



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
 PO Box 91215, Effort Square PO
 Hamilton, ON L8N 4G4
 Est. 1932 Inc. 1956

Do You Hear Those Contesters?

By Mardy, VE3QEE.

Almost every weekend there is one contest or another taking place on the air. You can find out about contests by looking at the Contest Calendar in The Canadian Amateur, or the Contest Corral in QST magazine. Both of these sources list web addresses where the contest rules, the nature of an exchange, and log submission forms are all available. Sometimes when I have a few minutes on a weekend, evening when there is a contest going on, I'll get on the air and give the contest stations a few extra contacts.

If you haven't done a lot of contesting there are a few suggestions to make that first contact a little easier. You'll want to record the frequency in MHz, and the time of the contact in Universal Time Coordinated, (UTC). At our location we are five hours behind UTC which is the time at Greenwich England on the Zero Meridian of Longitude, (the Prime Meridian). This means that after 7:00 PM at our location it becomes the **next day** in UTC. The time for contests is always recorded using 24 hour format. When you are recording, it helps to have a clock or a wrist watch set to UTC or a list of corresponding times for reference.

Another technique I use, is to listen to the station calling "QRZ" (Who is calling me?) and make a few notes

ahead of time. When I tune in on a station, I record the frequency and time. Then I record the station's call sign, and location. If a serial number is part of the exchange I may note the current serial number. Generally speaking, contest contacts are very brief, so if you know, ahead of time, what information to expect and what to say in reply, it makes the contact that much easier.

The time I have available might only be long enough to make a dozen, or so, contacts. So, I keep a hand written log, of the contacts made, and, later, transcribe the information onto an "official" hand written log sheet to be mailed in to the contest sponsor. I know my submission will not qualify for a prize, but I have fun participating and, letting someone else log another contact. The information I send in could also be used to verify the log of another contestee claiming a big score.

Some HAMs are annoyed when the bands are full of contesters, but, as an alternative to complaining, you could simply join in and have a bit of fun by giving an exchange or two. At least you'll see where your radio signal can be heard and you'll receive an acknowledgement in return.

Next Club Meeting

In the new year, Wednesday, January 19th our guest speaker will be Don Graziano, VE3VZ, speaking on the topic

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

of *Antennas: Testing and Tuning with Basic Equipment*.

The following Month, Wednesday February 16th our guest speaker will be Steve Kavanagh VE3SMA speaking about microwave communication. If you look at The Canadian Amateur, Nov/Dec 2004 issue on page 6 you'll see a picture of Steve Kavanagh and some other microwave enthusiasts with an example of microwave antenna and transceiver equipment, set up at a recent event.

Visitors are welcome. If you know someone who might be interested in attending a HARC meeting, or if you live near someone who might benefit from a ride please consider contacting them.

Contest Club Ontario, (CCO)

In answer to my question about the meaning of CCO, Rick Danby, VE3BK sent along the web address of the Contest Club of Ontario.

On their web page the Contest Club Ontario states their purpose:

"to foster and encourage the growth of radiosport (amateur radio contesting), to further the exchange of information and cooperation between members, to promote radio knowledge, fraternalism and individual operating efficiency, and to so conduct club programs and activities as to advance the general interest and welfare of Amateur Radio in the community."

The Hamilton Amateur Radio Club's own contest group has had a membership in the CCO for several years. In fact, our November speaker, John Sluymmer is the CCO president. So, you know this group is out there and they are actively promoting amateur radio in the community.

On their web site the CCO has lots of information about contests, tips for beginners, awards, records etc. If you

are interested in checking out this site for yourself, you will find their home page at:

[<http://www.qsl.net/cco/>](http://www.qsl.net/cco/)

Dis & Dat

by Bernie Granby, VE3EKY, VA3XJ

Well !! I just checked my eQSL account (free anyone can register and get one) and there was one card there from 1979. I still have all my old logs and there he was Art KA2DZW, Smithtown N.Y. on 80 m. I guess I was using a Swan 350A to an inverted dipole. He says he had a ts820s to a dipole. He said he was a ham for 3 mos. The swan was a Hybrid transceiver about 9 tubes and 9 transistors. It was a rare breed it only had one prw amplifier tube for the output. It was actually a receiver tube. Swan claimed an input of 170W. I used this rig one year on FD. I did 40 CW that year up at Rattlesnake point near Milton. I was running SSB (Wow do I hate to admit that); I was sharing the 24 hrs with Mike Spenuk VE3 a 16 year old red hot CW op. He and a couple of buddies were operating from a park bench. I was alone in a rented trailer. Our dipole was tied to a tree at one end and up around 65 feet up a communication tower that may still be up there. A tech who was doing some work on the tower graciously scrambled up the tower and tied the end up there. Foolish me come Sunday about three o'clock I realized I was in a bind. How am I going to get it down? Well Al Barker VE3HNG was there with his son Kevin now VE3HNG (who was still going to high school at that time). Kevin said I'll take it down and before you could say Jack Robinson he scrambled up 65 feet and dropped the ant while I watched with my heart in my mouth. I started that FD putting out 100W and finished up with 5W. In the months to come I tried everything to retube the final without success. (by the bye who was that Jack Robinson, maybe he was a relative of VE3GCP.) Well after a local tried to fix it for me I sent it down to the states in

California. Well thats a story for another time but let me tell about sending ham gear back to the factory DON'T DON'T DON'T. By the time customs and good old Canada Post got through with me that was a very expensive rig. If you beg me I'll tell the whole ugly tale of that episode including where that rig came from and where it went.

Back to the present, I'm attempting to program the memories in my HT the Icom T7H. Don VE3DDQ/VE3DQ has sent me an eMail list of freq to start with. Then I think I will use Mardy's list of simplex freq (published last year in THE

HAMILTON AMATEUR. Then I will finish up by putting in the receive channels for the Marine VHF Band. A daunting task to be sure but what the hay I've got all winter haven't I?

I was reading the mail the other day on 40 SSb; when I heard a couple of Canadian Hams discussing why it was so difficult to sell HF gear right now. i ALMOST PUSHED MY MIKE BUTTON but not quite.....who needs another argument about CW. What I would have told them was when I got my licence Jan 2 1976, we were in the depths of the solar sun spot cycle and I mean the pits. My rig was a HW 7 (hotwater 7) a 3 watt CW rig which I mostly operted on 40 meters. Cost \$75.00. I think I made one contact on 20M using a wire 1/4 wave vertical stretched up the west wall of my house. My qso was with HEP VE3HQT in Dundas. He turned out to be Hep Richardson. Look on the H.A.R.C. web site and you will see his name. He told me he started out in 1923 on spark gap. He was one of the founding persons of the club. He also was an artist. My wife Ruth later bought 2 paintings from him at a flea market in Milton. Near the end of that year I worked one station on 15M on the west coast. He was the first station I heard on that band and the last that year. One morning before I went to work I worked a DX station in the West Indies. It was a French station and my first I got my first DX QSL card. Well I pulled the plug on the QRP rig and went out in a blaze of glory. In between these I worked approx. 300 QSOs with Americans and Canadians. Lots of Hamilton stations were on the

air then and I worked most of them. It wasn't easy but HF was the only game, and you had to prove to the radio inspector that you had indeed practiced your skills for one year on CW before you wrote your Advanced and could operate CW at 15 wpm. Now we come to the real reason HF gear is not selling well now and that is because hardly anyone will learn CW to get their endorsement. I know some have and I congratulate them. I'm sorry kiddies I wouldn't wish CW on you but I.C. hasn't changed the rules yet. AAAAnd you know when they do make the change I don't think you will like it.

Well I'm QRU nw now except to say to everyone Merry Christmas and HAPPY NEW YEAR 73 BEST dx and DATS all about DIS fer now de VE3EKY/VA3XJ qrp and trustee for the McMaster Radio club VA3MCM Bernie (Ben didididahdidah)

Sounds Like Good Advice

This is an e-mail from one of the CCO members to others in the group. With permission of the author, Travis, VE3WO I am happy to pass along these ideas

Hi CCO -

I'm starting a new thread, and hope a few others of you will share your observations from CQWW this year (particularly you big guns). I'm going to post the few small lessons I learned from the CQWW contest(s) this year, and hope that others will do the same. Share the collective knowledge for the good of CCO, so to speak. What will you do differently next year?

Here's my list:

1) Spend a lot more time searching for multipliers. It's frustrating to see 3830 listing (unassisted) ops with way less Q's than me with a much bigger score, all because they took the time to search for multipliers. I will probably target at least 25% of my on-air time next year multiplier-hunting.

HARC 2004-2005 Executive

President

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

First Vice President

Michael Krebs VA3WXS
905-523-9005
mkrebs@sympatico.ca

Second Vice President

Ron Ouwehand VA3OUW
905-692-4684
ron.ouwehand@sympatico.ca

Secretary

Roger Pimm VE3UFZ
905-560-2628
rpimm@cogeco.ca

Treasurer

Fred Robinson VE3GCP
575-5197
FredRobinson@MountainCable.net

Repeater Chairman

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

Membership Chairman

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

2) Don't be lulled into thinking that starting that big JA run is only another few CQ's away. If they're not there, go somewhere productive until they show up. I did this a few times last weekend, and even while I was doing it, I was aware that it was a mistake. Still, I kept CQ'ing, waiting for the first JA/VK to call back. Wasted time, could've been earning points elsewhere. Next year, I'll schedule a time to start checking 15m for the JA opening, and check back every ten minutes until it appears. In the meantime, chug away wherever it's productive.

3) Over the coming year, compile a list of short openings to check for rare zones. A lot of times, an opening to a rare zone on a particular band will only last 30 minutes (or less), on a specific beam heading. Honestly, I don't know when they are, or to where. My job this year is to compile this list. Gotta improve my multiplier count (see point 1 above).

4) Never pass over a US call you haven't worked, ever. Every 2 points makes a big difference later on in the contest, when the multiplier count creeps up there. I made this mistake, skipping on easy 10 second Q's during those periods when I was hunting for multipliers. 2 pts is 2 pts, no matter what.

5) Don't jump into a big pile. Note the call & frequency, move on, and check back in 10 minutes. By then, most likely, the pile will have died down a bit, and I'll have a better chance of making the QSO. Better to leave and work a few than to spend the 10 minutes calling fruitlessly.

That's my wall of shame. As I've said, I hope that at least a few of you will offer your reflections/suggestions on this topic, so that others can learn from them. The only way to learn about contesting is by listening to other testers!

73 Travis VE3WO <ve3wo at rac.ca>

Minutes of the General Meeting for November 17, 2004

by Mardy Eedson, standing in for secretary, Roger Pimm, VE3UFZ

The meeting was called to order at 8:00pm. A number of members were attending at the new venue for the first time. Don VE3OCY, Andy VA3SMM, Klaas VA3KWD, Art, VA3ART, Guy, VE3GTH, and Leif, VA3KFE were

recognized. A warm welcome was extended to visitors Bob Ashton, VE3BQB, Bob Brown, VE3CYE, Bill Burns, VE3BRN, and Bill Thompson, SWL.

Mardy called upon Ron, VA3OWU, to introduce our speaker, John Sluymer, VE3EJ, accomplished contesteer and a participant in the recent South Sandwich Islands DXpedition.

John gave us some background about the expedition. South Sandwich Islands are located six-days journey, by boat, south of the Falkland Islands and just outside the Antarctic circle. They are possessions of Great Britain and were re-possessed as part of the Falklands War. Expedition members chartered a boat from New Zealand meeting and boarding her in the Falkland Islands for the journey south. John explained it took two years to get permission from Britain to make the trip, and outlined some of the guarantees and conditions that had to be met. The boat would remain with them, off shore, during their five day stay on the island.

One of the group on this expedition was a professional cinematographer who recorded footage and, later, produced a documentary about the event. As part of his presentation John showed us the 45-minute video featuring the South Sandwich Island portion of the trip. It was amazing to see the harsh conditions in the area, the huge ocean swells making many of them sea-sick, the impossible landing on a rocky shore one at a time from a Zodiac, and their camp, next to a Penguin rookery which was fiercely defended by determined penguins. We saw some comical confrontations in the video. As an aside, Peter explained that the soil beneath them was partly guano, which became softer when heated by the sun. He also explained that what we saw in the video was shot during the best days for filming. There were other times when the wind was high and the temperature cold that were not portrayed in the video.

The expedition was by all measures a great success and the video stands as a

Important points

Executive Meetings

HARC Executive committee meets each month, except July and August, at Mohawk College in room E031B. All members are invited to attend and participate. The meetings are on the Tuesday following the club General Meeting each month.

VE3NCF [146.760- & 444.075+]

HARC operates VE3NCF repeater, located atop the Niagara Escarpment. It's open for use by all Amateurs. Special features are a privilege of membership.

Nets

HARC "check-in net" is held every Tuesday evening, except July and August, at 7:30pm. HARC "swap net" follows at 8pm. The ARES net is held on Thursdays at 8:00pm. All contacts are welcome.

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 \$5.

Membership Information

Club membership, including all privileges, is \$25 per person, per year, Sept 1 to Aug 31. Additional membership, for immediate family living in the same home, is \$1 per person. One newsletter sent to each address.

The Hamilton Amateur

The Hamilton Amateur is published ten times each year (not in July or August). Deadline for article submission is the *last Saturday* of the month for the next month's issue. Preferred format is .txt file. Articles will be checked for spelling and grammar, but the author is responsible for the factual content. E-mail submissions to Mardy, VE3QEE < ve3qee@rac.ca >

testament to the determination and adventurous spirit of these brave and dedicated radio amateurs. We thank John for his interesting talk, and for the opportunity to get rare DX contacts from some of the most remote places

on earth.

There are other DXpeditions planned for next year.

Business Meeting

Secretary's Report

The minutes of the November 17 General Meeting were accepted as published in the club bulletin with the following change noted. The call sign of Mike Krebs is VA3WXS.

Further items relating to the Secretary's report were tabled until Roger, VE3UFZ, returns.

Treasurer's Report

Fred VE3GCP reported that all accounts relating to the Flea Market have been paid and club finances are in accord with projections.

The report was accepted as presented.

Membership Report

Emsley, VE3JAI, reported we currently have 66 paid members. The report was accepted as presented.

Mardy appealed to members to who have not renewed to get in touch with Emsley, and noted that Newsletters are not sent when a membership is in arrears.

Education Report

The advanced course is proceeding on Monday nights at 7:00pm at Mohawk College with 4 students. Wojtek Rusin, VA3WWR is the instructor. Mardy is continuing the Fall Basic Course with 4 students. A Spring course is scheduled to begin the last week of January. It will run on Thursday nights at 7:00 PM.

Health and Welfare

Mary Urbanski, VE3OGQ, will send a card to Monica Pimm with our best wishes. There was nothing further to report.

Contest Group

RAC Winter contest is coming up on Dec 18th, actually, the contest runs 24 hours, from Friday night 7:00 PM local time on the 17th to Saturday night at 7:00 PM local time. Anyone who can come out and give the contest group a hand would be welcome for a few hours or the whole time. See Rick Danby, VE3BK. His contact information is in the listing of Chairs (to the right).

Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum Station VA3CWM

Doug Last, VE3NBL, reported that the group operating at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum amateur station have installed an 80 meter dipole antenna, and they are operating ONTARS on Thursdays from 3:00 to 4:00 PM local time. They could use more operators on Monday. Currently the station is staffed Mondays and Thursdays. If you would like to know more talk to Doug or Frank, VA3FWL.

Christmas Party

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. The menu will feature Turkey Dinner and Plum Pudding. Social hour 6:00 PM, Dinner to follow at 7:00 PM.

Emergency Radio Station

The club emergency station which has been listed for sale on the HARC weekly Swap Net, and which was unsuccessfully offered for sale at both the London Flea Market and the Hamilton Flea Market, has finally been sold for a price of \$700. One of our own members, Ian Smith, VA3SOF, has offered to purchase the station. Ian has a Morse code endorsement and is looking forward to being able to operate HF from home.

Our club has an emergency operating location at Mohawk College, which is designated as a refuge centre. Should there be a need to provide emergency

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@simpatico.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
Iona Davidson VE3UGM

Membership/Web

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

Newsletter

open position

Public Liaison Co-Chair

Stanley Bolibruch VE3GFE
905-528-4002
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

communication from that location we have a Cushcraft R7 HF antenna on the roof of the student centre and feedline to the emergency operating location. As we do for field day, and other group activities, like contesting, we would count on club volunteer operators to bring their own equipment, rigs which they normally maintain and use, to employ for emergency communication. This way, the operators will be familiar with the equipment being used, and the emergency operating location will not be left unattended with expensive "club" equipment, creating an opportunity for parts to go missing or for operators who might be inexperienced on a particular type of transceiver to break it. In this way, also, valuable equipment will be actively used, and not kept in storage for extended periods of time, just getting older, while waiting in readiness for a disaster which may or may not occur. The foregoing ideas were the rationale for our decision to sell this station while it was still a valuable and viable piece of equipment.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.

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 requests by some Club members, we have acquired a number of these shirts for you. They are being sold to members on a cost recovery basis. The price is \$28.00 per shirt, tax included. See Ron Ouwehand, to get your shirt.

Internet Tidbits

Rick, VE3BK, sent these along.

Despite the cost of living have you noticed how it remains so popular?

He who laughs last, thinks slowest

Christmas Party at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club – Dec. 15, 2004

