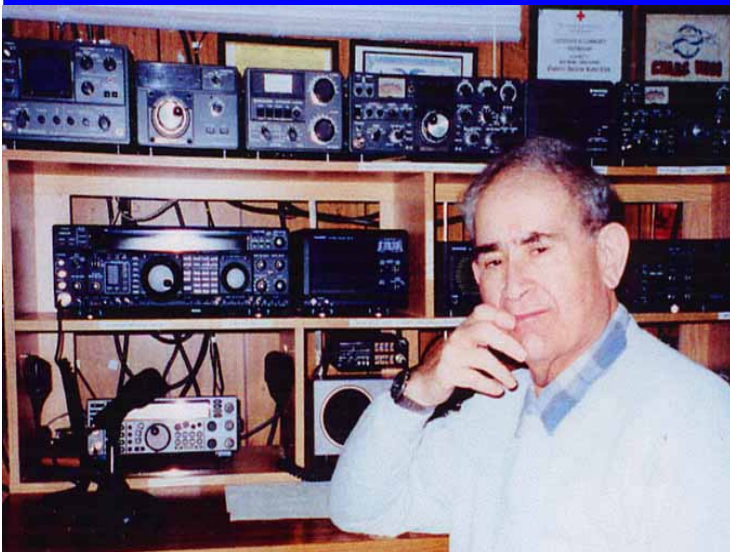


# H O T   B A N A N A S

Oakville Amateur Radio Club

May 2003

## Shack of the month



## VA 3 G R L

Mike Brown, VA3GRL, has been an Oakville resident since 1964. During that time and for 26 years prior to that in Quebec, he was involved in the failure analysis of aircraft systems and components.

Mike was born and educated in England. He caught the radio bug in 1948 and was licensed since 1951. Mike normally operates on 10, 15 and 20 metres running QRP. Mike has a variety of equipment and a small antenna farm consisting of a multiband (10-80) vertical, an inverted U (not V) 1/2 Square for 10, 20, 40 and 80 and a Hybrid Quad for 6 to 20. Mike is the author of our featured article.

## Upcoming Meetings

May 12 - Red Cross - 7:30 p.m. - Herb Hilgenberg on meteorological services he provides interpreting and transmitting weather information to the Coast guard and ships in the Atlantic Ocean. Not to be missed!

## To Amplify Or Not To Amplify That Is The Question

(Apologies to W. Shakespeare, et al)

By Mike Brown VA3GRL

*Editor's Note: Mike, VA3GRL wrote this classic piece almost 45 years ago. Much, no most, of his wisdom still applies. Mike is originally from "G"-land and I have not deemed it necessary (or possible) to offer a translation for some of his terms.*

### Authors Note:

**This Epistle to the DOUBTING, was originally penned "many" years ago, when over driven 807s and 813s were popular with the Post-War Ham radio fraternity, with resultant TVI, RFI and sometimes-violent neighbours. As it is apparent that this state of affairs has not really changed in the intervening 45 (plus) years. I considered that it was worthy of resurrection, with appropriate comments.**

**This text is presented in the original (untranslated) form, and, may contain technical phrases etc indigenous to British "HAMESE" circa 1952-54.**

*Continued on page 5.*

# VE3HB

The Oakville Amateur Radio Club meets on the second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. from Sept. to June at the Red Cross, 167 Navy St. Guests are always welcome.

There is an informal gathering 7 a.m. most Saturdays at Angel's Diner at 369 Speers Rd. and a Friday 10:30 a.m. coffee session at Tim Horton's on Cross Road.

All are welcome.

\*\*\*\*\*

VE3OAK - 147.015 +.600 (131.8Hz CTCSS)

VE3OAK - 444.325 +5 MHz

VE3OAK - APRS - 144.390 MHz

**Net** - Mondays at 7:30 p.m. (except meeting nights and holidays on 145.015.)

**Web Site:** [www.oakvilleamateurs.net](http://www.oakvilleamateurs.net)

## Hot Bananas

*Hot Bananas* is published 10 times per year from September to June and is distributed to all members of the OARC. Articles may be reproduced without additional permission provided credit is given to *Hot Bananas* and the Oakville Amateur Radio Club.

Submit story ideas, feedback, comments, articles or artwork to [ve3hg@cogeco.ca](mailto:ve3hg@cogeco.ca) or mail to:

**Hot Bananas**

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## Field Day Notice

It has been several years since VE3HB has been entered into any Field Day log. Well that is about to change. The ARRL had opened a new classification this year (F) which has the following definition.

*4.8. (Class F) Emergency Operations Centers (EOC): An amateur radio station at an established EOC activated by a club or non-club group. Class F operation must take place at an established EOC site. Stations may utilize equipment and antennas temporarily or permanently installed at the EOC for the event. Entries will be reported according to number of transmitters in simultaneous operation.*

The club has decided to operate a Class F station from the Red Cross building and we are looking for all hams interested in participating. Currently the plans are to run two HF stations along with VHF/UHF and possibly even packet.

Set up will start Saturday morning, June 28 (after breakfast at Angels) and the contest will commence at 2:00 pm local time. The contest is a 24-hour event running through to Sunday at 2:00 pm.

Everyone is welcome to come out and participate. Participation can be in many forms, help set up antennas, rigs, (and tear them down), operate or just to come out and socialize. Keep in mind we will be there approximately 30 hours. We hope to see you there.

If you would like to participate in any way please contact either:

Greg VA3GGF  
Peter VE3HG  
Harry VA3EC

**Field Day Links:**

(Editor's Note: What is Field Day? Is it a contest? Is it an emergency exercise? Is it a good time? It's this and more. [Join the fun and see you at Field Day.](#))

**Here are some links to check out Field Day:**

<http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/fd>  
<http://www.flammer.com/crew566/past/arrl99.html>  
<http://www.qsl.net/ae0q/fd.htm>  
<http://www.amsat.org/amsat/activities/amsatfd.html>

# CQ CQ CQ

## Executives & Coordinators

### Club Executive 2002-2003

President	Jack Livingstone	VE3ITM
Vice President	Denny Zidek	VE3OKD
Secretary	Greg Foster	VA3GGF
Treasurer	Carvell Pelkey	VE3CPQ
Director	Russ Schwandt	VE3JUJ

### Club Coordinators

Membership	Russ Schwandt	VE3JUJ
Program	Denny Zidek	VE3OKD
	Russ Schwandt	VE3JUJ
Emerg. Coordinator	Rick Harrison,	VE3YRH
Assistant E. C.	Jack Livingstone	VE3ITM
	Russ Schwandt	VE3JUJ
Help Committee	Harry Kosterman	VA3EC
VHF net activities	Denny Zidek	VE3OKD
Repeater	Greg Foster	VA3GGF
	Gary Hetherington	VE3TGH
	Harry Kosterman	VA3EC
Web site	Michael Willems	VA3MVW
Training-Basic & Advanced	Jack Livingstone	VE3ITM
Examiner	Jack Livingstone	VE3ITM
Public Relations	Doug Smith	VE3RG
Equipment/Shack	Mike Brown	VA3GRL
	Jack Livingstone	VE3ITM
DX Interest Group	Ron O'Reilly	VE3FII
Club Bulletin	Peter West	VE3HG

# VE3JCR SK

## If I can hear em, I can hit em!

"If I can hear em, I can hit em!" quipped Jack VE3JCR proudly back in my early days as a new ham. I will remember him as a fun fellow who loved to share and tinker.

I shared many hours on VHF with Jack when he was running back and forth from Markham to Oakville on his daily trek. He ran a 400 watt VHF/UHF amplifier in the trunk of his Celica and hence the phrase that titles this note. Jack cooked many breakfast's on Field Day, always involved and quick with a smile.

I have one of the 2 antennas that I feel he is best known for. The water pipe special is on the tower at my place which is now part of the IRLP. The other is known as the "Jack Special", which is roughly a 19 to 20 inch whip with a couple of nasty turns near the bottom to make it work as both a 1/4 wave on 2 meters and a co-linear on 70 cm (best I recall).

Jack's tireless passion for learning and an ever-inquisitive mind constantly sought to understand and master. His most notable passion was for Christmas lights. Most of the town has seen them over the years. The traffic was snarled on normally sleepy Patricia drive when his lights and chimes drew many admirers. He came to own an oscilloscope that he struggled with. He wanted to use it to help him diagnose one of his control circuits developed to control the lights. Jack discovered that I sold them and asked if I could show him the ropes. It was nice to give something back to someone who gave so much.

Jack also was a flying enthusiast and businessman, a key driving force behind the security business HARP that his son founded and he and his son ran. The HARP helicopter acquisition was undoubtedly a signature of Jack. I was able to attend his funeral service along with Mike VE3QSK. There was no less than three eulogies at the service delivered by his son, the mayor and the minister. The funeral home was packed. Jack has left quite a legacy and very fond memories. The amateur community will miss Jack Roberts, now a silent key.

Harry VA3EC

# Oakville Amature Radio Club – Meeting Minutes

April 14, 2003

- Meeting started 7:40 PM
  - 14 members present, 2 guests from Burlington club
  - Russ VE3JUZ reported on membership - 69 club members, no change from previous report.
  - Carvel VE3CPQ provided a Treasure's report. All bills were paid and there are no outstanding expenses. Latest expenses were related to some small items for club's station shack.
  - Rick VE3YRH, report on ARES
    - ARES Basic training session was held on April 5, 2003 – 8 people attended.
    - Further Basic training sessions are scheduled for Apr. 19, and Apr. 26, 2003.
    - Rick suggested that OARC should consider becoming involved in CANVARN activities in the future.
    - ARES setup in the club shack continues to be improving. At the present time there are separate VHF and UHF operating positions. A basic packet radio station has been set up. Improvements will continue.
    - Rick requested a small table (square or round) for use in the shack.
    - A large number of volunteers will be needed to help with communications for the Burlington Marathon – May 25, 2003. The request will be repeated in HB.
  - **Denny VE3OKD, asked club members to present nominations for Dizzy Izzy and Amateur of the Year awards.**
  - Denny also announced the program for the May 12<sup>th</sup> club meeting. The speaker will be Herb Hilgenberg and the presentation will be about analyzing weather data and communication of the information to maritime traffic. This will be a joint meeting with the members of the Burlington Radio Club.
  - Peter VE3HG again announced his intention to step down as an editor of bulletin HB. He will still prepare May and June issue of the bulletin.
  - The discussion then turned to the topic of Field Day 2003. This event is planned to be run from the Red Cross building. Greg VA3GGF will finalize the proposed set-up and registration.
  - After a short pause Michael Willems VA3MVW started his presentation about his experience as a traveling Ham to Hong Kong and around the world. The presentation also included information about applications of computer in conjunction with radio equipment. It is a pity that only a small number of club members had a chance to enjoy this presentation.
- 

## 40 years In The Wilderness

I am a fully qualified and competent ham. Well, lets take away the 'fully', and remove the 'competent'. As a navy radio operator, I was quite an active ham, operating in various parts of the world with a call sign that was considered a prize. That was about 40 years and several incarnations ago. A brief active period some ten years later, was not all that successful, given the pressures of education and work. We won't talk about the fear of knocking out the neighbours' TV, radio, or microwaves. Fast-forward about 25 years.

I joined OARC a few years ago, but have been more absent than present. Now retired, I hope to become more active. Boy! Do I have a ton to learn! There's nothing like standing between a couple of experienced hams during a contest and realizing that they actually speak a Martian dialect, laced with a few words in English. Our recent contest was a great experience and an eye-opener. I managed to get a few contacts, and the second day was better than the first. Thanks to the encouragement, patience and understanding of Peter (VE3HG) and Harry (VA3EC), I was never made to feel unwelcome. It was great fun.

Maybe you feel you're not up to snuff? Hop in, the water's fine.

Maybe the Club could run some sessions for qualified duffers; where do I sign up?

John Dunn VE3NZV

# Bigger Isn't Always Better

*Continued from page 1*

- Are you becoming depressed - yea frustrated and anti-social, because you are unable to have successful DX QSO's, with your legally allotted power?
- Are you "walked upon" and totally obliterated by the dreaded "W's"?
- Are banks of glowing (blue and red) valves, kilowatts, and stratospheric type towers, and associated super-beam type aerials, rivaling rugby and Daventy, the answer to your problems?

## **Epic battles**

Since Dinosaurs (and other nasty types) chased our ancestors through the swamps of antiquity, where, I am certain that there were many epic battles, with blue (woad) painted citizens of the Neolithic realm, all fighting to survive, skill has been pitched against brute force, and to a lesser degree-ignorance.

We all have our own analogies of this situation, which, most of the time can be boiled down to a basic fact, almost anyone, can with the installation of the requisite "equipment", produce and release, a blast of R.F. energy, with relatively simple amplification circuitry (examples being regularly shown in various American Publications).

We are, however, becoming (sometimes painfully) aware, that this approach to one's problems, has associated social problems, resuming from, TVI, where the picture on the neighbours nine inch. BUSH or K.B. "Telly", becomes a squiggly mess when you transmit!

## **RFI**

### **Where you almost rival Radio Luxembourg and sometimes the BBC Home Service?**

This scenario has also been carried to such an extent that irate neighbours start complaining to all levels of authority, that you (Kilowatt King) are interfering with their enjoyment of the HI-FI, by receiving your QSO, even when their equipment is turned off.

The aforementioned symptoms, are all signs of the dreaded "Goliath Syndrome" which can be very infectious, manifesting itself in other physical forms, such as killing ants with sledge hammers, or trying to control the mouse (or similar rodentia) population with explosives.

Whilst these activities can (and have been) quite impressive, (especially mouse control with a sledge hammer) they wreak of overkill, and in the use of excessive RF Power, of (now) revenge seeking neighbours, parents and other sundry (ex) relatives!

However: you have a choice in this terrifying scenario, you can equally become one of the "Davids" of our fraternity by the abandonment of the "Goliath" type activities in favour of the less aggressive path i.e.: rationalized aerial design, being moderate of power output, and last but not least, having a well founded understanding of "What is Power", and the developing of your operating skills.

If you choose this path. and become "an enlightened one", you will be recipient of many rewards, namely peace of mind, friendly relatives and neighbours and last but not least, no visits from the "little green van" bearing the dreaded letters "GPO RADIO ENGINEERING" from whence, servants of that worthy organization emerged, having been previously endowed with powers infinite, ranging from station inspection, through equipment seizure, to almost summary execution in the name of the reigning Monarch.

I have been preaching this philosophy for many moons, and hopefully the converts have not strayed from the flock. The philosophy is based upon the following facts and one's acceptance.

- What price is power, and why do we need it?
- Why should you transmit a mega signal, when your legal limit is 50 watts?
- Do you really need a stratospheric tower?
- Can you afford to "brown-out" the local electricity supply?
- What is gained by your involuntary broadcasting to neighbourhood wireless sets, Hi-Fs and telephones?
- Why do the lights come on (especially the new type fluorescent ones) when you transmit?

Whilst all, or some of the aforementioned items, have been associated with the desire for "high power" they are not deemed as a prerequisite for your success in Ham Radio, being defined by DX QSO's, exotic QSL's, etc.

Most hams have gone through the state of pseudo-depression e.g. DX deprivation or the DX plateau, and depending on ones financial resources (normally stretched to the elastic limit), have at some time fantasized the scenario, where we were the owners of the super station (as advertised in QST).

Such a station having racks of 807s and 813s glowing with a flickering, ghostly blue hue, and mod tanny, with the size (and operating temperature) of a small gas cooker, which during mod cycles imparted a dull red glow to the carbon anodes of the 813s.

Our dream rig is topped with a super receiver, a la CR-100, AR88 or SX28 or perhaps an HRO, with the coil drawers etc.

Continued from page 5.

Well, dear reader, such stations did exist, putting Brookmans Park and Rugby (almost) to shame, with their attendant broad band signals, these fantasies have also ended up as “nightmares”, due to the resultant RFI, TVI, brown-outs, and one fire which totally destroyed the shack, the origin of which was not determined, but rumoured to be the work of an irate neighbour.

I hope that at this point, I have shown that the brute-force or Goliath Theorem, is NOT the sole remedy for all that ails. As earlier stated in this text, “The David Approach” can provide such a remedy, if you are prepared to consider the following approach:

-Upgrade or improve your aerial system. You have a choice of many and varied alternatives. Consider a horizontal loop (good for 40 and 20 metres), or, if you have the space, a long wire for 80 and 160. This approach will not break the bank. The loop can be fed with coaxial cable (surplus stores), and matched with one of the circuits from the R.S.G.B. Handbook. Alternatively, try a TU 7.B, surplus at about 3-4 Pounds, beautifully made in America and silver plated.

-If you don't have enough trees or other forms of support for a wire aerial, then consider a vertical aerial, made from wire or aluminum tubing, or as a last resort, a Yagi type of beam aerial. This is a wide spectrum (much money) product, ranging from a homemade wooden tower, to a commercially built system. In this specific instance, I defer to your judgement, as only you know your priorities (i.e.: beer, food and somewhere to live).

### Operational skills

In this category, there is no substitute for the skill of the individual operator, being born and developed out of combination of patience, endurance, sorting out of almost unreadable signals from a QRM/QRN ridden background. Of these prerequisites, patience is a virtue, partly self-discipline and an ability to suppress frustration. This state of being patient, is not normally possessed by the majority of mega-hams.

We have all, at one time or another, encountered the scenario, where that rare DX station is calling CQ. All of a sudden, there is a mega emission of RF energy (usually from the “west”), almost of such magnitude so as to trigger a display of the Aurora Borealis. There they are all screaming their W call signs in unison. Often in (his ethereal battle of the titans) they are all losers, by virtue of having mutually swamped each other, with a combination of excessive power, gross impatience, bad manners and occasionally verbal epithets considered to be most un-British. These conditions being acute symptoms of “Goliath Syndrome.”

Now, conversely, the “Davids” of our fraternity (QRP) have a much more enjoyable life-style of operation, if possible, out of the mainstream, being patient, polite, unrattled, an often waiting for an eternity to make that contact! Are you a “David” or a “Goliath”? The choice is yours.

### What does High Power really do for you?

Let us diversify for a while, and return to the root of the dilemma! Why do we want power? Most devotees will tell you: to get a maximum signal strength report, or to “blast” through the prevailing conditions! If this is the case, where Fred J. Goliath's aim in life is to deform the needles on distant “S” meters, then it is time for a few words, on the repeatability and reliability of this device!

In general, the S-meter with the exceptions of the “top-line” receivers, (CR100, SX28, AR88 etc) is a low-cost moving coil meter, in an equally low cost circuit, striving to inform you of the incoming signal strength.

There have been many articles published on this subject over the years. Such articles have concluded as follows: That, with very few exceptions, they (S-Meters) are:

- Subjective
- Non-linear
- Inaccurate
- Doubtful calibration
- A device for the relative comparison of signals

A major (respected) reference work, summarizes signal strength and tuning indicators, as follows: “It is convenient to have some means to obtain a measure of the incoming signal strength on a communication receiver. The actual meter readings, in terms of S- units, or decibels above S9, are of little consequence as far as a meaningful report to a distant transmitting station is concerned.”

Few signal strength meters are accurate in terms of decibels, especially across the entire operating range. Some of the manufacturers of radio receivers once established a standard, where a given number of microvolts were equal to a meter deflection of 9 S units!

Unless, (with standard, mass-produced equipment/accessories) you have the requisite test equipment, such calibration is difficult to maintain when numbers and varying receiver's circuits are used. At best, a meter can be calibrated for a singular receiver, the one in which it will be used! Therefore most S-meters are only useful as relative indicating instruments, for comparing the strength of a signal, at a given time on a given band/frequency.

*Authors note: A series of controlled tests on six of the top line wireless receivers were conducted. All six radios were fed from a common signal input. Only two indicated the same “S” level. The remainder ranged from plus 1.0 unit to minus 2.0 units.*

It is therefore apparent that the humble “S” meter which we faithfully rely upon to quantify the level of the incoming signal, is one of the “root causes” of the dilemma, whereby the “needle benders” develop the insatiable urge for power to say that they worked some distant clime and received S9 plus umpteen decibels!

Continued from page 6.

As stated earlier in this text, whilst the S meters have their uses as a tuning aid, they should not be relied upon (religiously) for the precise measurements of signal strength. I have been accused of being over vocal in this subject, as one can contend, that if a signal, whether phone or CW, is 100 readable, it can be stated that this (readability) is the acceptance criteria!

### Back to Basics.

Continuing in the power vein, let us revisit some basic facts pertinent to RF transmissions. All RF systems have to abide by the same set of laws, namely: If you double your radiated power, it (all things being equal) results in a 3 dB (1/2 S unit) increase in the signal strength at the “receiving end”.

Now, to move the S meter needle, just ONE unit, you have to QUADRUPLE your power! In plain language, if you equate this as a series of comparative S meter readings and further assuming that your normal (non-amplified) signal is capable of producing an S9 reading, at some distant point, you will achieve the increase in gain, shown in the following table:

Tx Power (watts)	Rx (S units)
100.0	9.0
200.0	9 + 3 dB
400.0	9+6dB
800.0	9+10dB
9+12dB	

This is further illustrated in the appended table, (Ed. Note: Not included due to poor quality of photocopy.) which presents a curve of power versus signal strength. This graphically presents the results of transmitting a QRP signal (5 watts up to QRO signal (1000 watts).

We have further demonstrated that you gain TWO S units for a ten-fold increase in power (radiated). Is it really worth it, considering the expense and associated technical (and sometimes sociological) problems.

“Just to satisfy some “Primeval” urge to bend a distant needle! And further, to be informed that you are “coming-in” at a highly subjective, and sometimes doubtful “Nine-Plus”. Just listen to a contest, when all stations, whether needle bending or those who don’t move the needle, all receive, “You Are Five and Nine”!!!

There are, problems associated with the lust for power, as the addition of power amplification devices (and associated hardware) to your rig, entails other “concealed” expense items, i.e.: Do you have sufficient power to feed the beast?

Even a modest 400-watt amplifier requires an input of 800 watts! Add such a burden to your existing power demands, and you could become the victim of “Electric Kettle” (or toaster syndrome) or, in plain English, the electrical version, of The Straw that Broke the Camels Back!

Such a supply and (power) demand situation may also be manifested in the following ways:

- The picture on the “Telly” shrinks to about one inch in height!
- The living Room lights become diminished in their brilliance reminiscent of “load shedding” and brown outs of yesteryears.
- Comments from irate family members “that he is at it again!”

Remember also, that these beasts thrive on a diet of 230-Volt main power, and you will become (painfully) aware that the power service to your residence, if built in the early years of the Century, just cannot cope with unscheduled demands! So, you can soon be faced with the situation where you are faced with some difficult choices!

- You can disconnect the electric cooker!
- Switch off the immersion heater.
- Switch off the electric fire! Or, if your elderly house wiring can take it, have a commercial service installed. This latter item NOT recommended for areas supplied with 200 Volts D.C. unless your local electricity board has inspected (and sometimes rewired) the street and house wiring!
- Complaints from your local electricity board resulting in threats of “demand meter” installation. If at this point your XYL or previously doting parents haven’t taken draconian steps, and you are still of fixed abode, there are still other “priceless” factors to be considered. That your neighbours, now totally irate, mount a united front, similar to the peasants (and landed gentry) protesting Dr. Frankenstein’s (power based) activities. Unexplained visits (at odd hours) from the powers that be.

There is a way of obtaining a state of “operating nirvana” as stated earlier, consider your aerial system, and develop your operating skills. This will involve patience, persistence, courtesy and a respect for your fellow “HAMS”.

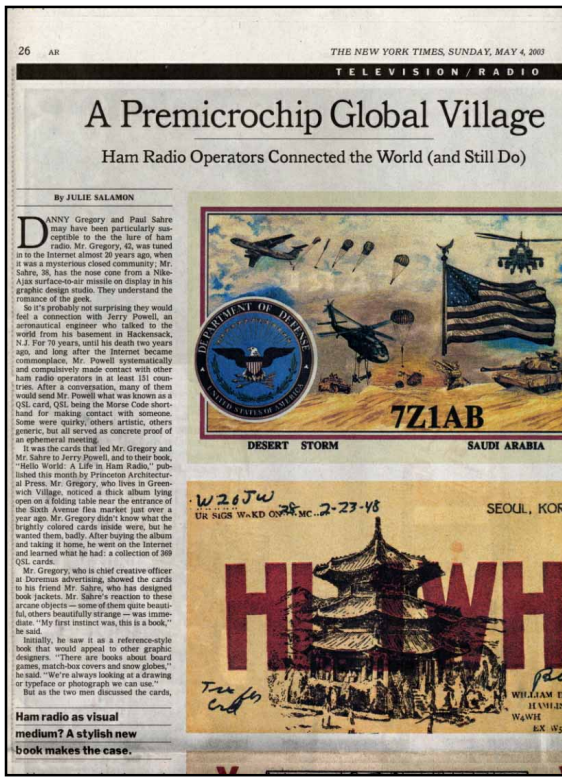
The choice is yours.  
Good Luck & FBDX  
Mike VA3GRL

### EPILOGUE:

It is now more than forty years since writing and presenting this epistle to my fellow HAMS. Although we have now in 1999 recognized the QRP operator, they are still greatly outnumbered by the “Goliaths” of this world. As we now have the sum total of all hams that have been attracted to (in my humble opinion) the greatest hobby ever, I am sad to report, that the overall situation has deteriorated, as (unfortunately) they have resorted to:

- bigger amplifiers
- stratospheric towers
- over-driven audio
- screaming and sundry obscenities

“All in the name of bending some remote S needle”.



# Ham Radio In *The New York Times*

Ham Radio hit the big time with a major feature article in this Sunday's *New York Times*. Perhaps the best read and arguably the best respected newspaper in the world, The New York Times piece on QSL cards will be seen by thousands of readers around the world.

The piece was prompted by the launch of the new book "Hello World: A Life In Ham Radio", featuring the QSL cards collected by Jerry Powell, W2OJW. The authors, Danny Gregory and Paul Sahre, were curious to learn the history of a box of cards they bought at a flea market.

The *Times* piece actually uses ham radio terms correctly and makes no mention of CB or any other radio service. The article includes a photo of the late King Hussein, JY1, who insisted on being called Hussein when on the air. One of the QSL cards shown in the half page article was from Canadian VE6MP, Maude, from Chancellor, Alberta.



## QRT by VE3HG



Depending on how the universe unfolds this may or may not be the last newsletter edited by yours truly. The last year of editing has been a lot of fun. I've learned a few things and met a few new people. If there is an issue in June, it will probably be a Dayton roundup. This will be my second year at Dayton and I've got to tell you: if you've never been, you can't grasp the size of this "fleamarket." Think Milton times 1,000. I'm not kidding! This year we're going to the contesters' dinner on the Saturday night.

Before I leave, a few thoughts: Any club is only as good as its executive. Next year, I've taken on the job of president at First Oakville Toastmasters Club which is one of the oldest and largest in North America. It is an awesome responsibility and I am blessed to be serving with a first-class executive team. In Toastmasters, (which for many is a hobby just like ham radio is for us) every executive member takes half a Saturday for training in the summer. There's another training day in the fall. Plus all executive members are encouraged to attend two provincial conferences each year. Every executive has a job and is expected to do it well - very well.

There's a Toastmaster meeting every week. The executive meets every three weeks and on the fourth week there's an area executive meeting. The regular meeting agendas are jammed packed and the theme and format for the meeting changes often. The treasurer is expected to bring forward a budget early in the fall which is accepted by formal vote. Financial matters are never brought back to the membership unless there is a major expenditure to be approved. The business sessions, which include the reading of minutes, executive reports and new business, last 10 minutes. If time runs out, the business is forwarded to the next meeting.

A Sgt. at Arms sets up the room and the vp of education plans meeting topics and special events months ahead of time. There are special committees formed to arrange a Christmas Party and a formal Charter Party in the late winter. Each club runs four or five formal contests each year including participation in an international speech contest. There are five Toastmaster clubs in Oakville. Each club averages 40-plus members. Each club offers a first-class educational program and we keep getting new members joining almost every week.

A new ham radio club for contesters in Ontario, Contest Club Ontario, is offering its members all kinds of exciting opportunities including the QSL card (above). There's a very active e-mail reflector and lots more. Gets me wondering what the Oakville Amateur Radio Club is going to offer its members next year? So far, in my opinion, aside from a couple of excellent presentations arranged by Denny, (Tnx Denny) the best thing for me about OARC is the Saturday morning breakfast and that's not even an official activity. Hum!