



January 2002

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## In this Issue

1	Happy New Year!
1	Haida
1	Marconi-mania
2	Ducie Island DXpedition
2	Holiday Season quiz
3	Contest station database online
4	The "law" on antennas
5	Order of the Gavel
5	VE3DC Top 10 In CQWW 160m SSB contest And more...

The Hamilton Amateur Radio Club  
PO Box 91215, Effort Square PO  
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Est. 1932 Inc. 1956

# The Hamilton Amateur

The Hamilton Amateur Radio Club Newsletter - 70 Years of Amateur Radio 1932-2002

## Happy New Year!

*David VE3STT - Editor*

First, please note the very significant change to the front-page banner. This year, 2002, marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hamilton Amateur Radio Club!

And sorry for the slight delay in getting this January 2002 issue of our newsletter into your hands. It's getting tougher to get anything done in that period between Christmas and New Year, plus putting something in the mail during that period is tenuous at best, so you're seeing this a few days later than usual.

And the real reason... a few days of vacation taken by your editor after things slowed down at Christmas, arriving back to have this in the mail "better late than never"!

## Haida

*David VE3STT - Editor*

It seems as if the preliminary groundwork is being laid in an attempt to have the "Haida" grace the Hamilton bay area instead of continuing to reside in that rather large city just around the Lake Ontario horn from us.

In an article from our newspaper, and as heard on most of the media in Hamilton, Heritage Minister Sheila Copps has announced Ottawa will give \$5-million dollars to refurbish the rapidly deteriorating destroyer. And the Haida is supposed to become the crown jewel in the \$10-million federal Discovery Interpretive Centre museum on the waterfront of Hamilton's harbour. It

will be moored at HMCS Star, Hamilton's naval reserve.

Needless to say that has prompted some debate on a couple of sides of the issue. Those that want to see the ship stay in Toronto are now making their views known. Among them Toronto Deputy Mayor Case Ootes. Ootes says that the ship should remain where it is simply because it's been there such a long time, but people involved with the Haida itself seem to see this as a way of injecting some new life into the 58-year old former Canadian warship, a ship

## Next meeting's Speaker

January 16

*Don VE3VZ - "Two of Canada's top contest and DX stations"*

His talk will include an explanation and description of these extensive antenna farms and the high-end equipment used. It should be a great first meeting of 2002! Bring a friend to expose them to both Amateur radio and our club!

responsible for sinking or helping to sink 14 ships, more than any other Canadian destroyer.

The debate is likely to continue.

The key Amateur Radio angle is the fact that the Haida contains a radio room that has been restored to most of it's past glory and would be yet another reminder of our hobby in a very public place. There may even be a way we could "lend a hand" as a club?

## Marconi-mania

*David VE3STT - Editor*

**Club meetings - 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday each month (except July and August) - 8pm in the St. John's Ambulance Association building, 500 Upper Wellington Street (on the Mountain). Park behind the St. John's building, NOT the Police station. Complimentary refreshments!**

In case you missed it, here is some of the activity that was on the air surrounding the anniversary of the most famous radio transmission of all.

The Society of Newfoundland Radio Amateurs operated special event station VO1S during the month of December to mark the 100th anniversary of the reception of the first transatlantic radio signal, the Morse code letter "s", received by Guglielmo Marconi at Signal Hill in Newfoundland on December 12, 1901. Marconi used a kite-supported antenna to hear the signal, which was transmitted from his station in Poldhu, Cornwall, England. If you did make contact, QSL VO1S via the bureau or direct (before March 1, 2002), to SONRA, PO Box 23099, St John's, NF A1B 479, Canada.

Another special event station, W1AA/CC commemorated Marconi's feat. The Marconi Radio Club and The Falmouth Amateur Radio Association celebrated from December 11-16 on 80m through 6m, SSB and CW. W1AA flew a kite antenna, attempting to communicate from Coast Guard Beach, Eastham, Cape Cod, Massachusetts, to clubs at the historic Marconi stations in Poldhu and Saint John's. QSL via the bureau or to W1AA, Box 1193, Lakeville, MA 02347 and include an SASE.

And stations KPH and K6KPH were on the air December 12 to celebrate. Both stations used the original transmitters, receivers and antennas of KPH, a former RCA coast station. K6KPH, the Maritime Radio Historical Society club station, was active on 80m, 40m and 20m. K6KPH reception reports or a QSL can go to Dick Dillman, W6AWO, 435 Utah St No. 4, San Francisco, CA 94110. KPH reception reports go to Tom Horsfall, WA6OPE, 1862 Tulare Ave, Richmond, CA 94805.

## Ducie Island Dxpedition

*The following note was submitted as e-mail to [ve3dc@rac.ca](mailto:ve3dc@rac.ca)*

## Important points

### Executive Meetings

The HARC Executive committee meets each month, except July and August, at Mohawk College in room E031A. All members are invited to attend and participate. The meetings are scheduled monthly to fit the schedules of the Executive members.

### VE3NCF [146.760- & 444.075+ MHz]

The HARC operates VE3NCF repeater, located atop the Niagara escarpment. It's open for use by all Amateurs. Special features are a privilege of membership. VE3NCF is part of the VE3RPT link system.

### Check-in and Swap nets

The HARC "check-in net" is held every Tuesday evening, except July and August, at 7:30pm. The HARC "swap net" follows at 8:00pm.

### Examinations

Amateur radio licence examinations are conducted the second Wednesday each month, except July and August. Contact the voluntary examiners to make an appointment. Each test costs \$3.00.

### HARC Fleamarket

The HARC Fleamarket is held annually at Marritt Hall, Ancaster. Contact the Fleamarket chair for information.

**Hamfest 2002 date will be announced shortly for October 2002!** Thanks to everyone that attended and helped with Hamfest 2001!

### Membership Information

Club membership, including all privileges, is \$25.00 per person, per year, September 1 to August 31. Additional memberships, for immediate family members living in the same home, are \$1.00 per person. One newsletter is sent to each address.

### The Hamilton Amateur

The Hamilton Amateur is published ten times each year. It is not published in July or August. The deadline for article submission is the *last Saturday* of the month for the next month's issue. The preferred format is ASCII code (.txt files). Articles will be checked for spelling and grammar, but the author is responsible for the factual content. E-mail submissions to David VE3STT at [ve3stt@rac.ca](mailto:ve3stt@rac.ca)

*(As I mentioned in the December newsletter, there is new DX on the horizon. A new Dxpedition should make that elusive DX more accessible to all of us. Here's the story...ed)*

With assistance from an ARRL Colvin Award, the Pitcairn Island Amateur Radio Association (PIARA) plans to mount a DXpedition to Ducie Island in March 2002. Ducie, which became the newest ARRL DXCC entity as of November 16, 2001, has not yet been activated, making it the most-wanted DXCC entity. Poor weather scuttled the initial attempt to land a DXpedition team on Ducie Island in November. PIARA President Tom Christian VP6TC, has announced that a DXpedition team now plans to depart by boat from Mangareva on March 12. Once on Ducie Island, the DXpedition will use a VP6 call sign to be announced at the start of the operation, which will include both SSB and CW and possibly RTTY on 160m through 6m. Six-meter QSLs go to JA1BK. Log checks will be available on the "DX Cluster from Japan" Web site, [www.big.or.jp/~ham/dx.html](http://www.big.or.jp/~ham/dx.html) and more information is available on the VE3HO QSL Manager Web page at [www.ve3ho.com/ve3ho-qslmgr.htm](http://www.ve3ho.com/ve3ho-qslmgr.htm) and on WD4NGB's DX Is Web site at [www.qsl.net/wd4ngb/ducie.htm](http://www.qsl.net/wd4ngb/ducie.htm)

## Holiday Season quiz

*David VE3STT – Editor*

Just before I cleaned my desk at work and checked all the e-mails that usually arrive in my computer on a daily basis, before enjoying a couple of extra days over Christmas, I received the following e-mail. I thought it was kind of cute and captured the spirit of the season. It's probably been around the horn several times and you yourself may have actually received this same mail. Enjoy.

This isn't like other quizzes... Don't bother getting a pen and paper. The point isn't the answers, but I think you might be the kind of person who can appreciate it.

Read on...

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
3. Name the last five winners of the Miss America contest.
4. Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer prize.
5. Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for Best Actor and Actress.
6. Name the last decade's worth of World Series Winners.

How did you do?

Few of us remember the headliners of yesterday. These are no second-rate achievers. They're the best in their fields. But applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Now here's another set of questions. See how you do on this one...

1. List three teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Think of five people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
5. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.
6. Name a half dozen heroes whose stories have inspired you.

Easier?

The people who make a difference in our lives aren't the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They're the ones who take the time to care. When you have a chance, maybe you'll pass this on to people who've made a difference in your life.

I just did. Merry Christmas!

## Contest station database online

David VE3STT - Editor

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If you're a contester, then you've likely talked to yourself at some point or another during a particular contest. It may have been when 10m closed down early, when the racket on 40m sideband just seems to be like pounding your head against a very unforgiving wall or running low power on CW and having a huge signal take up residence only .5KHz away from where you are (and then not even hear your pleas - QRL and QSY)!

Have you ever wondered why your signal may indeed actually rank as a "pea-shooter" compared to some of the so-called "big guns" out there? Now you have a chance to compare notes, evaluate stations of those you admire

and possibly look at ways to improve your own contest station.

The following came to me via one of the many internet reflectors that deal with Amateur radio items, in this case, contesting. The author is Pete N4ZR:

As long-time readers of this reflector know, Scott Tuthill K7ZO began the World Contest Station Database in the 1995-97 period. Information about HF contest stations was harvested from the 3830 reflector, organized in an Excel format, and made available for FTP.

In 1999/2000, I worked with Scott's blessing to adapt the database so that it could be made accessible on the World Wide Web, and so that people could submit revised information through the Internet. Leigh Jones KR6X, generously provided a web server as home for the database.



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Response from the contest community was very good, and the database grew by early this year to over 1700 HF contest stations worldwide. But as it grew, so did the burden of maintaining the database manually. It had reached the point by this past February that I was spending several hours of grindingly dull labour a week to do that, and something had to give.

Initially, I tried to develop a way to permit users to update their entries directly via the Web, but this approach foundered on technical and security issues. Then Mike Reublin NF4L, came up with the idea of automating the off-line updating process instead, and wrote an elegant little piece of software to do the job.

Now that this problem is solved, I've deployed a new release of the database, with several improvements. Most notably, the previously separate databases for US/VE and other stations have been combined, so there is now only one query form and one form for updating. The database is faster, and the display of data is more readable. All the updates that people provided from late February up through yesterday have been added, and the database is ready for use.

With thanks to KR6X for his long and patient support, I've also moved the database to a new server. The move should be transparent to most users, because the previous link through [www.qsl.net/n4zr](http://www.qsl.net/n4zr) remains in service. You can also access the database at the PVRC home page, [www.pvrc.org](http://www.pvrc.org).

Please drop by, and let me know what you think.

## The "law" on antennas

*The following note was submitted as e-mail to [ve3dc@rac.ca](mailto:ve3dc@rac.ca)*

*(Because it seems to always be a concern, if not a problem, I thought it might be interesting to relay the victory of a US Amateur in his on-going fight to have an "antenna support" for his Amateur Radio use..ed)*

In one of the most favourable PRB-1 court rulings in years, a New York Amateur has won a three-year battle to erect a tower on his property. The US District Court for the Northern District of New York has ordered the Saratoga Springs Planning Board to grant Randall J. Palmer N2NVH, a special use permit for a 44-foot antenna

### HARC 2001-2002 Chairs

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#### Swap Net Control

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support structure. PRB-1 is the limited federal pre-emption that requires localities to reasonably accommodate Amateur Radio communication.

In a 20-page decision issued December 3, US District Judge Norman A. Mordue found that "the planning board did not attempt to negotiate a satisfactory compromise" with Palmer. As a result, Mordue said the town failed to reasonably accommodate Palmer's Amateur communication needs pursuant to PRB-1. The judge found that "the planning board engaged Palmer in a strictly one-sided negotiation consisting of inflexible demands and the construction of hoop after hoop for Palmer to jump through."

Mordue found that the record "clearly proves" the planning board made no attempt to negotiate a satisfactory compromise. On the other hand, the judge asserted, Palmer complied with many of the planning board's numerous requests and even made concessions on his own initiative. Mordue said that since the town already understood its obligations under PRB-1, he was directing the planning board to immediately grant Palmer's application. It's not known if the town will appeal.

ARRL Volunteer Counsel Albert J. Millus WB2EQR, represented Palmer through much of the battle. "I'm a ham radio operator myself, and these are important cases for hams," Millus told the Associated Press December 4.

Saratoga Springs limits all antennas to 20 feet in height and allows exceptions only upon issuance of a special use permit. Palmer applied for one in 1999 to erect a modest antenna system of less than 50 feet in height, but the town continued to deny his permit application.

After the last rejection earlier this year, Palmer went forward with his lawsuit, filed after the town's initial denial of his application. A bench trial was held October 30. Mordue's decision relied on an analysis of prior antenna cases, including the landmark Pentel v. Mendota Heights case, issued by the Eighth Circuit in 1994.

ARRL Hudson Division Director Frank Fallon N2FF, continues to spearhead a legislative effort to codify PRB-1 into New York state law. Fallon said he hoped the decision in the Palmer case, coupled with the goodwill generated by amateur response to the September 11 World Trade Center attacks, would prompt the New York Assembly to act favourably on the PRB-1 bill when the legislature goes back into session December 17.

## Order of the Gavel

David VE3STT – Editor

January means tallying up a years worth of CW contacts once again to compete for the HARC Order of the Gavel – CW Operating Award.

The February meeting is traditionally the meeting we award the prestigious Order of the Gavel! On this page you will find a “new and improved” entry form that you can use to submit an entry.

Here are the rules (and please, no matter how many contacts you have made in the past year, submit an entry...you

never know).

**PURPOSE:** To promote the use of CW and to stimulate an interest among the newer Hams to operate in the HF bands.

### RULES:

1. The event is open to all members of the HARC.
2. The award may not be won two years in a row.
3. The contest will be an annual event.
4. Only the previous 12 months will be considered, from January 1st to December 31st. In case of a Ham of less than 12 months, the score will be prorated by dividing 365 by the number of days licensed, times the score of points attained.
5. The following point system will be used to decide the winner:  
*200w or more input @ 1 point per QSO.*  
*Under 200w input @ 2 points per QSO.*  
*Under 10w input @ 5 points per QSO.*
6. The total points from above will be adjusted by a DX multiplier of 1, 2 or 5 points per DX country in relation to the power levels listed above. DX will be the current ARRL DX country list. There will be no DX multiplier for USA.
7. A valid QSO will be QTH, RST, and

name.

Please submit the form included later in this newsletter to Lorraine VA3NZ, no later than the February meeting. The judges may want to see your logs before making their final decision.

*(And you get to keep the "Award of the Gavel" trophy for the next year. ed)*

## VE3DC Top Ten in CQWW 160m SSB Contest

David VE3STT – Editor

It's becoming all too commonplace! Once again the VE3DC contest team has achieved a Top 10 finish in the premier low band event, the CQWW 160m Contest.

In the December 2001 contest results just released the VE3DC team place #10 in the World in the SSB side of the event with a total of 130,760 Pts (a mere stones throw from the next three higher positions).

### HARC Order of the Gavel

#### CW Operating Award – Entry Form

Qso's MUST have been made between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31 of eligible year to qualify!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Call: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Qso's made with UNDER 10 Watts (Qrp):

Qso's \_\_\_\_\_ x5 =  Multiply boxes to left together to give Qrp Pts

Dx Cty \_\_\_\_\_ x5 =

+

#### Qso's made with 10 to 200 Watts (Low Power):

Qso's \_\_\_\_\_ x2 =  Multiply boxes to left together for Low Pwr Pts

Dx Cty \_\_\_\_\_ x2 =

+

#### Qso's made with over 200 Watts (High Power):

Qso's \_\_\_\_\_ =  Multiply boxes to left together for High Pwr Pts

Dx Cty \_\_\_\_\_ =

=

The TOTAL of the THREE boxes on the right will determine your SCORE for the HARC Order of the Gavel award. Please submit on/before the date of the February HARC meeting. Your logs MAY be required for official verification. Good Luck!

NOTE: Any Amateur licensed less than one year MUST multiply their score with the following formula to obtain a “pro-rated final score” - (Score x days licensed/365).

The actual score looked like this:

486q 49ve/us 7cty 130,760pts

And, even though I was part of the group that achieved this success, it always amazes me that VE3DC can work 7 countries on the lowest of bands to put up a score like that!

It's somewhat curious that the CW score posted by VE3DC was a little outside of the Top 10 box after the contest, even though it was more than double the score in the SSB portion. Just goes to show that CW makes for a more economical, farther reaching signal, but the competition on 160m CW is fierce, to say the least!

Congratulations to all the operators that can again claim to be Top 10 in the World on 160m:

Mike VE3DXF, Rick VE3BK, Dan VA3DJ, Steve VE3OZO, Mark VE3RYI, Tony VE3RZ, David VE3STT, Vic VE3VMO and Don VE3VZ.

## Up-coming events

*David VE3DWJ*

**Around the Bay Road Race – Sunday March 24, 2002.** I will be looking for volunteers to help out with the first 10km of the race. This annual event brings many runners to Hamilton. If you're interested in helping that Sunday morning, call David 905-383-9808.

**Red Shield Campaign – First Monday in May.** Traditionally the club has lent a hand to the Salvation Army with their annual appeal blitz.

**Field Day! – June 29 and 30<sup>th</sup>.** This contest/operating demonstration is always the final full weekend in June. This year, as always, we're seeking some early participation and great numbers of new members are encouraged to join the fun!

If you would like to take charge and be a band captain this year, call me as soon as possible so plans can be made. As always, we are seeking to improve our final position posted in last years event!

## HARC Repeater update

*David VE3DWJ*

Over the last twenty years the club has enjoyed a stable relationship with the landlord at our present location. We have always operated our repeater with an agreement and relationship that was always one of mutual friendship and one that was very informal.

The club was informed that this "agreement" was no longer acceptable as of the end of 2001. The managers of the apartment building, on which our repeater is located, would now require a formal document of the agreement.

The HARC Executive reviewed a request for insurance, liability insurance and a rent increase. A meeting was arranged with the building manager.

Our President Emsley VE3JAI and Secretary Fred VE3GCP met with the manager and after a couple of sessions negotiated a new deal. A new formal document was signed before December 31, 2001. We are happy to report that the HARC now has a new lease agreement for the next 15 years!

Part of the deal was that the club remove any unused equipment and cabinets from the site, which was completed December 28<sup>th</sup> with help from Fred VE3GCP, David VE3DWJ, Neil VE3VNG and Frank VA3FWL.

As for the repeater equipment itself, the link radio interconnection for linking our 2m radio to the TFMCS system has developed a problem. That will be corrected before the end of January 2002. A repair strategy for the UHF repeater will also be finalized soon!

## Highest of highs and lowest of lows

*The following note was submitted as e-mail to ve3dc@rac.ca*

**AO-40** - AO-40 satellite ground controllers have begun adjusting the

spacecraft's attitude as it enters a period of "unfavourable sun angles". AO-40 command station team member Stacey Mills W4SM, says the operating schedule has been modified slightly to reflect the decreasing attitude longitude (ALON).

"As expected, the satellite has lost sun sensor lock, so we are now officially in the 'dead zone'," Mills reported. The satellite is currently in a long period during which Earth eclipses the sun near perigee--its point closest to Earth. These periods will continue well into next June.

The satellite relies on solar panels for its power. The attitude shifting necessary to compensate will leave AO-40's antennas pointing away from Earth for several weeks.

To save power, the transponder pass bands were being turned off at various times, and the RUDAK digital transponder was scheduled to be off for up to five days.

**LF Signals** - Another new low-frequency distance record is being claimed. New Zealand DX tests coordinator Bob Vernal ZL2CA, reports that on December 15, John Currie VE1ZJ, in Canada, managed to receive and positively identify 136-kHz signals from ZL6QH, in New Zealand. ZL6QH, the Quartz Hill club station, is run by the Wellington Amateur Radio Club. The path from ZL6QH near Wellington to VE1ZJ in Sydney, Nova Scotia, has been calculated at 15,645km, around 9700 miles. VE1ZJ detected the ZL6QH transmission using a PC and ARGO DSP software.

An Amateur Radio LF signal spanned the Pacific for the first time on June 30, 2001, when Steve McDonald VE7SL, of British Columbia, Canada, detected a 184-kHz signal from ZL6QH. The feat was repeated in September.

Vernal said the next test from ZL6QH in the 136-kHz band likely would occur in mid-January. The ARRL has petitioned the FCC to authorize Amateur Radio allocations at 136 kHz and in the 160-190 kHz band. The petition is pending.