



Communicator

www.ifroar.org

January 2017

From the President:



In recent newsletters the spectre of ongoing poor propagation rightly concerned amateur radio operators everywhere. The sun's behaviour – with its sunspots and

regions – has resulted in lower solar flux and poor signal to noise ratios making it a challenge for participants on ROAR nets. Even locally, noise levels have worsened and some of us have had to rely on linked VHF/UHF systems for reliable coverage. However, at least one factor that contributes to good propagation is unchanged – the seasons! The grey line varies with seasons and – at last – has come to the rescue for ANZO/Europe nets and more particularly for the ZL's! It has been both a relief and a pleasure to hear many of the European ROAR members after a six month hiatus now that the grey-line links these two regions. Despite poor solar flux, "5's" in the logbook are frequently replacing months of "2's" – and hopefully this should continue through until February 2017 (at least!).

The Seoul Convention was another opportunity for us to share the fellowship with others. I had the pleasure of attending our AGM by Skype and 'met' everyone present as the laptop was passed around the table – no computers were harmed! My thanks to those who went to Seoul and contributed to ROAR's presence. This AGM sparked new interest in administrative roles – welcome again to secretary Phil (N9HWO) and also assistant treasurer Ingo (KK6EWB). The subsequent dialogue

between both of them and ROAR Treasurer Ed (N4EDT) has been most welcome and we hope will spark new enthusiasm within ROAR USA. Ed has recently been active in examining options for networks and Facebook users will have seen him survey members for their resources.

I can't avoid comment on the recent events here in my QTH – Wellington, New Zealand. Long known as a city with a seismic history and the periodic reminder that 'the next big one' is overdue, it was profoundly sobering to be within 100km of the mid-November 7.8 quake. The outcome would have been calamitous had the quake been centred on the City itself – more so if it occurred at noon rather than at midnight. Even so, a dozen or more supposedly 'at code' buildings were seriously impaired and are likely to be demolished – no second chances!

What of communications in our disaster zone? Cellular proved resilient. Nearer the epicentre, the local amateur VHF repeater continued in use and was used until the emergency services repeater was reinstated. At the time of the quake, I was on a Red Cross IT and Telecommunications Emergency Response Unit training course and I'll share the approach of that organisation with members.

Satellite communications (VSATs, Sat Phones and Iridium messaging devices [DeLorme's In Reach]) are now preferred for data, voice and personal security in the absence of a local cellular or broadband network. VHF is preferred for local communications – via a combination of portable repeaters and handhelds (Motorola and Kenwood). Establishing computer data networks in the disaster zone is now essential for logistical, medical and water/sanitation service and support – as well as the integration of local and international resources. HF systems are no longer effective in providing strategic

telecommunications services due to extremely low bandwidth and relative complexity (MUFs, Antennae, spectrum allocation, etc.) but have residual merit for broader area NVIS coverage in conflict zones. Are there any lessons for ROAR?

Satellite communications is very expensive – so we can set that aside. The potential for VHF (including internet-linked) radio communications is, however, much more viable for our fellowship. Indeed, ZL members have had to rely on their national UHF linked system over the winter months as the HF bands proved unviable.

My conclusion is the encouragement of ANY amateur-based telecommunications mode for the furtherance of our fellowship and the inclusion of more of our members. Echolink, IRLP, Digital or Analogue VHF via local/linked repeaters, HF, if you can manage it, or even humble email/skype in the absence of anything else. The important thing is that our fellowship includes all of our members and advances knowledge of Rotary at the same time.

I encourage our Vice-Presidents and members in their regions to work together and explore innovative amateur radio ways for enriched fellowship.

Finally, the Atlanta Convention is a mere six months away. We have a Booth (number 2735) and our AGM will be held in Room A406 on Saturday 10 June 2017 from 12:30-13:30 for our Annual General Meeting.

Helen and I send our best regards and wish each of you a happy and prosperous New Year.

*73's from John (ZL2JPM),
President ROAR*

Introducing Ingo Werk: Incoming ROAR Treasurer:



Ingo Werk, KK6EWB
Born and raised in Germany, where he received a Master's Degree in Design Engineering. Immigrated 40 years ago first to Colombia and ultimately to the United States. Ham

Radio interest started back then by listening to international shortwave broadcasts. Joined Rotary in the early nineties, served as 2005-06 District Governor of the greater Los Angeles area D-5280 and thereafter as Southern California Multi-District PETS Chair, RI President's Representative to countries in Latin America and Texas, Aide for 2 years to TRF Chair, and multiple international RI assignments. Proud member of the Rotary Club of Manhattan Beach, California. Currently serves ROAR as Assistant to Treasurer Ed Tyler, and is radio-active with an ICOM IC-51 and IC-737.

Special Event Station:

For the year 2017 Frank 5P2BA will operate OZ44C with a focus on Rotarian **Thor Heyerdahl**, Norwegian adventurer and ethnographer (October 6, 1914 – April 18, 2002). Thor was an Honorary member of the Rotary Club of Larvik, Norway.

Thor and his crew became notable for the **Kon-Tiki expedition in 1947, call sign LI2B/mm**. Radio operators have been Knut Haugland, LA3KY (1917–2009) and Torstein Raaby (1918–1964). See the link for details https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kon-Tiki_expedition

Vy 73 de Frank, 5P2BA

Re-Activation of the North American Net:



In an effort to start the New Year off in a right and proper fashion, I will put the ROAR North American Trans Continental Net on the air Sunday, January 1, 2017, at 1900Z. The net will operate on 14.287. I will be running a KW through a vertical antenna as my beam

has not yet be installed. Recent tests indicate the station can be heard but, I will not have the ability to isolate signals by putting the noise on the back side of the antenna. My vertical hears all signals equally. My call is N4EDT.

73, Ed Tyler N4EDT

ANZO ROAR Report Jan 2017:



The last six months have not been particularly kind to the ANZO members of ROAR. While we don't claim we were any better or worse off than the rest of the world amateur community, it is true that we look forward, twice a week, with a significant amount of anticipation, to our scheduled skeds with Europe on 14295.2 khz.

Mainly due to the current state of the sun, the level of enjoyment has been seriously dented, particularly in ZL!

The poor level of solar activity has had a dramatic impact on our ability to reach western Europe and, in particular, the UK, Netherlands and Finland over the last six months. Looking at my log and comparing the second half of 2016 with the comparable period of 2015 is illuminating. Without undertaking the level of statistical analysis that a communications engineer takes pride in, it is obvious that things have been grim.

In July 2015, I was regularly making contact (with 5/5 to 5/7 reports) on 20m with all the G stations and Finland, and only using 100 watts. In July 2016, I was very lucky to be heard anywhere in the UK. My signal seemed to cut off in France as I regularly had contact with Jean-Pierre and Alain, but with low signal levels. The best I got from F1CFA was a 5/1 in July. Klaus HB9CQS and Pertti EA7GSU were probably our best signals in July/August.

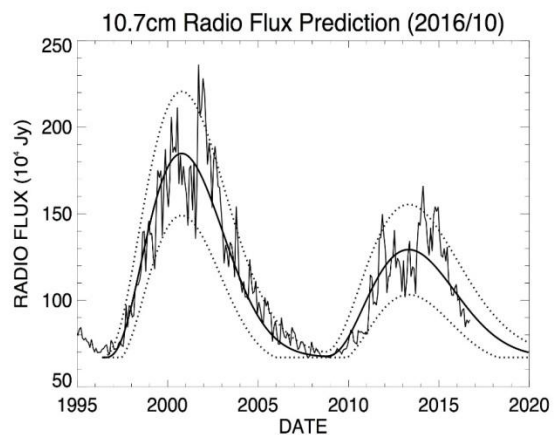
Things improved slightly, with a later start time and with the sun's move to the solar equinox, but not to the levels experienced in 2015.

As I said, things have been particularly poor in New Zealand. They were lucky to gain contact with their most eastern ROAR members, Coco YO9BC and Klaus. Still we did manage to keep contact within the ANZO region on both 40 and 20 metres.

I guess the biggest question we have for the future is what will be the extent over the remaining three of four years of the decline in solar activity in Sunspot Cycle 24

and what can we do to cope with this. It is probably fair to say that we can expect less ionisation, and therefore on average poorer propagation until things turn around towards the end of 2019 or 2020. This is a long time to go and I don't wish to sound too pessimistic as some scientists do point out that we don't lose all propagation, it is just reduced.

I found the graph below from NASA instructive.



The next question we need to ask is what can we do over the next few years to compensate for the current solar cycle? This has already been debated by some already including from memory Malcolm PA3AHC, John G3OKT and our President John ZL2JPM. We haven't come to any conclusions that I know of, but I can think of two things I can do. First is being more ready to move our sked times to maximise band openings. The second is to continue my study to get the unrestricted licence and therefore add more transmitter power. The latter is probably only going to help a little however as I note that Bill VK4ZD doesn't do all that much better than me and he is putting out considerably more power. As a wise man once said to me, it is mostly about the sun and the quality of your antenna.

I can't change the sun, my antenna is reasonably good as it is, so there is nothing to do but keep studying.

All the best to you all for 2017.

73s

Phil VK2MCB

ANZO VP

Milestones by John Thompson
RIBI Secretary of IFROAR, PHF
Rotary Club of Oswestry in District 1080:

Recently, while helping neighbours clear an overgrown paddock near my home on the Old Racecourse, 1000 ft up on the English/Welsh Border, we came across the rusting shack of G3ASC. ROAR owes much to the pioneering work of Ernie Power (1905-85), Oswestry TV shop owner and Rotarian, for his early amateur radio contacts with G8ON, K1UIL et al, which initiated the International Rotary Fellowship in 1966. The corrugated iron shed, with a hole in the back through which connection was made to a portable generator, is still there and only 100m from where I live!



Ernie Power, G3ASC's Shack in a paddock

I joined Oswestry Rotary Club in 2002, and became RIBI Secretary of the Radio Amateurs' Fellowship in 2011. This year, I was awarded PHF for work in connection with starting *Lifeline*, an annual Oswestry event which facilitates the local Police, Ambulance, Fire Service, Railways, Coastguard, First Aid and Cycling Safety to show schoolchildren how to be street-wise to the dangers in their environment. As far as I know, Oswestry Club is still the only Rotary Club in the UK to run such a "Crucial Crew" event. Also, I developed two extra scenarios on Internet Safety and Bullying which are presented by Rotarians with CEOP* accreditation. By 2016, more than five thousand 10/11 year olds had passed through Oswestry's Lifeline.



Teaching Internet Safety as part of Lifeline

Like many youngsters born in the 1940's, I cut my teeth on sophisticated radio equipment designed for the Armed Forces during WW2, which remained available at pocket money prices into the 1950's. As direct result I believe, and by 1984, I was Chief Radio Engineer of British Telecom and a member of the Cellnet Board for its launch of the first mobile telephone service in the UK in 1985.

However, before that, I was licensed G3OKT in 1960 and began operating a 160m homebrew transmitter using a Clapp Oscillator as VFO. Little did I know that I would meet Ben Clapp in person in 1988, on what would have been John Logie Baird's 100th birthday. Clapp was Chief Engineer to Baird, the inventor of television in the 1930's. As Head of TV Research for BT Labs, I was keen to celebrate Baird's transmission of analogue television over telephone lines between London and Glasgow. It was my pleasure to host Ben and to show off the 2 Mbits/sec digital video codec created by the seven-country collaborative European R&D project COST 211, which was agreed in 1975 and of which I was Vice Chairman. It was demonstrated on the first experimental European satellite COST211 developed a prototype video codec which after 30 years of micro-integration and development became SKYPE, now used in computers and phones for universal video communication.



Ben Clapp as televised by Baird



Digital videoconferencing in 1980

Although radio was my principal hobby, I was given FJ Camm's *Beginners Guide to Television* for my 11th birthday, and I had parents who trusted me to experiment with kV equipment in my bedroom, so when I left school and went to University, *digital television* engineering became my profession. I now see 2017 as the 50th Anniversary of the digital television research which enabled the functionality of today's Social Networks.

I retired from BT as Chief Multimedia Architect in 1995 for the chance to be COO of The Digital Audio Visual Council. DAVIC was a global consensus body of about 200 experts who were delegated by their Computer, Network or Consumer-Electronics companies to meet in 23 places around the world over the next five years in order to specify all the interfaces for what was seen as the future \$1trillion business of Convergence. DAVIC published this specification on the internet.

In 1999, I retired from DAVIC to The Old Racecourse, Oswestry. I joined Rotary and returned to active amateur radio. I attended the ROAR 2005 AGM at Matlock where I was encouraged to take over as Secretary of ROAR in RIBI from G4YZE (*Bill from Bolton where they made steam engines*).

In 2013, I gave a talk to The Oswestry Club on the effects of currently declining sunspot activity, embellished by photographs taken on an unsuccessful Norwegian cruise to see the Northern Lights. This and other Rotary talks can be found on my website at www.oldplace.org.uk.

From my shack I now look 60 miles east to my birthplace, where in the late fifties I was encouraged by Sunday visits to local amateurs during an 11year peak of sunspot activity, when ZLs and VKs were coming through with broadcast quality. I still remember the excitement of making my first VK contact: VK5KO, Jack in Adelaide, on 40m on 13/7/61. This was quite an achievement for a 20ft vertical in a small back garden in The Black Country.

However, currently in a trough of solar activity, IFROAR now awaits the return of such favourable propagation conditions!

Reference "A brief history of ROAR" by Don Cliffe, G0JWE

* CEOP – the UK Police Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency

Bill VK4ZD Webmaster & Diane VK4DI Editor

October 15th and 16th saw Diane and Bill participate in their 35th JOTA weekend since 1978. Their daughter Alizah VK4FOX and Darling Downs Club member Paul VK4CPS also assisted over the weekend.

The property looked like a tent city for 24 hours!

A total of 30 guides and leaders from Gatton, Helidon & Goondiwindi descended on their Lockyer Valley ham shack for a weekend without phones or internet.

A surprise visit from the owner of the neighbouring property with some rescued wallaby Joeys added some excitement.



This is the 4th year the Goondiwindi Guides have made the trip. The leaders had drilled the girls with the phonetic alphabet and they were given a short training on talking into the microphone. A number of the guides have attended before and were able to encourage their friends.

One of the leaders said she has been in Guides for 20 years and wishes she'd attended JOTA before now. Everyone wants to return in 2017.

The guides thoroughly enjoyed getting on air and talking to other groups, in fact some of them needed a lot of

encouragement to allow someone else to sit in the operator's chair.

Bill & Diane presented some of the girls who excelled "On Air" with Certificates to recognise their efforts.

Diane has taken on the positions of Contest Manager and Publicity Officer for the Australian Ladies Amateur Radio Association (ALARA) and is also heavily involved in organising the 2017 ALARAMEet Cairns in the Tropical North of Queensland.

Bill & Diane were also involved with the VI50CC special event station to celebrate the 50 Year Anniversary of the Cooby Creek Tracking Station north of Toowoomba. The Darling Downs Radio Club set up a field day station on site for the reunion weekend on Oct 23rd & 24th with information on Ham Radio. Diane was interviewed by local station Win TV with Bill being filmed making a contact into Pitcairn Island as well.



Diane VK4DI and DDRCi member Wayne VK4ARW

Cooby Creek Tracking Station was located 22.5 km north of Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia.

This station was built in 1966 to support NASA's Application Technology Satellite Program, and was a part of the Spacecraft Tracking and Data Acquisition Network. It was designed to be portable and the equipment was housed in trailers that were shipped out to Australia in the mid sixties.



A 12-metre parabolic antenna was used to receive and transmit information to geostationary satellites, which served as the forerunners to modern telecommunication satellites. The steerable crossed yagi antenna was used to transmit and receive telemetry from various spacecraft of that era. The transmitters used Klystron power amplifiers and the receivers were cryogenically cooled maser devices.



Cooby Creek tracking station phased yagi array with satellite dish in the background. Photo Courtesy of HullWarren

On 6 June 1967 the station received the first television program from outside Australia (from expo67) to be received on the Australian East Coast (the first program to Australia, "Down Under comes up Live", was received at Carnarvon on 25 November 1966) and on 25 June 1967 participated in the Our World program linking 24 countries around the world to Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.

The station closed in 1970.

OZ44C – a tribute to Rotarian Thor Heyerdahl

When I was a teenager I read the book of the famous 1947 Kon-Tiki expedition and was fascinated by what the crew accomplished – that fascination has never left me. Later I learned that Thor Heyerdahl was not only a Norwegian adventurer and ethnographer (October 6, 1914 – April 18, 2002) but also an honorary member of the Rotary Club of Larvik, Norway.

But let's start from the beginning. I have been a SWL since I was 12 years old (1978). My social media was my little CB radio and I listened to the world of Broadcasting and HAM stations with my Panasonic DR29 receiver. I dreamed of the wonderful world that was out there – somewhere! My favorite books have been adventure stories. Later in my adult life I travelled the world on business as well over the airwaves.

Some months ago, I applied for another personal call sign, OZ44C that I have dedicated to use solely to commemorate particular famous DX'ers and HAM radio historical events in general. For 2016, it was Father Moran, the famous 9N1MM – (see qrz.com for details).

During the year 2017, I will focus on dedicating QSO's and a special QSL card to commemorate Rotarian Thor Heyerdahl and his crew. This special interest is also with the radio operators on the Kon-Tiki expedition who operated the call sign LI2B/mm. The radio operators were Knut Haugland, LA3KY (1917–2009) and Torstein Raaby (1918–1964). See the link for details https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kon-Tiki_expedition

My aim is for QSOs on HF. I am facing challenges as I cannot set up any visible antennas in my apartment complex, so I will work QRP from the outdoors or will join with, for example, the famous Danish Contest Station OZ5E, to get on the air.

As history is one of my favorites, I am also in contact with the Kon-Tiki museum in Oslo, Norway. I visited it many years ago and highly recommend it. The Norwegian Radio Relay League has advised me that they have no plans for any special activity regarding the 70th anniversary of the Kon-Tiki expedition. However, they will have articles, both on their web-site www.nrnl.no and in their printed magazine. So with this and a contact to the Rotary Club of Larvik, it is my desire to focus some attention on this historic anniversary and to use it to promote Rotary.

To me, our radio hobby is a wonderful way to share information on Rotary as an organization as well as our activities to fight Polio. Let us continue in the spirit of the famous DX'ers and radio enthusiasts, and make others aware of our fantastic hobby to join in and pursue "International friendship through Amateur Radio".

I look forward working you on the bands.

Vy 73s de Frank, 5P2BA

RI Convention in Atlanta:

We can look forward to meeting old friends and making new ones as we showcase our amazing hobby to the rest of the convention goers

We have Booth number 2735 and our AGM will be held in Room A406 on Saturday 10 June 2017 from 12:30-13:30

Bill VK4ZD & Diane VK4DI are taking the opportunity to visit Dayton prior to the Convention.

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Treasurer	Ed Tyler N4EDT/ Ingo Werk KK6EWB
Webmaster	Bill Main VK4ZD
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