

POTLID NET THIRTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

POT LID NET

What is a pot lid? A cover for a pot? More than that in our neck of the woods.

Back In Time

In years past, an Ottawa mayor would not allow funding for repairing the many "pot holes" in the city. Since the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club members were operating mobile most of the time, they were very conscious of the awful situation.

To mock the condition, Ed and Doreen Morgan, VE3GX and VE3CGO had the ingenious idea to start a net for all those mobile units stuck in the pot holes. It was an 80m SSB net and they called it the Pot Hole Net. It was taking place every Sunday mornings at 10:00AM and still runs to this day.

Then, it became time to put a lid on all those pots. Enter the POT LID NET. This is an 80m slow speed CW net also taking place on Sunday mornings but at 11:00AM, after the Pot Hole Net. Ed and Doreen have been running the PLN for 35 years.

Fast Forward

On February 9, 2008, all the Pot Lid Netters were invited to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Net at Robbies Restaurant on Wakley Road. All but two of the regular Netters were present. VE3LC, Norm, was in Florida and Martin, VA3SIE was at work.

Raise Your Glass

What a friendly and cheerful crowd! We will just list the call signs but most were accompanied by their better half. VE3GX, VE3CGO, VE3GM, VE3XL, VE3ZBB, VA3ZBB, VA3TJP, VE3BNO, VE3VK, VE3XK, VE3CBE, VE3NJH, VE3VIG, VE3QSO, VE3QN.

Every year, Ed and Doreen were hosting the Pot Lid Net participants at their home



OVMRC 50th anniversary album, Doreen, VE3CGO, Maurice-André, VE3VIG, Ed, VE3GX

Photo courtesy of: Don, VE3NJH

in a cheerful celebration of wine and cheese. This year, due to the special celebration and the amount of guests, it would have been impossible to accommodate all. Excellent choice of restaurant with good food and velvet ambiance, we all enjoyed meeting one another, and for some of us, putting a face at the end of that key.

Ed generously served us with wine and he also brought in a marvellous cake that I found unequalled to taste. The cake was decorated with a picture of the "Golden Key" offered previously to the PLN instigators.

But the "cherry on top of the cake" was a presentation by Ed and Doreen to each one of the PLN regulars, of a great memento in the form of an octagonal plaque, inscribed with "PLN 35 years" including our individual call sign, and mounted on a plastic base which makes it convenient to display.

Thanks to Ed and Doreen

In return, we presented to OVMRC "Charter Members" Ed and Doreen with an album of pictures and text covering the OVMRC 50th anniversary celebration of the Club held in November past.

The following day, Sunday 10th, the PLN was sparking with congratulations and thanks to Ed and Doreen for the marvellous celebration, how much they have enjoyed it, and what a success it was.

I think I will echo everyone's sentiment in conveying, to Ed and Doreen, our admiration for their loyal dedication to Amateur Radio, and our heartfelt gratitude for their accomplishment. As indicated on the cake and in Ed's own words, "CW Forever!"

Maurice-André Vigneault, VE3VIG
for the Pot Lid Net



OVMRC Executive 2006-2007

President:

[Jerry Neufeld](mailto:jerry.neufeld@rogers.com), VE3QSO
jerry.neufeld@rogers.com, 613-828-0959

Vice-President:

[Jean Crepeau](mailto:va3jcn@rac.ca), VA3JCN
va3jcn@rac.ca, 613-288-8777

Treasurer:

[Robert Plante](mailto:plantrj@rogers.com), VA3SHO
plantrj@rogers.com, 613-

Secretary:

Vacant

Standing Committee Chairpersons

Amateur Radio Exhibit:

[Maurice-André Vigneault](mailto:vig@mondenet.com), VE3VIG
vig@mondenet.com, 613-749-9010

Amateur Radio Training:

[Ernie Jury](mailto:s282@freenet.carleton.ca), VE3EJJ
s282@freenet.carleton.ca, 613-728-3666

Accredited Examiner:

[Bob Kavanagh](mailto:ve3osz@rac.ca), VE3OSZ
ve3osz@rac.ca, 613-225-6785

[Ernie Jury](mailto:s282@freenet.carleton.ca), VE3EJJ
s282@freenet.carleton.ca, 613-728-3666

Field Day:

[George Steeves](mailto:georgesteeves@rogers.com), VE3ZQH
georgesteeves@rogers.com, 613-596-5015

Historical:

[Larry Wilcox](mailto:larrywilcox@rogers.com), VE3WEH
larrywilcox@rogers.com, 613-747-5565

Flea Market:

[Jake Guertin](mailto:ve2tqx@rac.ca), VE2TQX
ve2tqx@rac.ca, 819-684-9496

Membership:

[Jean-Guy Hardy](mailto:jeanguy2@soltekweb.com), VE3YOS
jeanguy2@soltekweb.com, 613-878-2117

Publicity & Programs:

[Steve Cochran](mailto:stevec@nfc.ca), VE3SBC
stevec@nfc.ca, 613-248-00323

Radio Operations (UHF/VHF):

[Matthew Hall](mailto:va3mhb@yahoo.ca), VA3MHB
va3mhb@yahoo.ca, 613-745-9752

Radio Operations (HF):

[Patrick Tunney](mailto:va3cmd@rogers.com), VA3CMD
va3cmd@rogers.com, 613-

Technical:

[Cam Milne](mailto:cmilne@nortel.com), VA3FO
cmilne@nortel.com, 613-763-8068

Emergency Preparedness:

[Ken Halcrow](mailto:Ken_h@rogers.com), VE3SRS
Ken_h@rogers.com, 613-837-3261

Newsletter:

[Jerry Neufeld](mailto:jerry.neufeld@rogers.com), VE3QSO
jerry.neufeld@rogers.com, 613-828-0959

Webmaster:

[Elias Zaydan](mailto:ve3ekz@rac.ca), VE3EKZ
ve3ekz@rac.ca, 613-

OVMRC Life Members

Maurice-André Vigneault,
VE3VIG

Ralph Cameron, VE3BBM

Doug Carswell, VE3ATY

Doreen Morgan, VE3CGO

Ed Morgan, VE3GX

Bill Wilson, VE3NR

Sponsors

The OVMRC acknowledges the following organizations for their support of our activities:

- Acceptable Storage, Ottawa, ON
- Bytown Marine, Ottawa, ON
- Elkel Ltee., Trois-Rivières, QC
- Kenwood Electronics Canada Inc., Mississauga, ON
- Ottawa Camping Trailers Ltd., Ottawa, ON
- Travel-Mor Trailer Sales, Ottawa, ON

The *Rambler* is produced using Corel's Ventura™ 8 software.

The club's web site is hosted by Magma Communications Ltd.
www.ovmrc.on.ca

OVMRC Repeaters

147.300 MHz(+)
444.200 Mhz(+)

Amateur Radio Exhibit VE3JW

Web site:

<http://ve3jw.tripod.com>

Canada Science & Technology Museum

The *Rambler* is the official newsletter of the Ottawa Valley Mobile Radio Club Inc. And is published 11 times a year (monthly, except for July). Opinions expressed in the *Rambler* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the OVMRC Inc., it's officers or it's members. Permission is granted to republish the contents in whole or in part, providing the source is acknowledged. Commercial use of the contents is expressly prohibited. Submit articles to the editor or by e-mail to:

jerry.neufeld@rogers.com.

RAMBLINGS

In previous issues of this newsletter, I have raised some questions about what the goals of OVMRC are and about how best to encourage participation in our club. If I may be permitted to draw conclusions from the absence of feedback, members appear to be content, both with respect to what we do and how much we do. With no responses to my queries, another question that I posed has gone unanswered: what should be the focus of the president of the club, apart from ensuring that it "runs smoothly". I have two related comments that I should like to make.

Notwithstanding the varied activities of OVMRC and the friendly atmosphere at meetings, like many socially-oriented clubs, I believe we may have become the slightest bit complacent as a group, basically happy with the status quo and not overly preoccupied about whether or not we undertake to enhance our membership. Our rationale would seem to be that since many clubs like ours report dwindling numbers of paid-up members, we need not be too concerned about that problem at OVMRC. Bluntly, I think much of the explanation for our diminishing numbers here at home lies in the average age of our most active members and in their preference, if preference it is, to leave things as they are, not a bad thing since we are quite okay. I do not think that what I have just said is at all unique to OVMRC, quite the contrary. However

waning enthusiasm for amateur radio clubs may be, I would prefer to approach the problem as though it were specific to our group since so doing forces us to be more vigilant.

For however long I shall continue to sit in the president's chair, I shall devote much of my attention to prompting for new recruitment strategies and for whatever changes in club bylaws and/or club orientation that will hopefully encourage greater interest in OVMRC. Two examples of such changes follow. I trust there will be others.

At our next Annual General meeting of the club in spring, the Executive will present a motion for a change in our constitution to allow for the creation of a new standing committee. This chair, if the motion is approved, will replace the current Flea Market committee.

Special Projects Chair

Rationale

OVMRC cannot but benefit from involvement with new projects that will augment interest of current members as well as attract new people, especially if these projects are innovative and entail new developments in amateur radio such as D-star and digital communication. The existence of a Special Projects person will enhance communication with other clubs in the region as well as be of help to the Programs chair in terms of potential guest speakers.

Duties

1. To investigate, throughout the year, and bring forward to the OVMRC Executive Committee, NEW pursuits that might interest members.
2. To assist the Program chair, when requested, in terms of future guest speakers who can address NEW issues.
3. To plan and arrange for OVMRC annual flea markets, most of the practical aspects of which to be handled by a subcommittee intended for this purpose, this subcommittee comprising any willing members of the club.

Recipients of the Rambler

As of this year, The Rambler is sent electronically to anyone (member or non-member) who wishes to receive it, the intent, to apprise people outside our club of our activities and interests. In this regard, if you know anyone, amateur or not, who you think might like to have an e-mailed copy of the newsletter, please write either to Bill Hall, VA3WMH, at bmhall@rogers.com, or write me at jerry.neufeld@rogers.com.

Suggestions need not come only from the Executive Committee. If you have ideas about how we can make our club more appealing while preserving its character and orientation, please contact me or any Exec member.

73 de VE3QSO



Pot Lid Net Celebration - Main table - Doreen, VE3CGO at the head and Jerry, VE3QSO in the middle



Pot Lid Net Memento from ED

Photo courtesy of Maurice-André, VE3VIG

Photo courtesy of: Don, VE3NJH

UPDATE ON THE CHAMPLAIN TRAIL



We are very happy to inform you that The Champlain Trail project has been accepted and taken on by the OVMRC at the February monthly meeting. The Club has also allowed a small budget to take care of admin and running expenses such as the special event licence, the QSL cards, some handouts, and fuel when we will be using the Emergency Preparedness Trailer.

It was also announced that the first outing and activation with Special Event Callsign "VC3C" will take place on Sunday, June 1st. This first deployment will be used to test all equipment at the

Champlain Look Out in the Gatineau Hills, a high vantage point overlooking the Ottawa River. Authorization from Industry Canada is for a period of 60 days from June 1 to July 30.

The following outings and activations will all be listed next month in The Rambler and will appear on the OVMRC Webpage. Contacts with Clubs on the Trail for possible help like extra operators, and with municipalities to obtain permission to set up communications at given locations is an ongoing process right now and we hope to have a full list in time.

As of now, the Québec City 400 committee and a Radio Amateur Club in that city have been approached and we have positive responses. At the far end of the Trail, contact with Allumettes Island municipality was made and the Renfrew County Club will be approached. In Ottawa, we will contact the NCC, and so on for the rest of the Trail. It will be interesting if we can obtain permission to set up on Sainte-Hélène Island where Expo '67 was built and where the Casino de Montréal is now located. Abundant public to promote Amateur Radio.

At this time, the list goes something like this:

- Québec City - Champlain monument
- Portneuf - where Champlain built an habitation 15 leagues up river.
- Trois-Rivières - where Champlain built a settlement (Fur trade post)

- Sorel - where Champlain met with Algonquins, Hurons and Montagnais to explore the Richelieu to Lake Champlain.
- Ste-Hélène Island - named by Champlain in honour of his wife Hélène Boulay.
- Champlain Township (l'Original - fur trade post)
- Petrie Island - Champlain and his men stayed on islands for protection
- Champlain monument at Nepean Point in Ottawa (Astrolabe)
- Champlain Look Out in the Gatineaus.(June 1, 2008)
- Fitzroy Harbour - where Champlain portage to round the Chats Falls.
- Portage-du-Fort - to round the White Water region.
- Cobden - where Champlain lost his astrolabe.
- Allumettes Island (Morrison Island)-where Champlain met Grand Chief Tessout.

Final Wrap Up on July 30, Ottawa Region; VC3C QRT at 8PM (23:59UTC)

Communications will be conducted in all modes on HF, VHF, UHF, and also making use of local repeaters and IRLP. We will use wire antennas where permitted. Otherwise we will use mobile antennas mounted on vehicles. APRS will be activated at each location so that you will be able to follow us on the Trail through Internet.

If you would like to participate in any of the above outings, send me your name and coordinates, and I will send you a list with dates as they are confirmed.

HAVE FUN ON THE CHAMPLAIN TRAIL!

Maurice-André, ve3vig/va2ma mobile



Original Map covering the Ottawa River – 81 is Allumettes Island

Pictures courtesy of: Maurice André, VE3VIG

A LETTER FROM A YOUNG GIRL

We have received a letter from a young visitor at VE3JW that could be of particular interest to some readers of The Rambler.

Maurice-André, ve3vig

Amateur Radio

By: Kinsey Cook

My name is Kinsey Cook and I am 12 years old. On Friday February 8th, 2008, I went to the Museum of Science and Technology in Ottawa, Ontario. Though the museum has many wonderful exhibits to visit, my favourite was the Amateur Radio Station, hosted by Mike Joyce, also known as VE3 LTN. While there, my friend talked with someone in another country on a radio. I was shy and didn't want to talk myself, but was very curious about the people on the other side who were talking back. Amateur radio is a fun way to meet people from all over the world. We also talked to someone in Gloucester Ontario, whom we later got to meet in person because he came to the museum too.

I would like to go back to the museum and talk with people on the radio. I would like to talk to someone in Germany. I am interested to learn more about amateur radio. I would like to take a course to learn more and maybe get a job in amateur radio someday. ❖

HOBBY and SERVICE

Often, at the Exhibit station located at the Canada Museum of Science and Technology, visitors approach us with a question: "Are you Hams...like CBers..?"

In order to inform the visiting public to our station about Amateur Radio and its participants we define three terms that currently apply.

Ham : One who thinks he knows Morse code, but in fact does not do very well. He "hams" it up. Also known as a poorly fisted operator.

Radio Operator : A newly certified amateur who does not possess technical ability yet.

Radio Amateur : A federally certified radio operator who possesses different levels of knowledge and ability in operating, maintaining, and repairing receiving

and transmitting radio equipment in the Amateur Radio Service bands.

Evolution of the Service now permits a Basic certificate which does not require much technical knowledge. However, some Radio Operators have excellent operating knowledge and totally reflect our guidelines of courtesy, helpfulness, civic mindfulness, and good will ambassador.

Judging on the awareness of the general public with respect to Amateur Radio, it is clear that we need a lot more press to inform on our Service. With the progression and availability of instant communications now easily obtainable and affordable, are we a thing of the past? No. Amateur Radio has always been an experimental hobby and as such often spearheaded the development of radio communications. What is in use today in the general public is often the result of Amateur Radio experimentation.

However, generally, the public is ignorant of Amateur Radio step-stones in the advancement of radio communications and of the important role it plays in back up emergency communications. We have a large front window to the public at the Museum and we endeavour to inform as much as possible. But, we need more of you to be verbal or vocal about your hobby and its accomplishments. Talk to Radio and Television stations, submit current events to your local newspaper, highlighting Amateur Radio participation, and join us at VE3JW to spread the word.

Maurice-André Vigneault, VE3VIG
Amateur Radio Exhibit Group VE3JW
❖

OVMRC MAY PICNIC

Who: This Picnic is open to Members of the OVMRC and their families, and we encourage any other

Amateurs and their families from other Amateur Radio Clubs to attend. The public is also

encouraged to drop in and visit us to learn about "Amateur Radio in the Park".

What/Where: Picnic At Vincent Massey park

When: May 11/2008

Why: Looking for a reason to get out and enjoy the spring weather and try out the boat anchor

you bought in Smiths Falls.

Talk in: VE3TWO 147.3+

I (VA3CMD) will arrive early (by 8am) to set up an HF Station and participate in the Pothole net.

Anyone interested is very welcome, bring your family, bring a picnic, bring a rig, come out

and enjoy the scenery and shake off the snow!

Access via the parking lot at Vincent Massey park off of Heron rd. just west of Riverside Dr.

more Specific directions can be given over VE3TWO repeater.

Time is flexible. I will be there from 8 am until at least 4 p.m., come when you can stay as long as you like.

There will be no rain date. All of the subsequent weekends are taken up by the May long holiday

weekend, the National Capital Race weekend, University/high school graduations/Commencement

activities as well as Field Day in June, so this is a one Sunday, one shot event!

Listen in to the nets on VE3TWO for updates,

We hope to see you there!

73 de Patrick, VA3CMD

OVMRC 2008 Calendar			
Month	Rambler Dead-line	Meeting	Exec Meeting
Mar	7	20	27
Apr	4	17	24
May	2	15	22
Jun	6	19	26

NOTE: March meeting starts at 7:00 P.M. For MAXI-MINI Flea Market

MORSE CODE COMPREHENSION AND SPEECH RECOGNITION

Jerry Neufeld VE3QSO

A question that continues to interest those of us who work in the psychology of language is how human beings break up phrases into words and, of more importance here, words into sounds when listening to speech. The decomposition or parsing process in written language is not complex: 1) the meaning of words and/or phrases is made clearer by inclusion of punctuation marks; 2) segmentation of phrases into words is facilitated by blank spaces between words and 3) printed letters of the alphabet are reasonably good representations of sounds in words. These graphic aids when reading are obviously not available when we must extract meaning from unsegmented streams of sounds, many quite long and without frequent pauses.

In the absence of efficient models on how we segment incoming speech, software engineers have had to develop algorithms that are not claimed to duplicate what we humans do but, instead, allow machines to convert spoken language into coordinates that can then be manipulated by computers to extract meaning, e.g. the speech recognition system employed by Rogers. Successful as these engineers have been, their work sheds little light on the topic of this article, that is, how we auditorily process Morse code.

My principal reason for writing this piece is to contest the view that CW comprehension speed is best tested with the use of five-character strings, for example, the sequencing of which is unpredictable by the listener, e.g. exotic call signs or random letters, numbers and symbols. My position is predicated upon common attributes of existing models of speech perception in humans. Imperfect as these models are, experimental evidence of the last two decades has brought us much closer to an understanding of how the language centres of the brain cope with lengthy, unbroken strings of sounds. My purpose here is to apply several widely accepted principles in this field to aspects of CW decoding that rarely receive attention.

Contrary to popular opinion in amateur radio, I contend that auditorily processing of CW, at speeds between five and 60 words per minute (WPM), is not a simple matter of progressive improvement of one's skills. Stated another way, success-

ful decoding of CW messages at 40 WPM and above, in normal or quasi normal language, requires development of listening strategies that closely resemble what researchers believe we do when hearing speech. In my view, this explains why the vast majority of CW enthusiasts experience difficulty in breaking the barrier of 40 WPM, plus or minus five. The development of strategies of the kind referred to above, requires a wholly different approach to listening, one in which character clusters and rhythmic patterns become the targets rather than isolated symbols. Imagine, if you will, a situation in which your partner in conversation speaks to you in disconnected sounds instead of whole words, i.e., (t h e s h o r t l i t t l e b o y) [the short little boy]. Although the analogy is far from exact, the question here is how proficient could one become at sound-by-sound decoding before reaching limits imposed by auditory processing constraints. Clearly, sounds, juxtaposed in an uninterrupted fashion as in normal speech, is vastly more efficient.

Much of our ability to comprehend speech up to rates of 400 WPM and higher, relies on the predictability of what comes next, this in conjunction with what has gone before. For example, the initial th sound as in "those," tells us that no hard consonants will follow, helpful but not very. When the next sound that we hear is e as in "the," the possibilities for the third sound in our word become seriously restricted. We will be able to predict that either we have reached the end of the first word, that word, the, or we may hear the sound s as in "said."

From a computational standpoint, then, we can easily defend the claim that segmentation within the word and within phrases as well as at sentential levels presupposes that we constantly are guessing about what is to come, both in terms of sounds and sound sequences and in terms of the next word we are likely to hear. In speeds of 40 WPM and above, I suggest that we do much the same thing, assuming, of course, that we have managed to cultivate normal speech-like segmenting strategies. As often claimed by high-speed CW operators, listening to code at 50 WPM involves the perception of patterns rather than discrete symbols, these patterns comprising high frequency sound clusters in English as well as whole words of five characters or less. Although I do not favor this position, it is possible that the patterns of which I speak here are syllable-based.

If you are still reading, you will anticipate my antipathy for the view that high speed tests of CW decoding should consist of five-character groups that allow for little or no computation of probability. Even

though one might be capable of copying material in normal language at speeds of 50 WPM and above, tests that make use of cipher-like groups of characters would produce rather disappointing results, the cut-off point probably between 35 and 40 WPM. Moreover, CW work, as we know it in amateur radio, does not involve the use of ciphers or randomized strings. Instead, we have many abbreviations and acronyms, all of which, at extra high speeds, will be heard as one pattern and not as distinct characters.

Said briefly, my point in this article is that comprehension of CW at speeds above 40 WPM requires that we invoke entirely different decoding strategies that bear little resemblance to what most amateurs normally do, strategies that, while natural, must be cultivated with a very different mind set. Skill acquisition, then, does not involve one CW decoding process only, but two, the first, invoked for handling symbol-by-symbol strings below 40 WPM, the second, invoked for handling high frequency (common) character cluster patterns at higher speeds.❖

MAXI-MINI FLEA MARKET

Electronics Bargains Galore

At our March 20th 2008 meeting, we will be having a Maxi-Mini

Flea Market to help dispose of a huge collection of almost new and collectable amateur radio items from Joe Blanchet's home (VE3BAD). The sale starts early at 7:00pm and will last until 8:30pm.

There will be many bagged lots of new and good quality used components and small parts, power supplies and test equipment. Also included will be several HF and VHF transceivers complete with manuals. Prices will be well below those you see on the Internet or at regular flea markets. Members wishing vending space should contact Steve (VE3SBC) at 613-248-0323 before March 17th.

Remember that this flea market is open to all buyers, so pass the word around to everyone. Transmitting equipment will only be sold to licensed operators and only cash will be accepted. No table rental charges apply, but a 20% fee is charged on all gross sales to each vendor.

Steve Cochran (VE3SBC)