From the President

ROAR Annual Report 2012-13

This year ROAR has experienced both highs and lows, but mostly highs. Pertti EA7GSU was very active in his three years as President and this allowed me as incoming President to pick up the ball on the run and try to maintain the momentum that he had so well established.

The Bangkok conference was a challenge in many ways. Our Japanese friends achieved the almost impossible in having an active station—HS85RI—at the conference.

In spite of the floods that inundated Bangkok previous to the conference, we made many successful contacts worldwide. The initial costs associated with the provision of Internet in the Hall of Friendship were very high indeed. However, thanks partly to circumstances changing in our favour (the organisers couldn't make the Internet work) we were able to get a substantial refund on the charges.

ROAR Japan paid for printing the HS85RI QSL cards, but it seems that due to the ill health of the person taking on the role of QSL manager in Thailand, the cards have not yet been forthcoming.

The European and ANZO nets appear to have continued to flourish, particularly when the propagation has helped out as it has this April. Participation has been good both on the lower frequencies (40-meter and 80-meter nets) and the 20-meter net between ANZO and Europe. However the Transatlantic 20-meter net has been fraught with propagation and participation challenges. Earlier this year, prior to the passing of Bill G4YZE, reports from the North American Transcontinental net indicated excellent participation. But since Bill's passing, reports on this net have been sparse. We all miss Bill a great deal.

From the Editor

Welcome to the Communicator! The RI Convention in Lisbon is coming up fast and this issue features a preview of ROAR's activities. Pertti EA7GSU tells us about how things are shaping up in bringing our convention special-event station, CR6RI, to fruition. On page 9 President Bill VK4ZD gives us a look at the agenda for the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Above, in his annual report, Bill also writes of ROAR's successes and challenges during the past year.

Starting on page 5, Bill and his wife Diane VK4ZD—they call themselves “The Twisted Pair”—treat us to a photo essay of the wonderful new shack they built and equipped together. Then we hear from Dan KB6NU about the Polio Day special-event stations that were activated in several countries in February.

I know many of you are planning to attend the RI Convention this year. Why not consider writing a short (or longish) article so we can try to include it in the next issue? Don't forget to take lots of pictures!

—Richard Spingarn TI7/AA2UP
President’s Report — cont. from page 1

Special thanks must go to John G3OKT, who has stepped up to co-ordinate the weekly reports just as Bill did for so many, many years.

Pertti continues to hope for a South American Spanish-speaking net. I encourage all members to use any and all of their contacts with Rotary and amateur radio to assist Pertti in this endeavour.

There is a renewed focus, both in North America and in Australia, to represent ROAR at Rotary and at ham radio events. I firmly believe that this should be an important part of our focus. Ed N4EDT has stated it very well. He told me he believes that hams and Rotarians have a lot in common; they both assist the community when needed. Many hams should find Rotary suits them perfectly and many Rotarians may find amateur radio a great hobby to participate in.

As an example: once again this year, building on Pertti’s initial efforts last year, stations were activated in Spain, USA and Australia to celebrate Rotary’s 108th birthday and our goal to eliminate polio worldwide. V14POLIO succeeded in making 818 contacts in 66 countries over a 48-hour period. The call sign was placed on QRZ.com with a lot of information on Rotary and polio and there were some 3,500 lookups on that site. [See p. 8 for more about this activity.]

We encourage as many stations as possible to participate in this way next year. My vision is to have all the stations coordinate their efforts and advertise the existence of all the other stations on their QRZ.com web page.

Also this year Pertti EA7GSU and Vitor CT1BJZ have been working very hard to ensure that ROAR has a real on-air presence at the Lisbon conference. Listen out for CR6RI.

Last, but by no means least, I wish to congratulate Richard TI7/AA2UP on the superb quality of the Communicator that he and Penny have provided over the last year.

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CR6RI at the Lisbon RI Convention — submitted by Pertti Kause EA7GSU

While I’m writing this progress report about preparations for our booth in the House of Friendship, we have just received the “Exhibitor Kit,” which explains the services and requirements for exhibitors. The planning for our ROAR booth is captained by Vitor CT1BJZ. The booth is set to be in Pavilion 2, number 1701. It is at the end of one of the corridors, allowing the possibility to “peep in” the operating room of CR6RI. The station will be remotely operated, with the equipment located in the headquarters of the REP (Rede de Emisoras Portuguesas), the Portuguese ham radio organization with whom we collaborate.

The operating bands will be 20 meters with 15 meters being the back-up. Frequencies will be mainly plus-or-minus 14.293 and 14.287 MHz, the traditional ROAR spots on the band. On 15 meters the frequency will be plus-or-minus 21.293 MHz. The output is 100 watts. A 2-meter station will also be installed—so take your mobile with you.

The House of Friendship hours are from 09:00 to 18:00 local, which is 08:00 to 17:00 UTC. The Annual General Meeting of ROAR will be held on Monday, June 24, in the afternoon and we are planning to have a “Get Together” later on the same day. The latest information is that many active net members are coming to Lisbon. So we are looking forward to having a great time matching faces with the voices we hear so often.

Welcome to Lisbon! If you cannot attend, keep your station ready for Charley Romeo Six Rotary International!
Bill Learmonth passed away in January 2013, at the age of 88 years.

He was born in 1924 on the island of Sanday in the Orkney Islands, a group of some 70 islands off the north coast of Scotland. He had two younger sisters, Morag and Barbara. He picked up an interest in radio at an early age from reading an article in a children's encyclopaedia, and at the age of 14 he built his own wireless set from parts. His sister Morag recalls being recruited to help him make coils of wire for the inductor components.

At the age of 17 he developed a valuable service for the inhabitants of Sanday, recharging their wireless batteries. Wireless provided the residents' most important source of news from the outside world in those days. Previously these batteries had to be sent away by boat to the mainland to be charged. People would bring their batteries to his parents' house where Bill would recharge them using a wind generator that he had made himself from a car dynamo connected to a hand-carved wooden turbine. The turbine was mounted on top of a telegraph pole that he had persuaded his father to buy for the purpose. Thirty years before mains electricity came to Sanday, the wind generator system also provided the house and the barn with electric light.

On leaving school Bill worked as an apprentice baker, but the Second World War led him into the RAF as a wireless operator. When visiting his sister Morag while home on leave he first met his future wife Jean, although their paths did not cross again for some time. After the war he served as a wireless operator for RAF transport command in Southeast Asia, and had a good number of stories to tell of his time there.

In the early 1950s his continuing enthusiasm for radio took him into the merchant navy, again as a wireless operator. This included a spell on ocean-going rescue tugs. Some of you will have seen his presentations and anecdotes of the incidents in which he was involved during that time, including his story of the Flying Enterprise, as well as his story of towing the battleship Sao Paulo from Rio de Janeiro to Scotland. The ship was lost during a strong gale near the Azores.

It was while he was travelling around on these naval adventures that he qualified as a chartered engineer through a correspondence course. He returned to land and joined the Independent Broadcasting Authority as an engineer and moved to Bolton to work at Winter Hill. Winter Hill is a commercial television broadcasting station, which covers a large area of northwest England. He met Jean again at an Orkney and Shetland Society dance in Liverpool. They were married in December 1962 and set up home in Bolton.

—cont. on page 4
Bill Learmonth —cont. from page 3

In 1966 Bill, Jean and their young son Duncan moved up to Dingwall near Inverness to work at the Mounteagle transmitting station, but they returned to Bolton in 1972, setting up home in Oakwood Drive, Bolton, which has been the family home ever since. Bill worked again at the Winter Hill site and stayed there until his retirement in 1987. He had an office next to the mast with wonderful views (on a fine day) of Blackpool and the Lake District.

Following retirement he became a keen amateur radio operator, with a 40-foot radio mast, topped by a three-element Yagi, in his back garden. Goodness knows how he got planning permission for that. I first met Bill at the ROAR AGM held at Street in Somerset in 1996, and every year since then until recently. He was very active in ROAR and served as the UK Chairman for many years, as well as coordinating radio nets every week covering Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand.

Bill was a keen organiser, joining Horwich Rotary in 1973 and serving as president in 1987. He chaired several committees and was particularly active in the Club Service Committee and International Committee, organising fundraising, student exchange visits and the like. In later years he played an active role in keeping in touch with those who were too ill to attend. He was one of the three co-founders of Horwich Probus club in 1994, which has grown and continues to thrive today. After his retirement Bill and Jean took up ballroom dancing, which they were able to enjoy for a number of years. Sadly Jean died in 1997.

Bill’s father had become a Francophile as a result of his experiences working with French people during the First World War and he passed this enthusiasm along to Bill. Bill originally learned French from records and tapes and later took up French classes in Bolton, where he met his partner Josée. They had been together for over 10 years.

Bill was able to remain fairly active until about April 2012 when a combination of arthritis and chest problems began to limit his ability to get about. But he continued working on updating his Rescue Tugs DVD presentation and collating the weekly reports of ROAR radio nets.

Bill’s familiar voice is sadly missed on the ROAR nets every Sunday, but we will all have fond memories of his opening phrase, “This is Bill, G4YZE from Bolton, where they used to make railway engines.”

Rest in peace, Bill.

ANZO Region Annual Report 2012-13

—submitted by Peter Lowe VK3KCD
Vice President, ANZO Region

The ANZO region AGM was held in Canberra in July 2012, at the Australian Rotary Conference. In addition to those present at the meeting, we were able to have ZL participation thanks to a video hook-up with John ZL2JPM. The main issues discussed were the planning for the RI Convention in Sydney in 2014, and membership development.

Our activities during the year have included a well-attended 40-meter net on Sundays, preceding the 20-meter EU ANZO net.

Polio elimination awareness was promoted by President Bill on Rotary’s birthday in February with the activation of the special call VI4POLIO. This was a great success with many hundreds of contacts and thousands of hits in the QRZ.com website. This was a very effective Rotary event and many thanks to Bill and his team for their hard work. We plan to do this again next year but bigger and better!

As previously indicated in the AGM report (see the January 2013 Communicator), planning for Sydney in 2014 is progressing well and we propose to have at least one trial run during a District Conference in VK4 next year.
The Twisted Pair

How we turned a concrete pad into a contesters dream shack

“It might have been a 20-year dream, but really came true!”

2007: Five acres in an Aussie rural area

1. The building commences

2. Starting to look like a shed

3. No mains water so we need a 20,000L rainwater tank

4. Bill VK4ZD and Alan VK4SN frame up inside
5. Setup and ready for JOTA 2007

6. One Guide does make JOTA

7. Diane’s favourite job—painting

8. Last ceiling panel goes up!

9. Tent City for JOTA 2012

10. JOTA 2012: 42 Girl Guides and leaders from three groups
10/12/15/17m el Yagi

Our new 5-band 2 el Quad

Bill VK4ZD’s station 2013

Diane VK4KYL’s station 2013

2013: Some Statistics

- 22,000L water tank (5,000 imperial gallons)
- Mains power in 3 power circuits plus a light circuit and air conditioner circuit
- 7.5KW non inverter reverse cycle air conditioner
- 35db acoustic and thermal insulation in walls and ceiling
- Acoustic panel ceiling
- Wireless networking
- Wireless internet
- Stubs available for Multi Multi station
- Kitchenette
- 4 operator positions with Computer logging set up for contesting
- HWS & full shower & toilet facilities
- 5 Glorious acres of land
- 6m x 12 m covered area outside
- Gas BBQ
- TV and Futon for overnighting

Antennas
- 2m & 70cm vertical
- 5el 6m Yagi
- 2 x 160m Fullwave Loops
- VK2ABQ Tribander (10,15 & 20M) now replaced with home brew 2 el 5 band quad
- 13 el 4 band Yagi at 17m (10/12/15/17)
- 20/40m Yagi to be installed once the 27m tower goes up!
- Electrically Quiet!
On Saturday and Sunday, February 23-24, 2013, amateur radio operators gathered at W A2HOM, the amateur radio station at the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum. We were there to operate special-event station W8P to commemorate the founding of Rotary on February 23, 1905, and spread the word about Rotary International’s End Polio Now Campaign (www.endpolio.org).

The goal of the End Polio Now program is to rid the world of this terrible disease. Rotary International launched this program in 1985, and with the aid of UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, has cut the number of cases by more than 99.9%. In 1988, polio was endemic in 125 countries. By 2012, polio was endemic in only two regions. We like to say that we’re “this close” to eradicating polio.

The unique part of the special operating event is that stations all over the world took part in it. Rotary is an international organization, and its amateur radio fellowship, Rotarians of Amateur Radio (ROAR), includes members from all over the world. In Australia, a group operated the special-event station VI4POLIO. In Europe, Pertti, past president of ROAR, operated his station, EA7GSU. Here in the States, a group that included yours truly, Jack N8PMG, Jameson KD8PIJ, Dinesh AB3DC, and Mark W8MP, operated W8P.

Since the museum is only open from 1500Z–2200Z, we were only able to operate for seven hours on Saturday. We spent all of our time on 20-meter phone, with our beam pointed southwest, concentrating on working mostly US stations. We had originally intended to operate on 14.287 MHz, but quickly had to change frequencies, as that portion of the band was occupied by participants in the Mississippi QSO party. We finally ended up on 14.227 MHz and made a total of 110 contacts on Saturday. This included 29 states and four DX contacts.

On Sunday, we only operated for a couple of hours and made another 27 contacts. While we made fewer contacts on Sunday, the contacts that we did make were more poignant than the ones on Saturday.

My first contact on Sunday was with a gentleman who was spending the winter in Florida, but whose hometown was Standish, Michigan. He told me that his mother had polio, and in the late 1930s and early 1940s, they would put her on a bus for Ann Arbor, where she would receive treatments. While there’s no way to be sure, I think that this ham’s mother was taking part in some of the research leading to the Salk vaccine in 1955. That research took place right here at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

I also talked to hams who had direct experience with polio. One was a polio survivor himself. Another’s wife was a polio survivor. A third was a physician who had been to Africa and had treated polio victims there.

It was a real treat to combine two activities that I enjoy so much—amateur radio and Rotary—and it felt good to know that in some small way I was furthering the work of the End Polio Now campaign. I hope that next year we will once again operate this special event and get even more Rotarians and amateur radio operators to participate.

When he’s not trying to save the world, Dan KB6NU enjoys working CW on the HF bands. For more information about his operating activities and his “No-Nonsense” series of amateur radio license study guides, go to KB6NU.com or e-mail cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

ifroar.org
The International Fellowship for Rotarians of Amateur Radio

Annual General Meeting

Lisbon, Pavilion 3, Room 5

June 24, 2013  ﾂ  16:00 hours

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Confirmation of the chairperson
3. Election of the secretary
   - suggest Diane VK4KYL
4. Registration and introduction of the attendees
   - Paper and pens will be available at the entrance for participants to PRINT their particulars
5. Tribute to silent keys
   - only known is Bill G4YZE
6. Minutes of the last meeting in Bangkok 2012, published on our Website earlier
   - Copies will be available for those who want them
7. Report of annual activities 2012-13 (see p. 1 of this issue of Communicator)
   - Copies will be available for those who want them
8. Treasurer’s report (see p. 10)
9. Discussion:
   (1) On-air promotion of Rotary’s birth-day and its goal to eliminate polio worldwide
   (2) History of Galkayo radio project
   (3) Promotional materials for use at Rotary and ham-radio functions
   (4) Purchasing equipment for remote controlling of exhibition stations
   (5) ROAR activities in Japan
   (6) How to commence ROAR activities in India, Korea and South America
10. A proposal to allow proxy voting by those who are absent from the AGM
11. A few words from the President
12. General business
   - any proposals for future activities
13. Closing

Please join us and come well prepared!
About ROAR

Rotarians of Amateur Radio is one of the oldest fellowships of Rotary International. It was established in 1966 by Byron Sharpe W9BE, a Rotarian from Illinois, USA. In 1989 one of our ROAR members, Hugh Archer W8JA, served as president of Rotary International. ROAR members are perhaps the most active fellowship in communicating with each other regularly.

Purpose: ROAR provides a forum for the exchange of views among members who share an interest in amateur radio, either as licensed radio amateurs or as shortwave listeners. We wish to promote international understanding and fellowship.

Eligibility: To become a member of ROAR, you must be an active Rotarian, a Rotaractor or a former Rotarian, and you must be a licensed amateur operator or have a genuine interest in shortwave radio. Spouses of ROAR members may also join.

Dues: The fellowship collects annual dues that cover the cost of maintaining our member directory and producing our ROAR Communicator newsletter.

Currently our dues are $20 US for one year or $90 US for five years and can be paid by visiting the website:

http://ifroar.org

ROAR Treasurer’s Report
2012–2013

Beginning Balance July 1, 2012 $ 4,137.44

Income:
Membership Contributions
Dues Europe $ 110.00
Dues USA 520.00
Dues ROAR UK 640.00
Dues ROAR Japan -
Dues ANZO -
Dues South America -
Donations -
Refund (Impact) 1,499.59
Total Income $ 2,769.59

Expenses:
PayPal 31.33
Bank service charge 18.50
Total Expenses $ 49.83

Balance as of March 23, 2013 $ 6,857.20

Treasurer’s Reminder

If you have not yet paid your dues, now is the time!
You can find out how to pay with Paypal by going to our website: www.ifroar.org.
—Bob Butler WB7RQG, Treasurer

ROAR Communicator is published by President Bill Main VK4ZD (RC Gatton and Lockyer, District 9630, Australia) for and on behalf of the International Fellowship for Rotarians of Amateur Radio.
Editor: Richard Spingarn TI7/AA2UP (former member, RC Ithaca, New York USA).