

QRM News



Newsletter of the Wagga Amateur Radio Club (WARC)

May 2010

President: John VK2YW
Secretary: Jorgen VK2KJJ
PO Box 294 Wagga Wagga NSW 2650
Meetings at Small St Clubrooms
Last Friday of each month

Callsign: VK2WG – VK2RWG – VK2RTW
Nets: 7.165Mhz Sundays 1200hrs EST
Web: <http://www.wagga-arc.org/>
IRLP Node - 6260
Editor: Bob VK2VKV Sponsor: EACOM

President's Report



Members,

One way or another it has been a particularly busy month. Now before I go any further, please remember that June is our AGM. AGM is when we of course renew our executive and our membership fees fall due. This meeting is a fixed agenda and is more or less the winding up of one club year and the beginning of the next. There will also be a general meeting straight after it. So, take this as notice of the AGM.

I was particularly excited by the news this month that the Club had gained 2nd place in our section in the John Moyle Memorial Field Day. To the best of my knowledge this was the best outcome we have ever done and given the fact we are not close to any major city where contacts are many I think we did remarkably well.

Last Monday night we kicked off the Technical Lecture series being conducted by Andrew Cole. Andrew is a very knowledgeable teacher and rather than presenting a course as such is going to present a series of talks that will cover many subjects in an interesting and easy

way of understanding the topic. If Monday evening was any indication they should be most interesting. Classes will resume on June 21st so put it in your calendar. It's a technical hobby and this is a way of improving your knowledge.

The Antenna Analysers have arrived so if you ordered one please see Mike VK2DAI to pick up same. Who will complete theirs first? The Club is also still holding a couple of Callbooks ordered by members. If that's you, then please drop in and pick up your copy.

Planning is underway for the WIA Centenary celebration. The Club will be holding an open day on Saturday 5th June and publicity for that will be going out this week. We also want to use the VK100WIA callsign on Friday 4th and Sunday 6th so at this coming meeting I am looking for volunteers to assist. Our displays are decided and I am aware of some work going ahead on that.

After the last meeting about 5 cars headed out to try to find John VK2JGK and Helen VK2FOAL who were the foxes. But cunning as they were it didn't take that long to run them to ground. OK – perhaps I exaggerate- yes, I agree they were well hidden and did run a bit of a smoke screen to try to put us off the scent and now I understand why John was insistent that we use 146.500 ☺. But well done to the finders – Greg VK2KGO and Judy VK2VJO. At the wash up and whilst downing birthday cake – yes, thanks Helen – we decided on a real hunt, with a hidden transmitter. The plan was to have it on a Sunday morning and culminate in a BBQ lunch. The date we have selected is **Sunday 27th June** so put it in your diaries now and more news as it gets closer to hand.

And finally, look out for a new callsign in coming weeks. More news when I am allowed to tell you.

That's enough for now - see you at the meeting Friday night 26th. 73 de John VK2YW

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 The April Foxhunt**
- 2 Latest Executive Meeting**
- 2**
- 3 Ham Babble**
- 6 Fox Hunting (Part 2)**

Proposed “Linked” Repeaters, their Call Signs and Frequencies:

Bethungra	VK2RBE	146.775
MIA	VK2RGF	146.850
Galore	VK2RGA	146.875
Tumut	VK2RTD	146.800
Wagga	VK2RWG	146.750

It is expected that all of the systems will be operational by mid-2010. Each links back to VK2RWG via a UHF link.



The April Foxhunt

Thank you for all those who participated in our fox hunt on Friday night, 30th April. The hunt was in a new sub-division of Barooma, with unheard of, un-mapped streets, (Breasley Cres) followed by hotdogs, tea, coffee and birthday cake.

The Foxes (John VK2JGK, Barry VK2KUZ, Anne VK2MKJ and Helen VK2FOAL) lay in wait. The Foxes had ingeniously lowered the power as the hunt grew closer. It was approximately a half an hour before Greg VK2KGO and Judy VK2VJO found us, followed thereafter by a procession of cars, John VK2YW, Des VK2TIW, Mike VK2DAI, Keith VK2HBJ, John VK2TH, and Jorgen VK2KJJ.

It was a great night, very exciting, watching the cars driving around the outside of the Barooma estate..... assuming streets were closed or dead ends.

We all had a great time, and a special thanks to the ladies Judy and Anne for their support.

Congratulations to Bob VK2VKV, John VK2YW, Jorgen VK2KJJ, Wayne VK2PDW and Doug VK2ZMP on their Birthdays and anyone else who had their birthday during the month of April.

The Fox Crew (aka Helen Knight & Associates)



The most cunning of foxes

“Foxman”

Latest Executive Meeting



Report from the Executive meeting 12/5/2010

Treasurer’s Report: Bank balance \$7,498.92,

General Business:

1. At a meeting to be held on 24 May, Andrew Cole will discuss areas of interest for future technical lectures (to be held on Monday nights).
2. 7 Analyser Kits @ \$135 each have been ordered for the Club.
3. Still a few Callbooks to be collected.
4. The Club to investigate the 2nd hand market price of FT101, TS140S, FT102.
5. 27 June 2010 – Foxhunt with direction finder.
6. Repeater Update – Mt Bethungra VK2RBE now up and running and will soon be linked to the rest of our repeaters. The Galore site VK2RGA is yet to be installed.
7. WIA 100 Celebration to be held on 4/5/6 June 2010 and will include activities at the Club. We will attempt to set up an interview on local community radio 2AAA-FM.
8. Members should bring their fox-hunting equipment to the May meeting for a check up.



Congratulations Joergen (VK2KJJ)!

Our own Joergen (VK2KJJ) gained **First Place** in the CW Section of **The Harry Angel Sprint 2010** – This is an excellent achievement – May I extend my hearty congratulations of behalf of the WARC.



HamBabble – Making Sense of What's Said on the Bands



By and large, amateurs are an articulate, well-spoken and intelligent lot. However when tuning the bands, one sometimes hears some strange contortions of the English language. This twisted terminology perplexes the newcomer and grates on the ears of the experienced operator.

Neither necessary to explain a technical concept nor useful to express a new thought, insight or observation, there are various terms and expressions unique to radio amateurs. Their inappropriate use makes amateurs sound strange to the uninitiated and hinder clear communication. If you've just got on the air, read this article and avoid the phrases listed unless you really mean them. If you count yourself as one of the uninitiated, treat this list as a guide to understand what the babblers on the bands are really saying.

I have attempted to go beyond a simple listing of words to identify specific patterns of communication unique to amateurs. For example you will be introduced to *Amateur Action words*, *Intention Phrases* and *Sign-Off words*. Many of the terms used by amateurs can be placed into one of these groupings. Their existence may tell us something about the personality of amateur operators, who have many more words to announce their intention to end a conversation than to welcome a station with which contact has just been established. Then there's specific patterns such as *Lengthening words* and *Regurgitating Rogers*. The topic is ripe for further study - is there a psychologist in our ranks who is willing to conduct a content analysis of amateur communication and report the findings?

The following list has been derived from both personal observation and suggestions from others.

Affirmative: Yes. An example of a *lengthening word*. Also see *negative*.

Amateur Action words: Except when they are trying to climb towers, amateurs are generally a sedentary lot ('Another cuppa – thanks Dear'). However on air hams like to convey the impression of being on the move – hence the constant use of 'going' as in 'going clear' or 'went' as in 'went QRT'. *Getting out* and 'coming back' are other *amateur action words* occasionally heard.

Best 73: 73 means best wishes, so best 73 must mean best best wishes! It has entered such common use that complaining about this is probably futile.

Break (Break): An abrupt and impolite way of interrupting a conversation already in progress. It's much better to simply insert your callsign in the breaks between transmissions that all good operators leave.

Breaker: An import from CB. Even worse than *break*. Fortunately rare on the amateur bands.

Device: George Orwell's *NewSpeak* replaces established terms with specific meaning with general terms of less specific meaning. The result is awkward communication that doesn't get to the point. The word *device* is an example of this misuse. Someone who asks if they are 'making it into the *device*' really wants to know if they have a decent signal through the repeater. Repeater is not much longer to say than *device*, but carries a more specific and accurate meaning.

(see you) **Further down the log:** HamBabble for later. Remains popular, even though most amateurs don't keep logs nowadays. *Further down the curly cord* or *further down the power bill* are variants, possibly borrowed from CB. All are common *sign-off words*. Adding 'will' converts them into *intention phrases*.

Getting out: Transmitting and being heard. An SWR reading of 1:1 does not always mean that you're *getting out*. Your coaxial cable might be very lossy, or you're transmitting into a dummy load.

Go: A terse contraction of 'go ahead'. Occasionally used on the amateur bands. A variant is found on 27 MHz, where the 'o' sound is extended and raised in pitch. It's quite entertaining – have a listen one day!

Going: Another *amateur action word*. Unless you're mobile, you're not going anywhere! Why is it that amateurs are often 'going clear', 'going QRT', or, heaven forbid, 'going thataway'? Often turned into an *intention phrase*, eg 'will go clear', etc. Over-used.

Intention phrases: Amateurs often prefer to say that they intend to say something rather than actually saying it. What's wrong with us – is the overuse of intention phrases an unrecognised form of mike-shyness? *Will say 73* is the most common intention phrase you'll hear, closely followed by 'will go clear' – also an example of an *amateur action word*.

It: What is *it*? I don't know. Ask those who are always handing 'it' over to you or putting 'it' down. Once you have the answer, let me know.

Lengthening words: Often used in phonetics – most commonly Victor Kilowatt rather than Victor Kilo. Also *affirmative* and *negative* rather than yes or no. Presumably the repeated consonant sounds in the longer words kicks the needle on the linear amplifier higher up the scale. The average power is higher and the signal cuts through the static better. When said very quickly with non-standard phonetics and the

speech processor wound up you will succeed at making yourself as unintelligible as any other DX hound on 20 metres.

(VK....) **Listening:** A weak euphemism for calling CQ used on VHF/UHF FM. Common on repeaters for no logical reason and even sanctioned in published operating guidelines. Like *intention phrases*, it's another example of amateurs not saying what they really mean.

Negative: Does not only mean the black power lead on your transceiver. Like *affirmative*, it is an example of a *lengthening word*. *Negatory* is the CB variant, almost extinct these days.

Over and out: Though popular in movies, these two words mean two different things, and should never be used together. 'Over' is an invitation to transmit. 'Out' means 'clear', QRT, 'pulling the big switch' or any of a multitude of other terms.

Over words: When conditions are good and operators know each other's voice and intonations, the term 'over' can be dispensed with. Over isn't the only word used to pass *it* to the other station – some use the equally respectable 'go ahead' or the in-your-face 'back'. Some HF DXers say 'over over' (said slowly), which may have some merit when signals are weak. See *Lengthening words*.

Personal: Normally pertains to matters that are private or not of interest to other people. However some newcomers use it as a jargonish alternative to the plain 'name'. *Handle* is similar, but is more accepted in amateur ranks than *personal*, which is popular on CB. However not everyone likes *handle*; heard recently on 40 metres was the comment 'I don't have a *handle*, I have a name'.

Place words: If amateurs are going to be constantly on the move (see *amateur action words*) it makes sense for there to be places to move between. That's why there is a need for the amateur lexicon to feature the words 'here' and 'there'. 'The name here is Bob'. Does Bob carry a deed poll form in his pocket and change his name when he goes somewhere? If not, the 'here' is superfluous. The famous British spy did not say 'The name *here* is Bond - James Bond'. Neither should you.

Put it down (with): Something your vet might advise should be done with your ailing dog. However it's yet another sign-off word. Presumably the '*it*' is a hand microphone, and you're *putting it down* when you finish. Also see *it*.

QRZ the breaker: An ugly embellishment of plain old QRZ? Who is calling? is the plain language version.

QSL: The meaning of this term has broadened from the original acknowledgement of receipt of message

(presumably one does not have to understand the message content as in *roger*) to almost a synonym for yes or *affirmative*. 'Are you running 100 watts?' 'QSL QSL'. Also see *roger* and *regurgitating roger*.

QSL question: We don't seem to send as many QSL cards as we used to, but QSL remains popular in amateur parlance. QSL is sometimes appended to yes/no questions to which the answer of QSL is desired. Example: 'Your QTH Perth, QSL?' When signals are poor, stations may go through several iterations of repeating callsigns to each other until 'QSL QSL', is heard, which means that stations have received each other's callsign correctly, or are too lazy to care. Given that the meaning of QSL relates to acknowledging receipt of messages, the *QSL question* is quite legitimate and is probably not true HamBabble. It only appears here because it's overused at times. A close relation is the *roger question*.

(Can I have a) **Radio check?:** A question asked by those who would like to know if they are *getting out* but are uninterested in holding a full conversation with those on the frequency. The usual response is 'you're working'. The question is common on CB, where it probably fulfils a useful role on a busy repeater. Use on the amateur bands identifies the questioner as either a pirate or someone who hasn't listened much before talking.

(the) **Regurgitating Roger:** It's a good idea to confirm salient details with your contact when conditions are poor, but occasionally people go overboard, even when signals are strong. Sometimes you hear almost a playback of your last transmission, punctuated by *roger* between each item. Example: 'Roger your name is Peter, roger on the QTH, roger that you're running ten watts, roger on the FT-301S, roger on the new dipole, roger on the 15 degrees, roger that you're off to work soon, et cetera'. It's boring, repetitive, and tells you nothing you don't already know. The 'regurgitating QSL', is used in a similar manner.

Roger: Message received and understood, but also used to mean yes or affirmative. It's not unlike the CBer's 10-4, use of which has diminished greatly since the 1970s. See also *regurgitating roger*.

Roger question: Like QSL, *roger* is used as a question if given a questioning intonation at the end of a transmission. This can sound quite odd, as in 'Your name is Justin, *roger?*' Those using the *roger question* appear to invite their contact to reply by saying either *roger*, *roger*, *affirmative* or *negative*.

Roger dodger: A pretentious version of Roger. Let's kill this one off, *roger?*

Roger that (or Roger there): Just plain roger will do.

Romeo: Part of the phonetic alphabet for the letter 'R'. However it's also misused to mean *roger*.

See you: Unless you use amateur television, saying that I'll see you further down the log can't possibly be true. In radio talk, when you speak to someone, you 'see' them.

73s: 73 is an old telegraphic abbreviation for best wishes. Is 73s twice as good? If so, should we wish people 146 to save them from having to do the mental arithmetic themselves? A variant is 'seven-threes', to which the correct reply should be 21.

Sign-off words: Of any fraternity in the world, radio amateurs must be the one with the largest number of words that mean ceasing transmission or saying goodbye. These are often combined to result in a sign-off that is almost as long as the original contact. An example: 'Will let you go and I'll pull the big switch this end. 73s for now and see you further down the log'. This is repeated several times in turn until everyone signs. Strangely enough we don't have nearly as many initial greeting words. Does this imply that almost as soon contact is established (confirming that equipment is working but without lowering oneself to ask for a radio check) most amateurs are itching to end the conversation ASAP?

This end: A crude telephone can be made with two jam tins and a piece of taut string. You talk into your end and your partner hears you at his end. Someone famous once said that radio operates the same way except there is no string. But the ends remain, and amateurs are incessantly talking about things happening this end. See place words.

Will let you go: Another intention phrase. A series of sign off words invariably follows. The implication is that your audience has just been given a long earbashing by you. You've run out of things to say, so want the contact to end in a dignified manner. What better than ostentatiously parading your consideration for others by generously granting your contact their freedom by uttering 'Will let you go'?

Will say 73: The most common intention phrase. Why do amateurs announce their intention to wish others best wishes more often than they actually give these wishes?

Will sign: Another intention phrase. When spoken, it sometimes sounds like a threat. See will let you go.

Conclusion

Well, we've exceeded the word limit this way, so will let you go, and pull the big switch this end. We'll give you best 73s, put it down for now and catch you further down the curly cord. Hope to see you on the device again some time soon, roger?

Acknowledgements

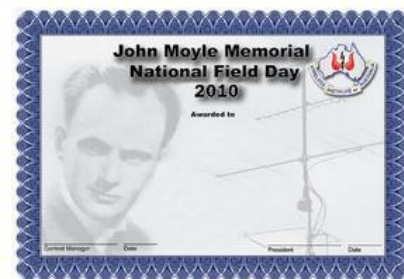
Thanks to Ron VK3OM and Keith VK3JNB for suggesting some of the phrases defined here. Also to the babblers on the bands without whom this article would not have been possible!

by Peter Parker VK3YE - first appeared in *Amateur Radio*, October 2000



"Hang on a minute Larry...my SWR is jumping...I'm going outside and see what the problem is..."

John Moyle Memorial Field Day



It is with great pleasure that I announce that the Club came **2nd in the JMMFD**. I think that is at least the single best effort we have done in all the time we have entered this contest. First place getter in our category was VK3CNE. I am sure you will all join me in congratulating the guys that put in the effort – Yay! Look out next year!

John VK2YW



The Fox Hunt (Part 2)

As mentioned in President's Words we are going to try for a Foxhunt culminating in a BBQ on Sunday 27th June – weather permitting. Last month I talked about what a Foxhunt and what a Hidden transmitter hunt was and what equipment was required. This article will concentrate more on what you need to join in for this next event.

The main item you will need is a directional antenna of some sort plus a meter or some form of indication of signal strength on your radio. If you don't have these items of equipment it will be very difficult to make a start, so I suggest that you make this bit a priority if you want to join in, and I hope you do.

There are lots of different styles of antennas and the internet is a great resource but the most basic type of antenna is the 3 element yagi. With three elements you will find you will have a good front to back ratio and a little gain. These are relatively easy to build and as you aren't transmitting can be quite forgiving and require no setup. Armed with that and some knowledge of the area or a map you are in a position to start.

Once the Fox's transmitter is switched on, hop out of the car and slowly rotate the antenna. The polarity should be vertical for when we start off but if these events prove popular we may go to a horizontal polarity which will allow the antenna to rotated as you drive along although in this day and age the road regulators may not take kindly to that.

Back at the start now as you rotate the antenna through 360 degrees, note the signal strength as you go and you should see a distinct increase in signal when your antenna is pointed at the fox. Make sure you have the front and not the back – reverse the antenna direction to confirm. So now come back to that point and try and visualise what is out in that general direction and then head off. We will start from the top of Willans Hill so the signal should be quite strong. If you were a purist you would probably go to another hill if possible and take a second reading and perhaps plot these two on a map and where they dissect one another should be roughly where the fox is. But most of us can't be bothered doing that because we want to be first and head off in the general direction, stopping every now and then to take another bearing.

As you get closer though, the signal also increases and invariably will be so strong it will be impossible to get a bearing. At this point and armed only with beam and radio you will find the need to attenuate the signal or

make it weaker so you can still rotate the antenna and still take a reading. Depending on your radio it might be possible to move frequency slightly to attenuate so do try that but ideally you need a piece of equipment between the antenna and the radio called an attenuator and normally these will have a number of positions or levels of attenuation built in. And so it's a good idea to also have this piece of equipment. All these bits – the antenna and the attenuator can be built for a fraction of the price you might pay for them so give some thought to that and have a look around for bits.

OK, so now you have got very close – so close in fact that despite your attenuator working the signal is now so strong not even that works. This is where you would consider using a device called a sniffer but more about them in a later article. What you may find now is that without a sniffer you are still stuck because you can't rotate any more and still get a direction. At this point, try disconnecting the antenna altogether and see if there is enough signal to be heard by the radio alone (without aerial). If so, drive slowly and watch the S meter. It should rise and fall as you go through the nulls and nodes. Keep going and the signal should continue to increase. If it doesn't you have probably gone past it so back track until it does. When it is at maximum signal strength you are very close – maybe within 50 metres or so. Now, its time to get out and have a look for it because you are very close!!

For this next hunt, we won't be so mean and if you get that close you should see Greg and Judy close by and for this hunt that's close enough – get out and get your food out ready for lunch as you are here! Hope you can make it and don't forget to put that date into your diary.

The May meeting will be an opportunity for you to bring whatever gear you have along to check and otherwise get ideas. Doug VK2ZMP has donated a book on the subject along with some equipment for use by anyone without equipment but wants to try the sport out first.

John VK2YW



“I have satellite TV, satellite radio, satellite telephone and GPS navigation.....How can you expect me to be down-to-earth”