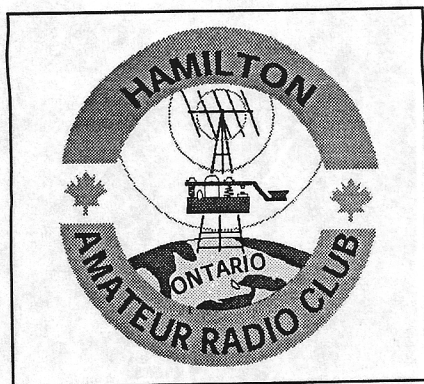


VP 8 VTN 2002 South Sandwich Rocks VE3BR



The Hamilton Amateur

The Hamilton Amateur Radio Club Newsletter - 72 Years of Amateur Radio 1932-2004

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[Http://www.hwcn.org/link/harc/](http://www.hwcn.org/link/harc/)

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The Hamilton Amateur Radio Club
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 Est. 1932 Inc. 1956

HI-Q BALUN

HARC Hamfest 2004

By Mardy, VE3QEE.

Thanks to those volunteers who helped at the Flea Market on October 16th. The event was a success by many measures. This year, due to a number of circumstances, we were understaffed. Some dedicated volunteers took up the slack by working from 6:00 AM until 12:00 noon, almost non-stop, doing several jobs each. Our thanks to those club members for all the help. The Pathfinders in the kitchen did a splendid job preparing and serving food. A share of proceeds from the kitchen will help send one or two Pathfinders to camp. We are booked for the Saturday following Thanksgiving in 2005. If you have a calendar that goes that far ahead circle the date, Saturday, October 15th.

Next Club Meeting

Wednesday, November 17th our guest speaker will be John Sluymer, VE3EJ, who is certainly no stranger to our Club, having been a guest speaker here on more than one occasion. John is a noted contester and maintains an enviable antenna farm where he lives on the escarpment south of Grimsby.

John will be speaking about his recent DX Expedition to the South Atlantic and showing a 45 minute DVD about the adventure. Bring a friend, and help us welcome John at the November meeting.

Scientists Predict Early Solar Minimum

This news comes via the ARRL weekly e-bulletin quoting from the GB2RS News Service.

American physicist David Hathaway believes that the next solar minimum could arrive sooner than previously predicted.

GB2RS News quotes on an article on the 'Science at NASA' website. It predicts that the next solar minimum could occur in late 2006. That's about a year earlier than previously thought.

Dr. Hathaway bases his prediction on data from the last eight solar cycles, which show that solar minimum follows the first sunspot-free day on the sun by 34 months. In this solar cycle, the first spotless day was on 28th January this year and more recently, on the 11th and 12th of October, there were two more spotless days.

Hathaway goes on to state that the next solar maximum might also come early. He is quoted as saying that solar activity intensifies rapidly after solar minimum. That in recent cycles, the Solar Max has followed Solar Minimum by just four years. If that is the case, the next solar maximum could be not all that far away in 2010 and a Solar Max is good news for D-Xing.

Club meetings – 3rd Wednesday each month (except July and August) - 8pm in the Hamilton District Christian High School, 92 Glancaster Road at the corner of Rymal Road (Hwy. #53) and Glancaster Road. Parking on location. Complimentary refreshments.

Explain This

Why is it that some HAMs will complain bitterly about the price of gasoline at 85¢ a litre and then turn around and pay \$1.50 for 500 ML of bottled drinking water?

Dis & Dat

by Bernie Granby, VE3EKY, VA3XJ

Save those stamps, boys and girls. Put them in your album or give them to your nieces, nephews kids, or grandkids. for their albums: You get the idea.

Have you noticed that our esteemed editor Mardy puts special, collectable stamps on our correspondence. Every month with your THA (HARC's Bulletin) you get this special stamp. No extra charge. Don't you think thats neat? Read your bulletin more than once and pay attention. Mardy: I save them every month. Ruth has an album. She collects them in an envelope. She says she will paste them in some day .Actually her statement of intent was more like "I'll save them up who knows some day I may be layed up with a broken leg and then I'll have something to do". How were we to know that all these years hence they give you a new knee and toss you out of bed the next day and off home a couple of days later. Isn't this a wonderful world? What next?

Boy, getting rid of a couple of trees, (see last month's Dis & Dat), sure makes a difference in propagation. Signals are up and in one afternoon on 40, 30, 12, and 20 I had QSOs with our friends to the south along with UK and Italy. I've got all these many times over but I still get a kick out of it. I'll send a QSL card to the station in Balogna cause he asked. Via the buro is painless. I love my long wire inverted vee dipole it gets out on all 9 HF bands. Hope nobody else knocks it down. Well dats all about dis fer nw 73 de ben (dah di di dit dit da dit)

Inner Secrets Exposed

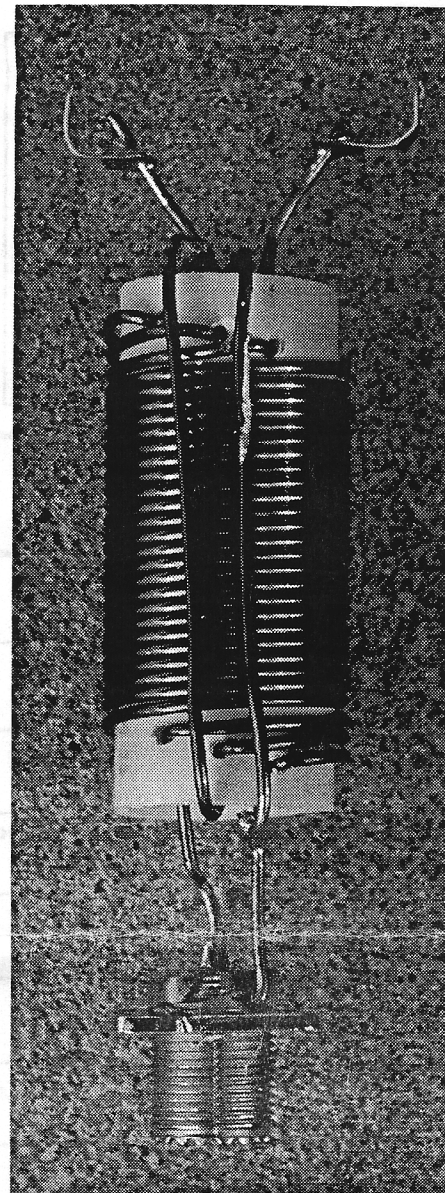
Mardy, VE3QEE, takes a look inside the ubiquitous Van Gordon Balun

Have you ever wondered what is inside one of those white jacketed Van Gordon Baluns? Well, at a cost of \$25.00 to find out, save yourself some trouble and expense by reading further.



The 4:1 balun in this picture looks similar to the balun cut apart. However, the interior shown on the right and described in text is from the balun with a 1:1 ratio.

There is a method of testing baluns using the MFJ Antenna Analyzer. First, you terminate a 1:1 balun with a pair of 25 ohm resistors in series. Then you measure the SWR developed across each side. If the SWR readings are not the same, or very close, supposedly, the balun is "of questionable use". A recently retired balun of mine failed this simple test of balance. Armed with that excuse, and having fought curiosity about the structure of those baluns for

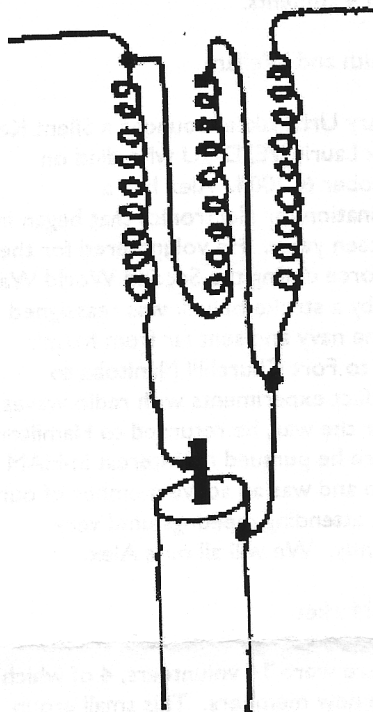


many years, I sawed through the case, and liberated the contents.

Inside, were three strands of enameled wire, running parallel and wrapped nine times around a 1" diameter hollow plastic core forming a three stranded coil. The first strand of wire came from the left branch of the dipole and ended at the center pin of the coax connector. Soldered to beginning of that same strand was a lead running straight down the outside of the coil to feed the second strand of the coil from the bottom upwards. The third strand came from the right branch of the dipole and ended at the ground or braid side of the coax connector.

Where the second strand emerged from the coil at the top of the balun another lead also ran straight down outside the coil and was soldered to the ground or braid side of the coax connector.

*1" diam plastic
9 winds*



The result is a broad-band transformer that feeds both sides of a dipole from the centre pin of a coaxial cable, enabling us to drive a balanced antenna using an unbalanced feedline. If one of our readers can explain, in more detail, how the balun works electrically, e-mail me at, <ve3qee@rac.ca>, and I will print your explanation in the next newsletter. In the meantime I hope your curiosity is being satisfied as much as mine was.

RAC Winter Contest

For those members who like contesting, the HARC Contest Group, using the Club call sign, VE3DC, will be participating in what has become a "favourite" contest.

HARC 2004-2005 Chairs

Awards/Volunteer Examiner

Lorraine MacPherson VA3NZ
905-389-7653 va3nz@rac.ca

Contesting/Property Manager

Rick Danby VE3BK
905-544-3253 rdanby@sympatico.ca

Education

Mardy Eedson VE3QEE
905-648-0187 meedson@cogeco.ca

Emergency Services ARES

Gary Notto VE3TTO
905-387-1103 ve3tto@rac.ca

Volunteer Examiner

Bernie Granby VA3XJ
905-527-7175 berngran@hwcen.org

Field Day

David Bruton VE3DWJ
905-383-9808 am983@hwcen.org

Flea Market

Mardy Eedson, VE3QEE,
905-648-0187 ve3qee@rac.ca

Health/Welfare

Mary Urbanski VE3OGQ
905-388-8383

Hospitality

Bernie Granby VA3XJ
905-527-7175 berngran@hwcen.org
and
Ilona Davidson VE3UGM

Membership/Web

Emsley Mitchell VE3JAI
905-627-0333
eamitch@mcmail.cis.mcmaster.ca

Newsletter

open position - we are looking for
an Editor

Public Liaison Co-Chair

Stanley Bolibruch VE3GFE
905-528-4002

Public Liaison Co-Chair

Neil Galloway VE3VNG
905-383-6986

Repeater

John Vandenberg VE3DVV
905-692-3802
Jvandenberg@mountaincable.net

Swap Net Control

Frank Love VA3FWL
905-679-4524

Talk to Rick, VE3BK if you might be interested in doing a shift with the group.

RAC WINTER CONTEST is December 18, 2004 0:00 Zulu to 24:00 Zulu which means 7pm Friday night December 17 to 7pm Saturday December 18, 2004.

To those who regularly contest with the group, we are planning a practice run on the computers before the contest date, so that Murphy doesn't get us. Let me know a suitable time when you could attend a meeting at the site for this purpose, preferably some time in November or early December. I know this can be a busy time of year with office parties etc, so, please send me a note by e-mail.

Rick, VE3BK

Please note that Rick Danby, VE3BK, Contest Manager, has a NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS. rdanby@sympatico.ca Please remove the old address in your computer's e-mail address book. -ed.

Christmas Dinner Party at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club

Please pass the word and encourage your friends to join our group for the annual HARC Christmas Dinner at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club. The dinner takes place on the third Wednesday of December which is December 15th this year. In a similar format to that of last year, we are having a full course Turkey Dinner with trimmings. The cocktail hour begins at 6:00 PM and dinner will be served at 7:00 PM. Tickets are \$27.00 per person and Fred is looking after the guest list. Please let Fred know your intentions.

The Yacht Club is at the foot of McNab Street North (between James Street and Bay Street). To get there proceed down Bay Street towards the bay. At the end of Bay street the road turns right and the name changes to Guise Street for one block. The parking lot

for the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club is accessed off Guise. It is well signed, and parking is free.

Minutes of the General Meeting for October 20, 2004

by secretary, Roger Pimm, VE3UFZ

President Mardy called the meeting to order at 8:00pm. The first order of business was to draw for the 1 year free membership for the membership year 2004 - 2005. Mike VA3MXXS did the draw and the winner was David Webb VA3RF. Congratulations David.

Our guest speaker this month, Vern Sherwood of Excess Energy, was introduced by Ron Ouwehand. Vern's company specializes in renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and hydraulic power generation. His presentation focused mainly on batteries; their capacity, maintenance and reliability. A number of different types of voltaic cells were discussed:

- Lead Acid
- Gel Cell
- NiCad
- NiMh
- Lithium

Some interesting anecdotes presented were:

NiCad batteries rule as far as Vern is concerned. A NiCad battery can endure 1000 cycles of charge/drain whereas a NiMh cell can endure only 400 cycles.

(But let's not forget that a great advantage of the NiMh cell is that it has no memory!-Ed)

Vern then went on to discuss emergency power for homes in the event of power failures, and also power for off grid homes. Off Grid homes are homes designed to be completely self sufficient for power by utilizing both wind and solar power sources. Energy storage is still lead acid technology. It has been observed that the number of Off Grid homes is

increasing. There is an economic advantage to purchasing property in unnerred territory (ie: no utilities of any kind) and then providing your own power sources. Property in these territories is much lower in price than property in the urban environment.

The Japanese government sponsored 100,000 off grid homes, which were financed by the government controlled power company. The cost of equipping these homes was eventually passed on to the subscribers on the grid by increasing power rates. It seems that the only winner in this case is the environment.

The presentation was capped off with a large hands-on exhibit of wind generators, solar panels and charge controllers. All in all a very interesting presentation. Vern's Web Site is at [HYPERLINK "http://WWW.EXCESSENERGY.NET" WWW.EXCESSENERGY.NET](http://WWW.EXCESSENERGY.NET)

Business Meeting

Secretary

The minutes of the September 15 General Meeting were accepted as published in the club bulletin. Moved by Neil Galloway and seconded by Walter VA3WVB.

Treasurers

Fred VE3GCP presented a financial health report the highlights of which are:

Flea Market ticket sales ñ 368 general admission, 65 table rentals
Resulting proceeds were \$1,460
Costs were approximately \$1,300

Moved by Fred VE3GCP and seconded by Casey VE3CVP the report was accepted as read.

Membership

We currently have 53 paid members. A guest Ian Smith VE3SOF was introduced to the club members. Moved by Emsley and seconded by Mike VA3MXXS that the report be accepted as presented.

Education

The advanced course is proceeding on Monday nights at 7:00pm at Mohawk College. Wojtek Rusin is the instructor. There are currently 3 students with a 4th possible. Mardy is proceeding with the Fall Basic Course with 4 students.

Health and Welfare

Mary Urbanski announced a Silent Key Alex Laurie VE3DQU who died on October 6, 2004. Alex had a fascination for electronics that began in his teen years. He volunteered for the air force during the Second World War but by a stroke of luck was reassigned to the navy and sent far from harm's way to Fort Churchill Manitoba to conduct experiments with radio waves. After the war, he returned to Hamilton where he pursued his interest in HAM radio and was an active member of our club, attending meetings until very recently. We will all miss Alex.

Flea Market

There were 14 volunteers, 4 of which were new members. This small group did a lot of work and our appreciation is conveyed to them. Next year we will need more volunteers to spread the work around. Even those of us who are too old to be lifting and moving tables and chairs can contribute, in a very simple way, by being in an area and keeping watch on the goings on.

Unfinished Business

The club emergency station was put up for sale at the London Flea Market at the price agreed upon at our last general meeting with no success. At our Flea Market there were two similar rigs for sale. One for \$700 (including power supply) and it sold for \$650. It would appear that our asking price should be in the order of \$700 - \$800 since our rig is in pristine condition. The radio is being listed on the swap net.

New Business

The club Christmas Party will be held on December 15, 2004 at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club. Dinners will be \$27 per plate. Please let Fred Robinson VE3GCP know if you plan to attend.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00pm.

Club Shirts

Here is your chance to wear something with the club name.

Recently our guest speakers have been presented with a shirt embroidered with the HARC name. In response to comments by some Club members, that they would like to have a similar shirt, the executive has ordered a number of those shirts to be made available to club members on a cost recovery basis.

At the time of printing I believe the price will be around \$28.00 per shirt, tax included. Ron Ouwehand, VA3OUW, has the shirts. Talk to him if you are interested and pick one up at a Club meeting.

Fla. Hurricane Havoc

The following poem from the internet was submitted by one of our members..

Tw'as the night before Frances, when all
through the state
Not a gas pump was pumping, not a store open
late.
All the plywood was hung on the windows with
care
Knowing a hurricane soon would be there.

The children were ready with flashlights in
hand
While bands from the hurricane covered the
land
And Mom with her Mag-Light and I with my cap
Had just filled the bath tub for flushing our crap
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter
I sprang from the closet to see what was the
matter.

The trees on the fence, and the neighbour's
roof torn
Gave the fear of us dying in this terrible storm.
With a little wind gust so lively and quick,
I remembered quite clearly our walls were not
brick.

More rapid than eagles her courses they came,
And she whistled and wafted and surged all the
same.

Off shingles! Off Sidings! Off rooftops! Off
Power!
Down trees! Down fences! Down trailers! Down
towers!

In the center of Florida she continued to maul,
Screaming, Blow away! Blow away! Blow away
all!

As wind ripped and tossed debris through the
sky,

I peeked out the shutters at cars floating by.
So get to the safe room my family did do,
With portable radio and batteries too.

And then in a twinkling I heard on the set,
The end was not coming for a few hours yet.
As I calmed down the kids and was turning
around,

Through the window it came with a huge
crashing sound,

A tree branch it was all covered in soot.
The wind blew it smack dab on top of my foot.
A bundle of twigs now lays in a stack,
And my living room looks like it's under attack.

The wind how it howled, the storm – very
scary!
Myself and my family were all too unwary,
The dangers of hurricanes are serious you
know,
They are taken for granted as Frances did show.

Winds dying down, and the danger beneath,
I noticed my tool shed was missing its sheath.
So I grabbed my last tarp and nailed it all down.
Then I got in my car and headed for town.

The traffic was awful. The stores had no ice.
My five gallon cooler would have to suffice.
Generators were scarce, not one left in town.
There were trees on the roads and power lines
down.

FEMA was ready with people to work.
Electrical workers came in from New York.
And in the midst of this peculiar routine,
Another storm came named Hurricane Jeanne.

I sprang in my car and gave my family a whistle.

Then away we all went like a Tomahawk missile.
You could hear us exclaim as we drove out of
sight.
"To Hell with this place, Vermont seems just
right.

Alex Lawrie VE3DQU 1917-2004

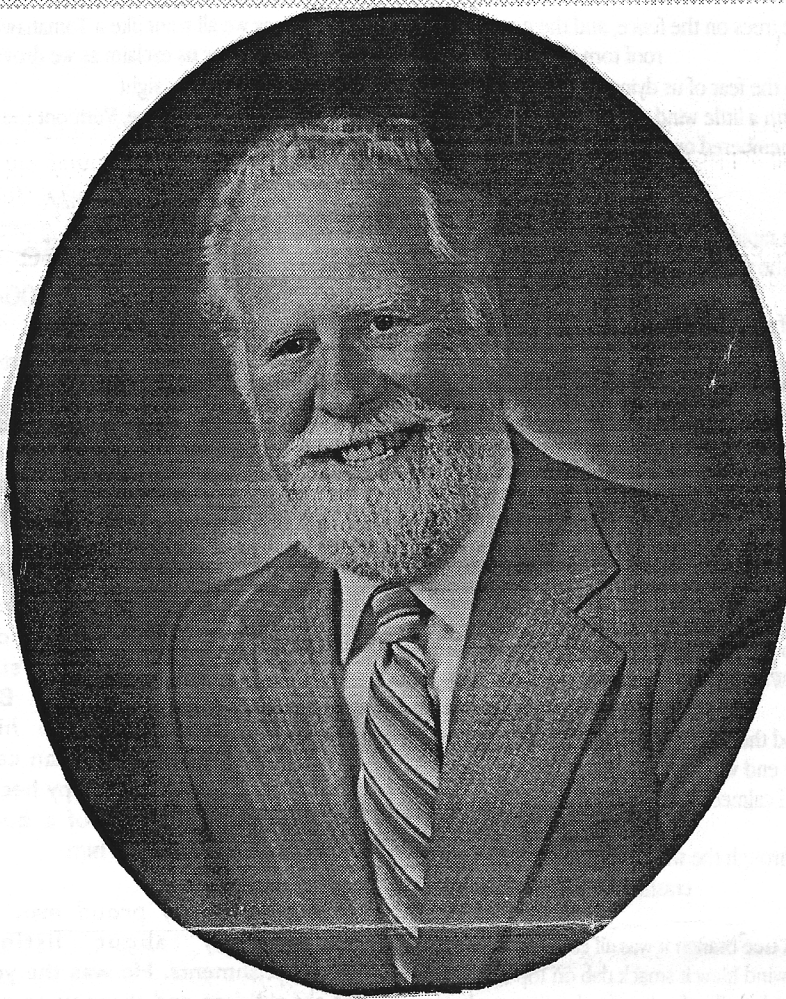
Excerpts from the eulogy – courtesy of
Fred VE3GCP

Saying goodbye is never easy but today
is not a sad occasion. Dad lived to be
87 and although he spent the last nine
months of his life in a nursing home, he
was never seriously ill in his life; he
never had an operation and he never
spent a day in a hospital. It would be
easy for the moment to focus on what
a terrible thing the last stage of
Alzheimers is, because it is. But that
would not do justice to his long
successful life. Today we can celebrate
his life and we can be happy because he
is free of the burden of a body that
would no longer serve him.

Dad was a very proud man and he
wasn't shy about listing his
accomplishments. He was the youngest
of six children and there were no skirts
to hide behind after he lost his mother
at the age of seven. He learned to stand
up and speak up for himself out of self-
defense. When he met someone who
had trouble remembering names his
standard line was, "You'll remember
mine, I'm Alexander The Great". He
was joking of course..... sort of.

The big band era was ushered in during
dad's teens and early twenties. He
spent most of his social life at
community and church dances. It was
on the dance floor that he met and fell
in love with our mother Grace
McVinnie. She became his wife and life
partner. They were married during
WWII, but like many young couples at
that time they were separated by
military service.

Dad had signed up for the air force to
be a rear gunner on the bombers but a
twist of fate intervened. He had



repaired a radio for a friend of the family who as it turned out, ranked high in the military secret service. This friend was impressed with his knowledge of electronics and had him transferred to the navy. Dad was eventually assigned to a research station in Churchill, Manitoba to conduct experiments on radio transmission and sunspot activity. Mom was able to join him later. Dad absolutely loved the wilderness experience. Mom absolutely hated it.

It has been said that copper wire was invented by two Scotsmen fighting over a penny. While dad was very generous with his family, he was a true Scot when it came to spending money on himself. If you add being a HAM radio

operator to that and you have the very portrait of thrift. Hams are notorious for scrounging and making their gear from spare parts and salvaged components. Our basement was full of old radios, army surplus electronics, radar units

and even a teletype machine at one time. Most of them had been disassembled for parts that filled shelves and boxes and baskets that took up an entire corner of the basement. After all, you never know when you might need a certain part and you wouldn't want to have to pay the price of a new one!

Dad spent most of his working life with Westinghouse Canada. He was promoted to foreman, responsible for

500 men. He was most proud of the period when he oversaw the construction of the turbines that were used to build the Trans Canada Pipeline.

For mom and dad their retirement years were happy times. When he was working, Dad worried about whether Westinghouse would stay in business and if he would have enough money to retire on. After he retired he stopped worrying. They spent there winters in Florida and were socially active. They love to dance and would go square dancing two or three times a week.

Dad played many rolls, in his life time: a child, a naval officer, a husband, a father, an executive and a grand father six times over. Janice, Malcolm and I, are grateful for his playing the roll of our father in this lifetime. His innate sense of right and wrong is so ingrained in us that it is hard to tell where his values end and ours begin. We are happy that he has been released from his burden and take comfort in the knowledge that the world today is a better place for his having been here.

Answers to Last Month's Crossword

Across

1 Radiation; 3 Adcock; 8 Loopstick; 10 Horizontal; 11 Yagi; 12 Loss; 13. Radiation; 15 Balun; 16 Trap; 18 Resonance; 19 UHF; 21 Installation; 23. Hardline; 25. Choke; 26 Duplexer; 27 Dielectric; 29 Quad; 30 VSWR; 31 Mobile; 32 Match

Down

2 Attenuator; 4 Coordinates; 5 Transmatch; 6 Phase; 7 ERP; 8 Lightening; 9 Polarization; 12 Loop; 14 Attenuate; 17 Rotation; 20 Impedance; 22 Coaxial; 24 Directivity; 25 Colinear; 28 Induced