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NMST Lighthouse

AMATEUR RADIO LIGHTS THE WAY FOR VISITORS OF THE LIGHTHOUSE

What do you get out of an Amateur Radio Special Event such as the Lighthouse Weekend? One easy answer is: as much as you put in. Not quite true!

Some times you can get real bonuses. Something like playing the odds.

The Lighthouse and Lightship Activity Weekend is a special event in which the OVMRC has participated for the second year in a row. It is an international event with many lighthouses being activated all around the world. We are fortunate to have a lighthouse, right here at the Museum, and even more so, to have it recognized as an official lighthouse for the Lighthouses Award.

Well, the odds were not in our favour this time around. No Special Event coord; not enough operators coming forth to handle a spot in the two-day weekend; Club field day equipment not available due to summer holiday. **THREE STRIKES! YOU'RE OUT!** Again, not quite so! Excellent cooperation from the Museum staff and the die-hard attitude of a handful of dedicated Radio Amateurs helped make of the event a "Special Event". The word "dedicated" here includes the total awareness of the importance of keeping up skills for emergency situations as well as thoroughly enjoying the hobby. When Jake, VA3TQX, heard that we could only hold the event from the Museum VE3JW station, it didn't quite hit him as that being a Lighthouse event. Right away he suggested that we string up a single 20 meter dipole from the tower to a nearby tree and carry on the event from the lighthouse.

Museum staff, Paula Kirton foremost, quickly responded to our change of plans. VE3DZZ, who had volunteered for a spot, thought it a shame that we should be limited to one band. He arranged for the loan of a Cushcraft R5 antenna from a friend so that we could at least add a couple more bands. Tony, a Museum Curator, agreed for us to attach the vertical to the top rail of the lighthouse, provided that he supervised the installation.

Great care was taken in the installation, using foam to isolate the support pole, and the holding rope, from the rail. As a result, Tony was satisfied that we were doing a conscientious and effective effort to protect the valuable "artifact".

Last year, when we did the event, we concentrated on gathering a lot of contacts. This year, we used a different approach. Since this event is not a



OVMRC Executive (1999-2000)

President	Susan Mogensen, VE3MOG 833-2766, ve3mog@rac.ca
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Technical	Open

OVMRC Life Members

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Doug Carswell	VE3ATY	Ed Morgan	VE3GX
Gerry King	VE3GK	Fred Noble	VE3BAJ
	Bill Wilson	VE3NR	



OVMRC code phone

Practice your CW
737-0197



OVMRC Repeater

147.300 Mhz(+)
444.200 MHz(+)



OVMRC web page

<http://www.ovmrc.on.ca>
Webmaster: John Rodgers,
VE3JR, jrodger@takeone.com



Next Meeting

Sep 16, 1999
Rambler Deadline
Oct 8, 1999

Affiliated Clubs

The **OVMRC** is pleased to exchange newsletters with the following Amateur Radio Clubs across Canada and the United States of America.

Algoma ARC	Sault Ste Marie, ON
Augusta ARA	Augusta, ME, USA
Border City ARA	Windsor, ON
Chatham-Kent ARC	Chatham, ON
Calgary ARC	Calgary, AB
Comox Valley ARC	Comox, BC
Heritage ARC	Coburg, ON
Kingston ARC	Kingston, ON
Lambton County ARC	Sarnia, ON
London ARC	London, ON
Ottawa ARC	Ottawa, ON
Pioneer ARC	Nepean, ON
Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC)	Ottawa, ON
Renfrew County ARC	Pembroke, ON
Rideau Lakes ARC	Smiths Falls, ON
Scarborough ARC	Scarborough, ON
Sudbury ARC	Sudbury, ON
Saskatoon ARC	Saskatoon, SK
West Island ARC	Dorval, PQ
Winnipeg ARC	Winnipeg, MAN

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Ramblings

by Susan Mogensen, VE3MOG
President, OVMRC

Last month, I expressed a strong interest in shifting the focus of our club meetings away from club business and towards get-togethers that are fun, stimulating and educational. To accomplish this objective, the regular meeting format will be altered slightly, to include a 10 - 20 minute discussion, debate or contest involving club members, followed by the featured presentation, and ending with announcements, door prize and 50/50 draws, and the social hour. Meetings will start, as usual, at 7:30 pm and run until around 8:45 - 9:00 pm, depending on the length of the featured presentation. Be prepared to be asked to participate in the meeting in some way ... the club will be the better off for it!

While club business won't be the focus of the general meetings, it is always the focus of the monthly Executive meetings. As such, if you have a question, concern, idea or proposal related to the way in which the club is run, you have several options. One option is to discuss the issue directly with the member of the Executive responsible for that area of responsibility. Another choice might be to volunteer to help the Executive with the your interest or concern, and/or to come out to the Executive meeting in person to raise the issue.

Executive meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of every month, at 7:00 pm, in one of the classrooms at the Museum. Further, to ensure the rest of the club is kept up-to-date with its activities, the Executive is quite happy to make its minutes public. Please also feel free to call or e-mail me at <ve3mog@rac.ca> anytime if you have a question or idea.

In the working world, I have always felt far more motivated in jobs where the boss gave me free reign to take the initiative, as long as the work I did contributed to the goals of the organization and the processes I used were cost-efficient and ethical. As such, I am relying heavily on all members of the Executive to handle their own areas of responsibility, contributing to the goals I outlined when I took on this role and, of course, keeping within the club's by-laws. At the same time, I am always glad to help or to facilitate a resolution to a problem when necessary.

Already, I can see that the Executive is working well, and all the committee chairperson positions have been filled. We owe tremendous thanks to Jake Guertin, VA3TQX, for stepping forward to fill the role of Technical Committee chairperson. Jake will help to ensure that our repeater is in great shape, and I am sure you will hear more about repeater improvements over the coming months.

Great new developments are also progressing under the leadership of Vice-President and Emergency Response Committee Chairperson, Ken Halcrow, VE3SRS; and Ken Barry, VE3KJB, is co-ordinating much appreciated Amateur Radio assistance to public events. If you are interested in public service, OVMRC offers you a lot of opportunity. Just ask the two Kens!

With September upon us now, I am really looking forward to our first meeting of the year, on Thursday, September 16, featuring Marc Pichette, VA3DRV, with an introduction to and demonstration of how APRS (Automatic Position Reporting System) works. The September meeting is also your opportunity to submit nominations for the Jerry Wells OVMRC Amateur of the Year Award.

Lastly, think about bringing a friend to this meeting. Do you know someone interested in the hobby, new to Amateur Radio, or someone who used to belong to the club but has not been out to any meetings for a while? Invite them along, and spread the fun of our hobby! I'll see you on September 16. ❖

POT LID NET

**Commences operation again at 11 AM (Local)
Sunday 12 September 1999 on 3620 Khz.**

**We especially like to welcome newcomers to
Amateur Radio!
Of course old timers are always very welcome!**

**If you have any questions about the NET and it's
operation please do not hesitate to call.**

Ed Morgan, VE3GX - Telephone # 733-1721

WESTERLYEAR - VE3JW - In the spotlight!

A look at Ramblers past, by Larry Wilcox, VE3WEH

We continue with this column with fall closing in fast and winter not far away. I sincerely hope you all had an enjoyable and safe summer. Have you ever wondered about VE3JW being shut down?

Our amateur radio station VE3JW, located in the National Museum of Science and Technology was in the spotlight! Bob Baillargeon VE3MPG noted in his January 1989 editorial that VE3JW would be shutting down on January 27 for a few months during renovation of several areas of the museum.

President Alan Boyce VE3LNH, noted in his Ramblings column of February 1989 that the Museum was prepared to discuss location, structure, lay-out, equipment, antennas, and soundproofing for the new amateur radio station and that Bob Baillargeon had volunteered to chair the committee with help from several other volunteers. Alan regarded this as an opportunity to redesign the station from the top down, to have a good station to use and an informative and educational display for the museum visitors. He suggested defining new roles for the station such as being more accommodating to young amateurs and that it should be equipped to operate in emergencies.

Alan also noted new features should be included, such as;

- More complementary surroundings,
- More explanatory signs,
- More light, more switches,
- Fewer cables to unscrew,
- Less dust,
- Less acoustic noise,
- Less electrical noise,
- Easier contact with the public,
- Operating positions easier to see by the public,
- More seating for the operators,
- Racks with access from the back,
- A public address system for visitors to hear radio

conversations,

An external microphone for audience participation,
A morse code key and reader for people to touch and try,

A permanently rolling packet monitor,
Slow-scan television equipment that could be left setup continuously,

Two 2 metre antennas for packet and voice, and

Two HF antennas for simultaneous operation.

And he noted "If anyone can think of a feature that will make amateurs line up to operate the station, then that should be included too!"

Bob Baillargeon reported in his February 1989 Editorial that the committee had met twice in two weeks and had hammered out objectives, ideas and proposed design plans for the new station. Chuck King's submission for a proposed station design won overall support from the committee. It was a scaled down version of a similar amateur station at the British Museum in London, England, which is sponsored by the Radio Society of Great Britain. A document containing these ideas and plans was presented to the Museum Director in order to give him a clear impression of our commitment to VE3JW.

The overall objectives for the new VE3JW were:

- It must inform and involve the public;
- The station must be a joy to use;
- The station must be easy for new amateurs to use, and
- The new station should be provided with emergency power.

Specifications for coax, rotators, new antennas, wiring, RF grounding and safety would need to be defined and ideas for the display area and Public Address systems for the public should be addressed also.

Reflecting on these objectives, I wonder how many of the goals have been met by our current station? The current operators at VE3JW have noticed some changes at VE3JW as our new Amateur Radio Exhibit Chairperson, Maurice-Andre Vigneault VE3VIG has

been making some minor improvements. I know he will be making more major changes during the coming year which will improve on our "National Amateur Radio Station" which is representative of all Canadian Amateurs. I'm sure the improvements will make VE3JW more attractive to the public and the volunteer operators who spent over 600 hours of their time demonstrating amateur radio to the public. ❖

VE3JW A look to the future

Initial Information Gathering on the Feasibility of Acquiring a Satellite Communications Demonstration Station Add-on to VE3JW Amateur Radio Station

Museum visitors who stroll by the VE3JW station tend to have an out of time opinion of Amateur Radio as we know it today. After visiting sections arking back to the early 20's and 50's in nearby exhibit, they wonder if we are still useful in today's digital age. They marvel while watching us send Morse code over the air waves as if we were part of the coastal station display just next to us, portraying the "good old days". To them, we are using "old" equipment and "old" methods as we are being compared to the Internet system.

At VE3JW, we are trying to change that image, that perception, by:

Inviting visitors to talk with some of our distant contacts;

To make contact with someone on the other side of the globe using the packet chat mode, keyboard to keyboard in real time;

To watch VA3DRV driving down a street in Indianapolis via the APRS system;

To watch greeting messages from the MIR astronauts flash on our computer screen as we tune them in on 2m; and

Rambler, September 1999

To see our Amateur satellite tracking system in action with the help of our software and up to date satellite data from NASA and AMSAT.

However, at VE3JW, we are not equipped to make that all important contact with our satellites, not equipped to use our amateur satellites to have a distant QSO, something that would convince the visitor that we live in today's communication world. Moreover, with the scheduled launching of our Phase 3D satellite, this coming October, we have no means of demonstrating its effectiveness and usefulness.

Therefore, some research has been initiated to assess the feasibility of a project for the VE3JW station that would allow us to do and demonstrate satellite communications. From the information gathered, a plan will be developed to be proposed to the OVMRC and to the Museum.

This plan could be two-fold.

Option A would included all the necessary items needed for a full-fledged satellite station: All-mode transceiver, cable run to the roof, VHF and UHF pre-amplifiers, AZ-EL rotator and antenna arrays, computer control software.

Option B would be a basic system: All-mode dual band, "Eggbeater" omni-directional antennas for VHF and UHF with pre-amplifiers and cable run to the roof.

From preliminary research, Option A would total up in the vicinity of \$6000.00, not counting transverters for 1.2 and 2.4 GHz, and Option B, approximately \$2000.00 ❖

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Lighthouse *(Continued)*



The lighthouse crew; left to right, Jake VA3TQX, Maurice-Andre VE3VIG, and Patty VE3DZZ

contest we focussed the interest on the presentation of Amateur Radio to the public, and geared our activities toward the visitors.

A certain number of tours were to be guided through the lighthouse. On the first level, where the radios were set up, the tour guides explained the origin and history of this lighthouse. We asked them to turn the group over to us so that we could give a 3 min presentation of Amateur Radio. We then asked the group that if anyone wished to talk on the radio with our distant contacts, they could do so on their way down from visiting the uppermost part of the lighthouse.

During the presentation, lots of visitors were surprised and interested in finding out that Amateur Radio is not a display of antiquated communication lost in days gone by. Eyes and ears perked up when we mentioned about the part Amateur Radio holds in emergency communications in times of disasters; the continuing technical experimentation going on in electronic circuitry, antennas, and even satellites, the near dozen up there and the one being launched in October 99, the most advanced Phase 3D; and participation of Amateur Radio in the SAREX Space Program, including communication with the Space Shuttle and the Space Station. Enough interest to have one visiting electronics engineer ask for information on our courses!

The bonuses that I talked about earlier were manifolds. First, VE3MOG, Susan, our new Club President, honored the opening of the special event by handling the very first shift, under the distant watchful ear of a certain VE3YE...! (Rob) one of the very few local amateurs taking time to contact the Lighthouse. VA3CMD, Patrick, a graduate of the last OVMRC course, accompanied Susan. It was his first introduction to HF. He had so much fun that he vowed he would rush to qualify for the privilege.

Then, the well sought-after contact with the Master of this International event, Mike Dalrymple, GM4SUC, at the GB2LT Turnberry Lighthouse, near Ayr, on the south west coast of Scotland. There were many interesting contacts, too numerous to list here, such as VE1NLN, Norris, near Sydney, N.S., sight

impaired, who told us that the word "Lighthouse" we were using was a code word for a training program for the blind. He immediately responded upon hearing our call. Other bonuses were the efforts volunteered by the ever present Club enthusiast VE3WEH, Larry, taking part in the set-up and take-down of station and antennas, operating a shift, informing the visitors and giving hand-outs, and providing relief for operators on long shifts; Jake, VA3TQX, filling extra shifts and helping in take-down and transportation; VE3EJJ, Ernie, helped throughout the event and saved the day by fabricating a 100-foot coaxial cable for the 20m dipole; VE3DZZ, Pat, who came in to help during all three days; VA3OFD, Tom, who helped with the set-up and take-down; VA3KER, Keith, who worked the 20m band for a few hours.

Then there was the special first contact that one new amateur was successful in completing. His first time operating an HF rig, set on 20m, he searched for contacts up and down the band and found it difficult to break in. He decided to park on an open frequency and call for stations. Soon, he heard a strange sounding voice calling back the VE3JW/Lighthouse station. He probably thought that this was a station from Zanzibar or some far away place. Upon touching up the tuning control a might, the voice came in loud and clear and could be immediately recognized. "VE3JW/Lighthouse this is VE3DRO"...Well, that made VA3EJM's day. Ed was so happy that he remained on, past the two hours he had originally signed up for, looking for "yet another contact"!

It turned out that we picked the right formula for the event. everything went so smoothly, we might as well have been at a picnic. Fun and enjoyment for all - the visitors, the tour guides and the Radio Amateurs. A sincere thanks to all those participants, set-up crew and operators.

Next year, why don't you activate a lighthouse near you and help keep the Amateur Radio light shine on? ❖

Maurice-Andre Vigneault
VA2MA/VE3VIG
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From the Editor

At the last meeting of the OVMRC there was no volunteer to publish the *Rambler*. As a result, a motion was carried to increase the funding for the *Rambler* so that someone could be hired to publish the *Rambler*. The approval of that motion reflected the importance with which the *Rambler* was held by the membership.

After the meeting I introduced myself to our new president and indicated that I would volunteer to give it a try. As a recent graduate of the club's course and new to amateur radio I didn't feel that I was well qualified to be the editor of the *Rambler*, a newsletter for amateur radio operators. I knew however, that the *Rambler* was supported by a group of people who provide the subject matter and therefore the job should be just one of assembling the pieces together. My offer was accepted and with much assistance from the previous editor I got the first edition out. It was, perhaps a little late, and a little larger than normal, but then I never worried about the cost or postage before as my previous copies were delivered to the class.

I am having fun learning how to use the software to produce the newsletter. Corel Corporation donated it, through the efforts of a club member. I also enjoy getting to know about things earlier than most club members. I am certain I will learn a great deal more before I am finished.

I believe that the *Rambler* probably reaches more members of the OVMRC than any other medium of communication, i.e., meetings, internet, or on air nets. Therefore it is an obligation to ensure that it is produced in a timely and accurate manner. I think the *Rambler* serves two purposes. It provides information to members and it reminds them about the next meeting. Its' content conveys the information and its' arrival in the mailbox is intended to be a timely reminder that the next OVMRC meeting is due. I hope I am able to meet the club's expectations on both items.

Since the club meetings are scheduled well in advance it's possible and necessary to establish deadlines to ensure the objectives are met. So here are the

deadlines for submissions if I am to deliver in time to remind you about the next meeting.

Month	Submission Deadline	Meeting Date
October	8 th	21 st
November	5 th	18 th
December	3 rd	16 th
January	7 th	20 th
February	4 th	17 th
March	3 rd	16 th
April	7 th	20 th
May	5 th	18 th
June	2 nd	15 th

This is your newsletter. You pay for it and you should expect it to provide what you are looking for. It is also here to serve you. If you wish to have the *Rambler* promote some activity that would be of interest to OVMRC members please feel free to drop me a note before the desired issue has gone to bed. If you wish to tell the club members about something you have done or you have something of interest that you would like to pass along, please give me a call or drop me a note via e-mail.

On behalf of the club, and myself, I would like to sincerely thank the many people, who have in the past, taken the time to write articles for the *Rambler*. They have made it what it is. I encourage you to use the *Rambler* to promote and record the activities of the OVMRC and its' members. ❖

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830-5580

Jerry Wells OVMRC Amateur of the Year Award

The **OVMRC** Inc. established the Jerry Wells Award in 1997 in recognition of Jerry Wells VE3CDS, 1928-1997, a life member and Silent Key. Jerry received the "Amateur of the Year Award" in June 1997 for his contribution of time, effort and devotion throughout the year to the Amateur Radio Course, his work as Delegated Examiner and his management of Amateur Radio Station, VE3JW, at the National Museum of Science and Technology. The Award was subsequently renamed the "Jerry Wells **OVMRC** Amateur of the Year Award" in his honour.

Please read the Award Criteria before completing the nomination form.

Selection Criteria and Process

The submission of nominees and selection of the award winner will be based on the following criteria.

1. Each nominee for the award must have been a fully paid up member of the OVMRC and a licenced Radio Amateur during the most recently completed club fiscal year starting July 1, 1998 and ending June 30, 1999 (Award Year).
2. Nominations must be received in writing, in the required format (as shown), prior to, or during, the regular September meeting. Each nomination must be supported by not less than two Full Members who were in good standing during the Award Year, and must include a short narrative description of the nominee's contribution to Amateur Radio as specified in criterion 3, which follows.
3. To be eligible, nominees must have made a significant contribution during the Award Year to further any of the objectives of the OVMRC by:
 - a) contributing to the interest, study and progress of the science and art of Amateur Radio with particular emphasis on mobile operations;
 - b) cooperating with and assisting the civil authorities to the fullest extent possible in any emergency; or by
 - c) fostering good will and understanding among Radio Amateurs.
4. The eligibility of nominees will be verified by the Executive.
5. The names of the nominees and the short narrative descriptions provided by the nominators will be published in the October issue of the Rambler.
6. The Award winner will be determined by **SECRET BALLOT** by all members attending the regular meeting held in October. Two Full Members in good standing who are not nominees or nominators will be appointed by the President to scrutinize and tabulate the ballots.
7. The "Jerry Wells OVMRC Amateur of the Year Award," consisting of a suitably engraved plaque and an engraved chrome plated iambic paddle keyer, or equivalent, will be presented to the winner at the November regular meeting. ❖

Jerry Wells OVMRC Amateur of the Year

Nomination Form

Please read the Award Criteria before completing this nomination form.

Please print

We wish to nominate: _____, Call Sign: _____,

for the Jerry Wells Amateur of the Year Award. We believe the above-named Amateur deserves to be honoured with this award for the following reasons:

NOMINATION SUBMITTED BY:

Signed: _____

Print Name & Call Sign: _____

Signed: _____

Print Name & Call Sign: _____

