighting (in the operating area) were installed.

We had left a floor section by the entrance door for later installation of ceramic tiles, to provide a space for people to leave boots. One day we came in to work, and found that Jerry had generously had some very nice textured concrete laid down there and in the bathroom. He had also had the walls in the meeting area sprayed with stucco and stained the doors and floor trim.

Antennas

Our antenna installation is still a work in progress. We have access to the complete roof, which is 80 feet wide and 186 feet long, for our antennas. To start with, three of the Delhi tower sections we had used at the old location were attached to the side wall of the station building, and a number of coaxial cable access holes were drilled through the wall. Initially we mounted our TH6 10/15/20m beam, plus our Comet GP15 2m/70cm/6m 3 element vertical on this tower. The beam has since been removed, as in that location it is directly above and only 20 feet or so away from the operating positions, and created RF feedback problems. Jerry, the building owner, has very generously donated two HF antennas to the club, and paid for their installation: a Force 12 4SXL beam (for 10/15/20/40m) and a Force 12 Magnum 12 beam (for 40/80m). The 4SXL is mounted on a guyed 40 ft medium duty Samson tower on top of the building (and thus is about 60 ft above ground), and the Magnum will be mounted on a Rohn45 ground mounted tower at the back of the

building. Until the Magnum goes up in the spring we are using an 80m/160m fan dipole supported by a guyed 40 ft mast on the roof.

The club's IRLP node UHF link radio will be connected to a Cushcraft 11 element UHF yagi antenna, mounted at the top of the Delhi tower, and aimed at the repeater site. Eventually we will set up a 900 MHz data network linked to the repeater site using a parabolic antenna mounted on the same tower.

Radio Equipment

The club's main HF transceiver is a Yaesu FT1000MP MK V, with the usual complement of factory filters plus the Inrad roofing filter and the key click and noise blanker modifications. Alex VE3MA has loaned the club his FT-1000MP as a second radio until we purchase an FT-847 to replace it later this year. We currently have a Collins linear amplifier good for about 600 watts, and this will eventually be replaced with a linear with a higher power rating.

We have found that during contest operations we cannot operate a second radio while the main radio is transmitting, because the second radio front end could be damaged, especially if it is tuned to the same band as the running radio. In order to solve this problem, the club has purchased an Array Solutions SixPak RF switch. This can switch up to 6 antennas and 2 radios, while providing mechanical interlocks to prevent connecting one radio directly to the other, and to prevent both radios from operating on the same band. We have also purchased a pair of Dunestar Model 600 bandpass filters, one for each radio. These will prevent RF energy from a radio operating on one band from getting into the second and desensing or damaging it.

At the moment the station has a VHF mobile for access to the club VHF repeater.

We have recently relocated the club's IRLP node to the station. The connection to the club repeaters is via a dedicated Phoenix UHF transceiver with its own UHF yagi antenna.

Figure 5 shows the main operating position.



Figure 5: The main operating position

Computers and Software

We have 3 computers at present, one for each HF operating position, and one for the IRLP system. N1MM is used for logging on HF. A Linksys wireless router is used to connect to the internet. A separate firewall provides complete isolation between the Danmax and station computer networks. Laptops can be connected to the station network if necessary.

Meeting Facilities

The separate meeting area (Figure 6) has four six foot tables (one donated by Bryan VA3BLJ) plus seating, donated by Earle VE3XEL and Alex VA3CKI. The room is used for various club meetings, training, and various other activities such as club station nights.



Figure 6: The meeting area

IRLP System Back in Service

The Club's IRLP system has been relocated to the club station, and is now back in service, with a new node number (2998). We have installed a computer (donated by Don Meaker VE3KHN) with a new IRLP board, and a Phoenix UHF link radio, at the station. The link radio is currently connected to the 3 band vertical at the station, and talks to a similar link radio located at the repeater site. When the weather warms up, we will install a yagi antenna at the station, and re-orient the existing yagi at the repeater site to point it at the station. This should improve signal quality, although our tests show it is reasonable at the moment. The repeater controller passes signals between the VHF repeater and the UHF link radio at the repeater end of the connection.

The operation of the system has been simplified. You do NOT need the ON or OFF codes formerly required. Now, you just key up, identify yourself and state you are using the IRLP, and enter the node number you wish to reach. When you want to disconnect from a node, just key 73 (Either you or the person at the other end can do this.) Note that the IRLP is currently accessible only from the VHF repeater, although later we will likely provide access from the UHF repeater also.

Please look at the IRLP web site www.irlp.net, and in particular the IRLP Guidelines section, before using it.

The next step will be to add Echolink to the system. We will do this once we are sure that the IRLP itself works properly.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the club I would like to thank Jerry Maksimowski, the owner of Danmax Electronics, for his enthusiastic support. The VE3MIS station would not exist without his generosity. Jerry has provided the space for the station at no charge, and has donated both Force 12 antennas to the station. He also has contributed significantly towards construction costs.

Although I have mentioned several club members specifically in this article, many others have helped in various ways during the construction process, and have donated furniture and equipment. Everyone's contribution is greatly appreciated.

The Roving Reporter

This month the Roving Reporter interviewed George William Gorsline Jr, VE3YV

VE3YV

RR: How did you become interested in amateur radio?

VE3YV: In high school in Pennsylvania I was interested in both science and in international politics, so I became an SWL, listening to the major international broadcasting stations: Radio Moscow, VOA, Radio Prague, the BBC, Radio Nederland and so on. One of my father's co-workers was a ham and after I studied, he gave me the US Novice exam. The theory was pretty basic but the CW (at 5 WPM) was harder, but I passed. In 1965, at age 16, I got my first call, WN3CZJ. My first receiver was a Lafayette KT-135 kit, which was sold assembled as a Trio-Kenwood. The transmitter was a homebrew two tube for 80m CW, running about 60 watts with a 6146 final. It was crystal controlled, as was required for Novice licences at that time. For a while, it also transmitted on 40m, as confirmed by an FCC QSL. I saved up enough money caddying at the local golf course to buy a used Drake TR3 transceiver, which I used for about the next dozen years at different locations.

US rules would only let you have a Novice call for a year, so back to lots of CW practice for the upgrade to the General licence (13WPM). When US incentive licensing came along in 1968, those without the Extra class licence would lose access to portions of the bands, so more code practice to pass the 20 WPM test and get the Extra license.

I moved to Canada in 1975, and took the Canadian Advanced exam, being given credit for the Basic because of the US ticket. I was issued VE3FIU at the end of 1975, which I kept until receiving my current call in 1990 after a 6-1/2 year wait on the two-letter call list. In the meantime, US rules changed and I

applied for a two letter US call as well, K8HI.

RR: How is it that you are a member of MARC?

VE3YV: I was approached a number of years ago by Michael, VE3TKI, and Lorne, VE3CXT, to do DXCC card checking at the Ham-Ex hamfest. I had been doing checking at other hamfests but most clubs just viewed you as another vendor, sometimes asking for commercial table rates. I was impressed that they offered publicity for the checking, free admission for me and a helper, as well as any other assistance. Then they invited me to do a talk on DXing to the club's DX group. So I decided to join the club because it seemed like a great group (still does - HI).

RR: Could you tell us about your station?

VE3YV: I run a very basic setup. At home I have a Yaesu FT1000MP MK V with extra filters, interfaced to my computer for logging with Logger32 and also to run PSK and RTTY. The antennas are a home brew 30/40/80m trap dipole slung over the roof of the house and a Force 12 C3S full size beam for 10/15/20m. The C3S also works on 12 and 17m. It's mounted about 10 ft above the roof, on a homemade push up mast. As my house is only 15-1/2 ft wide, I have to park the antenna carefully so that it does not overhang the neighbour's property (12' boom). Downtown noise levels, S9 on 80m, make working the low bands particularly challenging.

I have a second station at the cottage, a Yaesu FT-100D to an 80m dipole fed with open wire through a tuner. Note that there's no linear amplifier listed at either location.

RR: What are your current ham radio related interests?

VE3YV: I've been an avid DXer for many years, on CW and SSB and more recently on digital modes, PSK and RTTY. At the moment I have 327 current (333 all-time) DXCC countries confirmed in mixed mode (CW and SSB), 293 confirmed on CW, and 304 confirmed on SSB. I got into digital modes partly because of an on-going problem with telephone interference which quite a few different filter combinations have not been able to resolve completely and also, I thought it would be fun to try something new. I've been playing with digital modes for about five years, no interference using 30 watts and I've been able to confirm 110 for DXCC so far. I had been playing with packet on 2 meters and had a primitive spotting cluster system running in the mid-80's.

I have DXCC certificates on 7 bands, the Challenge 1000, and am waiting for the Digital/RTTY award. I'm chasing the most elusive two left: 80m DXCC (for 8-band DXCC) and DXCC Honor Roll. Everytime I get to where the next "new one" confirmed will put me on Honor Roll, they add another one, so it may be quite a while before I get there!

I'm not an avid contester, although for the past 3 years, Pete, VE3AD and I have done the 10m contest from his place north of Haliburton. We won the low power category in each of the last two years. And I do enjoy Field Day, although it's less a hard core work-em-all contest and more of a chance to get to know your fellow club members better.

RR: Are you involved in any other amateur radio groups?

VE3YV: I'm a life member of RAC and ARRL. I was one of the founding directors of the RAC, having been the CRRL Ontario South Director where my main focus was working to create a single national amateur radio society from CRRL (Canadian Amateur Radio Relay League) and CARF (Canadian Amateur Radio Federation) {Ed. Note: CRRL and CARF were competing Canadian organizations; they merged eventually into RAC}. The name "Radio Amateurs of/du Canada" was cooked up by Carl Anderson, VE1UU and me at one of the merger meetings.

I have belonged to a number of now inactive or defunct clubs: West Side ARC (VE3JJ), Canadian DX Association (VE3TDX), and the CTV ARC (VE3GER). I'm also a DXCC Card Checker, nominated by RAC to the ARRL.

Some time ago, I was asked to be one of the trustees of DARF (Defence of Amateur Radio Fund). Donated funds are held in the DARF trust and can only be used to pay the expenses of a Canadian licensed ham to represent the our interests at the triennial World Radio Conferences (which decide what services get which frequency allocations). Industry Canada makes a spot available for a RAC appointee on the official Canadian delegation to these conferences, but does not pay expenses.

RR: Do you have any ham radio related "memorable moments" you would like to share?

VE3YV: My very first QSO. The night my license arrived in the mail, I went to my ham mentor's station, K3HID (SK), and had my first contact with a VE2 in Baie Comeau. So I started my ham career by DXing! Another one I remember is right after Hurricane Hugo passed over Jamaica, I heard a weak 6Y5 ham calling for any Canadian station. He got on the air by throwing a wire over some trees and

scrounging batteries out of damaged cars. He wanted to get a couple of "we're OK" messages to Canadian families and also to let emergency officials here know that the airport was going to be open the next day to accept relief flights. At the time I was a member of the CTV ham club, so I called the CTV newsroom and the information was put on the nightly news.

I've had a lot of fun with ham radio. It's a life hobby that grows and changes with you as your interests evolve. You meet some great people along the way. Since my formal education is in political science, ham radio is where I learned much of the technical background needed to be successful in a career in the computer business, including designing networks and building data centres.

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