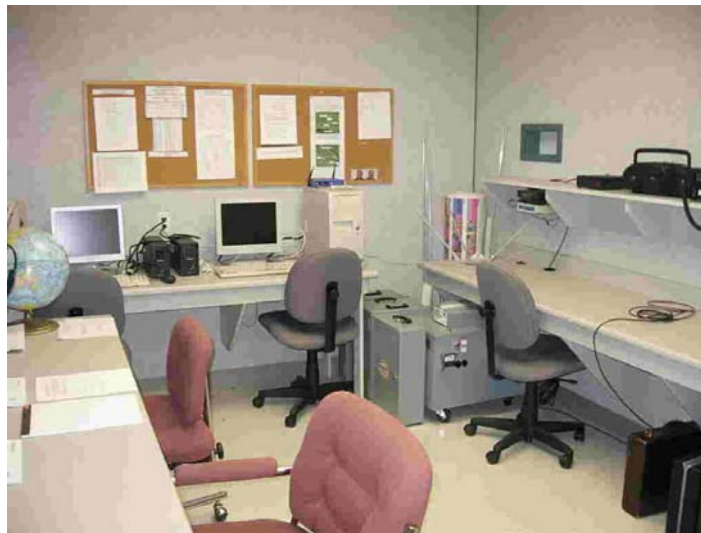


# THE REPEATER

A PUBLICATION OF THE CHILLIWACK AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

MAY 2009



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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

2009 saw a new Executive team for the Club and as requested by members, a new direction. The new direction became the "old" direction with the emphasis being put on Amateur Radio as a hobby. We have been fortunate in being able to add some new and younger members to the Club - Welcome. Thank you to the many volunteers who have helped establish the Amateur Radio Emergency Service over the past year and made it the best we have heard of in the area. Thanks also to John VE7BXN for the design and building of the new suitcase radios which are checked regularly at each location in Chilliwack to make sure that they are up and running. Jack VE7HJJ has looked after the repeater station after it was moved to his property and has allowed the Club to keep the trailer and its equipment there as well. Recently, a group organized by John VE7BXN met in Yarrow to learn how to erect the crank up tower on the trailer and related equipment. Unfortunately all of the attendees had previously experienced the set up and use of equipment. While the Emergency Communications is definitely up and running, the emphasis is by no means removed. We are finding interest in CW practice and classes given by Jack VE7DOJ. Interest was expressed by 6 people for a basic course in Amateur Radio in order for people to write the exam and get their Ham license. Unfortunately,

the interest waned and the course was cancelled.

It is expected that our intended move to the Twin Rinks location will take place late May, early June depending on how far the City gets with construction. Our Committee has been working closely with Jim MacDonald and the City to co-ordinate our needs i.e. the cement base for the tower. The new site will be on ground level and wheel chair friendly, so we are hoping that Hams who were not able to attend meetings at Fire hall #4 will be able to do so at the new site.

We are looking forward to Field Day and we are working towards the Train and Hobby Show in October. As always, we are looking for some new volunteers to help out with some of the Clubs commitments. It's your Club, only you can make it work.

Roger Galliford VE7GMG

## **CLUB EMERGENCY CO-ORDINATOR**

Early this year we experienced a real emergency in the Fraser Valley. Heavy snow falls and subsequent rain caused extensive flooding the valley particularly in the Greendale area. The flooding was also accompanied by mud slides in our surrounding hills including Vedder Mountain, the Chilliwack River Valley and other areas. Although we are not first responders the FVRD

activated their EOC and requested we set up our associated radio room. This was completed within 30 minutes of the request and subsequently we deployed a number of radio operators in their own vehicles to provide situation reports of specific areas.

Although normal phone communications were available these activities proved to be excellent training for us. The City of Chilliwack EOC was activated, and although we were not specifically asked to respond we did check our city radio room and its equipment and began tentative planning in the event we needed to provide emergency communications. Subsequent debriefings indicated that a strong case can be made to provide a communicator for the City Emergency Coordinator and the ESS Director as they went about their business in coping with the disasters taking place. Such an operator can help with cell phone calls and well as passing information via radio to the radio room for further ongoing communications via normal phone. This would help reduce the enormous communications work load of critical personnel.



For those cub members who have not visited these facilities here are pictures of the SW Region EOC and Radio Room at Green Timbers Surrey

In March we were provided with another unexpected event. Our request for further funds from the Gaming Authorities had been reconsidered and our Gaming account received a significant deposit that will enable the club to complete our mobile antenna and portable radio room as well as purchase new HF radios and a new generator for emergency operations. A planned practice in setting up our mobile emergency system will take place soon and it will be put to test again at the end of June during the annual Field Day Event. All club members are encouraged to participate.

My thanks again to everyone who helps make our club an active organization particularly in the area of emergency communications.

Jack VE7HJJ

### **HAM CLUB MOVE**



The Club has been using the Fire Hall #4 for Thursday night get togethers as well as executive and general meetings for the past 5 years. However, the City of Chilliwack has determined that the fire hall be made into a 24/7 hall and the rooms we have used for Club activities will be changed to bedrooms and other rooms necessary for the firemen. As a result, the City has agreed to set up mobile trailers at the Twin Rinks area in Sardis. City workers and Club members will work in conjunction to install outside antennas as well as making sure the trailers we will be using are set up to our specifications. Once the trailers are set up the move of equipment will take place and this will happen toward the middle to end of May. The access to the trailers will be on ground level which will make it much easier for some of the members who experience difficulty climbing the stairs at the fire hall. We will have a large meeting area, radio set up area and kitchen. The Emergency Operating Centre (EOC) will also use our facilities in the event of a disaster.

The pictures shows John Pierce (VE7 BXN) standing beside the newly installed antenna base and the pink lines show the layout of the trailers.



### **REPEATER MOVE**

The 146.960 will soon have a new home. Paul Blessin (VA7 LLB), a new member, lives on the west side of Chilliwack Mountain and has agreed to have the repeater moved to his property. The repeater is currently at Jack Jackaman's "ranch".

The property is high up on Chilliwack Mountain and will allow the Club much greater coverage of the Fraser Valley.

### **NEW MEMBERS**

The Club has seen a big increase in new members this year. New members include younger people which will be a great asset to our Club. The Club would like to welcome the following people:

Paul Blessin -VA7 LLB  
Ann-Marie Blessin - VE7 FDB

David Kenis - VE7 CFL  
David Porteous - VA7DSP  
William Porteous - VE7XWP  
Gord Salter - VA7GCS

William is our youngest member at 13 years old. We will try and get some other young people to join you, William!

We also welcome back Sean Clarke - VE7 AYZ and Norm Schmidt - VE7 IIT.

Hopefully we will gain other new members during the year.

### **APRIL WORK PARTY**

A work party was scheduled for April 25 to set up the tent and mobile antenna. This was predominately to show the new members how this equipment is set up and to have the practice. Unfortunately, only one couple, Paul and Ann- Marie (VA7 LLB and VE7 FDB) showed up. Also present were Dave Fraser (VE7 PD); John & Bonnie Pierce (VE7 BXN and VA7BXN); Jack and Joan Jackaman (VE7 HJJ and VE7 IHJ); Burt and Gail Cross (VE7 KCQ and VA7 GCC); Harold Thiessen (VE7 HHT); and Tom & Diane (VE7 XTA and VE7 XDA). Dave, Tom, Harold and Burt took the tower off the trailer and examined the cabling and determined that it does not need to be replaced. The tower was then put back onto the trailer.

A meal of chili, buns, and squares was provided by Bonnie and Gail.



Harold Thiessen, Burt Cross, and Tom Adrain examining the tower

### **MONDAY MORNING BREAKFAST**

The Monday morning breakfasts continue to be well attended. Lots of laughter and talking are experienced during this time. We encourage any that can come to do so to enjoy a social aspect of the Club.

We would like to thank the staff at Banner's Restaurant for their wonderful support of our group and also to the other customers who have to endure our "noise".





### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEKEND**

In April 2009, the City of Chilliwack Emergency Co-coordinator, Jim MacDonald, asked the Club if we could provide an active radio presence for a 3-day event at Chilliwack Mall for the annual event, National Emergency Preparedness Week. We agreed and had a display of two emergency radio systems which were up and operating during the three days. From my point of view, as organizer of the event, I thought it was a success. We were asked to provide equipment and operators and we provided both. Thank you to all who offered your time and energy to participate. Although there was little public interest shown, there was a few each day that stopped to inquire about our equipment and responsibilities during an emergency response.

Thank you to all who made this an event that was successful and enjoyable.

John Pierce VE7 BXN



John Pierce (VE7BXN and Jack Allan (VE7DOJ) at booth

### **MY CANADIAN EXPERIENCE - GOBYH.**

In October 2007 my daughter Debbie, who at that time was an Intensive Care Nurse at Stanmore Orthopedic Hospital in North London, attended a recruitment meeting that was being held in a central London hotel. The meeting and interviews were being held by staff from Chilliwack Hospital, and following her interview was offered a position in the Intensive Care Department.

In the following February, with her family, she traveled to Chilliwack for a two week visit, and during that time visited the Hospital, and decided to take up the position which had been offered. Unfortunately due to the deteriorating financial situation in

the UK they had difficulty in selling their property and did not arrive in Canada until late 2009, and eventually started work in Chilliwack Hospital on 29<sup>th</sup> December of that year. Once they had become settled, having purchased a house on Garrison Estate, my wife and I decided to visit her and the family.

I have held an Amateur license in the UK since the early 1980's, first as a "B" licensee with a call of G6PRF and then an "A" license G0BYH. Over the years I have visited Europe and the USA and utilized the reciprocal license arrangement that exists between the various countries and the UK, but I had until now, never visited Canada.

So before my visit I decided to investigate what was required for me to operate in Canada. Obviously it was quite easy to find out that the same reciprocal agreement exists between Canada and the UK as far as general operating, but I was not sure what protocol to adopt as far as call sign identification, i.e. "VE", "VA", etc, which should be given with my own call when on the air. A few searches on the Internet and I soon discovered that Chilliwack had an Amateur Radio Club and that there were a number of Email addresses which were published on their website.

I sent off a couple of Emails and almost straight away received a reply from John Jackaman, VE7HJJ.

John, who I then discovered is known more by the name of Jack, providing me with all the information I required as far as call sign protocol, and also very kindly offered to visit my daughter and family, and give any help and advise they may require as newcomers to Canada.

I did not plan on bringing with me any HF equipment, only a VHF/UHF handheld, but after further research on the Chilliwack Club website I soon realized that the coverage of our VHF radios in the UK would give me very limited access to the local Chilliwack repeaters. Our 2 meter VHF allocation in the UK is only 144 - 146 MHz with our repeaters in the 145.600 to 145.775 (-600 KHz shift) section.

In general Email discussion with Jack I mentioned that I would only be able to access one local repeater due to the limited coverage of my handheld and he then very kindly offered to loan me a portable and mobile transceiver for my visit. The handheld proved to be most useful when we were out and about. I contacted Jack shortly after I arrived, and he invited me to his home QTH to see the Contest Station which he has adjacent to his house. His son Dale VE7GL was also there on the day I visited, and he gave me a very interesting and detailed explanation of the equipment and antennas. This I think is a station any Amateur would be proud to own, it

makes my own little station and antennas seem very insignificant. However it's amazing what can be worked with very little power and modest antennas if the conditions are right, so I will keep working away for that DXCC HI.

As many of you will know I was also invited to attend the Monday morning breakfast meeting and one of the Thursday club meetings where I was made most welcome. The Chilliwack Radio Club venue, when compared to our own club (Braintree & District Amateur Radio Society) premises is luxurious, we share with a Hockey Club and a Children's Play School, and on club nights we can be found moving toys, teaching aids etc around before the meetings start. Following one of the Monday breakfast meetings Jack & John VE7BXN took me to the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) and explained to me the link between the Chilliwack Radio Ham operators and the Emergency Services. The equipment and procedures were all most impressive and I think would be the envy of our RAYNET emergency support in the UK. I was most impressed with the construction of the emergency portable and suitcase radio systems, which had been constructed by club members.

During the 3 weeks of our visit my wife and I were able to visit some of the local places of interest, Harrison Hot Springs, Othello Tunnels, Hells Gate, and White Rock, I must say

that British Columbia has not only lived up to, but exceeded our expectations for spectacular and breathtaking scenery.

I look forward to making a further visit later in the year when I hope to have more time for radio and sightseeing.

Once again I should like to say my sincere thanks to all the club members I met who gave me such a warm and friendly welcome, and particularly to Jack who has given my daughter and family such immense support since her arrival in Canada.

Geoff - G0BYH

Braintree & District Amateur Radio Society.....

<http://www.badars.org.uk/>

RAYNET.....

<http://www.raynet-uk.net/main/>

### **THIS AND THAT**

The annual field day is coming up at the end of June. Be aware that Bonnie Pierce (VA7 BXN) will be

phoning families regarding food for the event. This will happen toward the middle of June.

We will be requiring members for work parties during the move of the Club equipment. If you can help at all, your assistance will be most appreciated.

This newsletter is for and about the Chilliwack Amateur Radio Club and its members. Anyone wishing to contribute is welcome to do so. Please e-mail Bonnie Pierce, [happyknitter@shaw.ca](mailto:happyknitter@shaw.ca), with your submissions. Comments and suggestions are welcome.