

Loose Gravel

Newsletter of ROADS

Volume 2, Number 9

AB7X + KD7VLP
Co-editors

Good evening, I trust you are all ready for the change into Autumn? The first rains of the season may be upon us. This is a positive event for HAM radio, since most of us neglect one of the most important aspects of our stations: the station ground. Over the dry Summer months the ground rods and connections to them tend to lose their connectivity with the earth and we pick up some residual static due to potential not being dispersed the way that it should. Another ground not to overlook is the telephone ground. I purchased a new 2.4G system recently, and was disappointed to find that it was quite noisy when talking to others on it. I watered the ground to it and the noise all but disappeared. I hope the rain takes the rest of the static and hum away!

What is emerging next is a segment from Ron, KK7UU, the editor of our website: www.w7ore.com

WHO WE ARE...KK7UU Ron Schlitzkus

1. HOW-WHY-WHERE-WHEN did you get involved in Ham Radio?

I had been interested in electronics since I was a little kid. I was the kid that took Mom's dryer apart to see what made it work. The first radio I had was a crystal set that Dad helped me string a wire in the Pine trees so that I could get one station from Eureka CA.

When we moved to Madera CA, I used to fix radios for the neighborhood. I took an electronic class in High School (and was playing with CB radio at the time) and spent a lot of time with three other kids in the electronic class. We ended up being the group that became teaching assistants (setting up labs, grading papers, etc).

The Teacher Mr. McNary was a Ham and had us set up a station in his office. We put up a long wire loop antenna on top of the industrial arts building. One of the other students was already a licensed Ham so the two of them stated teaching us Code and Theory during our study period. Six months later we all took a field trip to the FCC office in San Francisco and I came home with my Novice license in 1965. Graduated High School in 1966. I went to College in Reedley CA for two years and the folks from whom I rented an apartment had a son that was a ham so the apartment had all the antennas. They let me get his equipment out of storage and hook it up. So by my second year at college I made the trip to the FCC office in Los Angeles and got my Advance ticket (was trying for the Extra at that time but did not pass the 20 WPM).

2. Did you have an Elmer to get you started?

I had several Elmers over my Ham life. My Electronics Teacher at Madera High School, My College Prof at Reedley that got me interested in going after my Second Class Radio Telephone, and the family in Reedley that allowed me to use their sons equipment in Reedley.

3. What is your current license? Since when?

My current license is Extra. Got my Extra in June 2005.

4. Did you, or do you, use radio(s), in some form or another in your work life?

I went into the Navy after my second year in college. I ended up being an Electronics Tech (ET) right out of boot camp. I did get to operate the Ham station at the Naval station in Brunswick GA and, later, when on a ship (DE-1067) stationed out of Long Beach California, I operated the AUX radio set up as a Ham station when at sea (the Captain liked being able to get message back and forth to his family). I had gotten my Second Class Radio Telephone license while going to Reedley College and when I went back to school in Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, I worked part time for a guy that maintained commercial repeaters around the area. Mostly got to climb towers and work on antennas.

5. Are you active in Ham Radio now? What and how?

Yes, have been active in Ham Radio off and on. Most of the time you can find me on 10 meters, or chasing DX on 15, 17 or 20. I usually have the local repeater 86 on when in the shack. You can also find me on PSK and RTTY mostly on 10 and 20 meters, sometimes 40.

6. What does your shack look like?

I have a 30 x 40 shop on the property. I have a room in the shop in one corner that has my shack. Not much to look at by it gets the job done.

7. What kind of equipment and antennas...etc?

I have the following: ICOM-756ProII, Yeasu FT-900 my digital station, Yeasu FT-735 all mode 6m, 2m, 220 and 440, AL-811H, ALS-600, Cushcraft X7 on 55 ft tower, Cushcraft D40 on tower at 60 ft, Cushcraft AR10 at 60 ft, Cushcraft MA5B at 30 ft, R7000 at 30 ft, BW90 10-160 folded dipole at 35 ft, Comet 6m, 2, 220, and 440 vertical. Several other 2meter and 440 radios. I also

have two FT-100D radios in my car and truck with an ATAS-100 and ATAS-120 antennas. I also have an IC-703 QRP rig and a buddipole that I take camping.

8. Any major awards, achievements, coups or contacts that you want to brag about in order to make others feel insignificant?

Awards 1st place in 7 area for 10-10 Phone contest in Summer 2005, 1st place in 7 area for CW contest Spring 2006.

9. Other hobbies or past-times?

The XYL and I are classic car buffs. We have a 1970 Firebird, 1954 Ford Pickup, and 1957 Chevy 4 door Hardtop. That is what the 30x40 shop is really for. I am also a scuba diver (actually I am a certified instructor) but have not gone diving in several years after hurting my back. I also am a licensed pilot holding my Multi Instrument rating.

10. Unless your family has lived in Polk County since 1846, how did you end up here in, or around, Polk County?

I live in Marion County. When we originally moved to Oregon we built a house in Benton County in the town of Monroe. I then took a job with a company in Bend so we lived over there for five years until the company was sold. Took a job in Portland, but did not what to live up there so moved to South Salem and here we are.

Extra Credit:

We are always looking for good places to eat...any suggestions ?

The two places in Salem we like the most is Busters on Commercial Street and the Gas Light in Keiser. There is also a hole in the wall place in Oakridge across from the Best Western that does a great breakfast.

Recommend a good book?

Best book was by Chuck Yeager.

Best thing to happen to you?

Getting married to my wife.

Worst thing to happen to you?

Right now I would have to say the back injury and the two surgeries and recovery period.

Future projects?

Right now I would have to say just get better after this last back surgery. I have a 253 ft Windom that I would like to get in the air some day.

Thank you, Ron, for sharing with us. When you get ready to hoist that Windom, let the club know...some

of us that would be glad to come help with that project.

[My Screwdriver dipole project is still not finished, and won't be until my machinist gets done with his project in China. I'm anxious to get that completed and on the air for some comparative reports on the low bands! It won't be anything like having 253' of wire in the air, but effective anyway.]

I hope all you VHF'ers got out last weekend for the contest and had a bit of fun here locally. There is a life beyond repeaters, and it can be quite exciting when there are operators willing to get on the air.

Dave, KD7VLP, our illustrious Vice President has another episode for us...

QRK de KD7VLP

It is that time again...more "stuff" from the past that may amuse you or not. But until we get more material from the members, I will be forced to keep doing this on and on...stop me before I have to do this again. Please.

Another item taken from the pages of Popular Communications.

Q. I have heard the phrase "polishing the antenna", which seems to refer to doing useless work. What exactly does it mean?

A. Back in the days of spark gap transmitters Hams didn't understand as much about antennas as we do today. Enameled wire was considered unsuitable because the enamel was thought to block incoming signals. Bare solid copper wire was thought to be the ideal antenna wire. Serious hams, however, felt that in time bare wire would oxidize and the corrosion would also block signal. A serious ham would lower the antennas about once a week and scour it with steel wool. Only a bright copper antenna was considered ideal for catching signals.

The POP'COMM TRIVIA CORNER
Radio Fun And Going Back In Time
R.B. Sturtevant, KD7KTS
Sept 2006

Now for something different: Here is "the" Jimmy Doolittle working with the most modern 1929 aircraft instrumentation. From Radio News December 1929

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LIUTENANT JAMES H. DOOLITTLE, who recently flew an airplane with enclosed cockpit, at Mitchel Field, Long Island, N. Y. His take-off, flight, and landing were accomplished without his being able to see anything outside the cockpit.

In addition to the usual altimeter and artificial horizon, the plane was equipped with a visual indicating radio beacon receiver which made possible this first demonstration of blind flying; an augury of what radio will do to conquer fog, the aviator's worst enemy.

Now a word from our sponsor...

The New



Balkite "B" - \$35

Supplies plate current from the light socket



Balkite "B" II The same popular model as offered last year. Same as Balkite "B," except it will fit any set including sets of 8 tubes. Price \$55



Balkite Battery Charger
For charging radio "A" 6-volt batteries. Entirely noiseless—it can be used while the radio set is in operation. If your battery should be low you merely turn on the charger and operate the set. Charging rate 2.5 amperes. Price \$20



Balkite Trickle Charger
Charges both 4 and 6-volt radio "A" batteries at about .5 amperes. Useful in three ways: (1) With a low-capacity battery for sets now using dry cells. (2) With storage battery sets of few tubes. (3) As a "trickle" or continuous charge for sets of as many as 8 dry cell or storage battery tubes. Fits in the usual dry cell compartment. Price \$10.50

Balkite "B" replaces "B" batteries entirely and supplies uniform constant plate current from the light socket. With its use there are no "B" storage batteries or dry cells to recharge or replace, and your "B" current never varies, but is always exactly what is required. Once connected to your set and adjusted to its requirements, it needs no further adjustment, and can be put in operation at any time by simply turning on the current. It operates either storage battery or dry cell tubes.

This new model will fit any set requiring not more than 20 milliamperes at 90 volts—practically all sets of 5 tubes or less, and most 6 tube sets. In most cases it will fit in your present dry cell compartment, occupying about the same space as a large 45-volt "B" dry cell. Current cost about 1/10¢ per hour. Operates from 110-120 AC 60 cycle current. Special model for 50 cycles.

Noiseless—No bulbs—Permanent

Like all other Balkite Radio Power Units Balkite "B" is entirely noiseless in operation, is a permanent piece of equipment with no bulbs or moving parts, nothing to break, replace or get out of order, and requires no attention except the infrequent addition of water. Balkite Radio Power Units provide uniform constant current to both "A" and "B" circuits. Whatever type of set you own, Balkite Radio Power Units will serve it.

A. S. Lindstrom Company, Western Representative.
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146 1/2 N. 10th St., Phone BR 8600.
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FAN STEEL Balkite Radio Power Units

BALKITE BATTERY CHARGER • BALKITE TRICKLE CHARGER • BALKITE "B" • BALKITE "B" II
ALL BALKITE RADIO POWER UNITS ARE TESTED AND LISTED AS STANDARD BY THE UNDERWRITERS LABORATORIES

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THE HUNTER-WALSH CO., 446 Stark Street, Portland, Or.

The Sunday Oregonian January 3, 1924

To finish off this contribution...While doing some research using some old microfilm, I ran across this little item from the past when Oregon was full of boosters who wanted "everyone" to come and join them in Oregon. Even Californians.

Californian Emigrants

They are coming from California. As the Mountaineer says, one of the most suggestive sights in the world is the spectacle of a Californian, who hasn't before seen rain enough for a year to lay the dust, standing out in an Oregon rain with his hat off, and enjoy it as aquatic fowls do a Summer shower. Oregon has been sneered at as the rainy country by California; but they are not sneering now. They are hunting a country where it rains enough, and prefer the verdure of Oregon to the blight and desolation of California. Persons now arriving tell us that immense numbers in California are preparing to move, as rapidly as they can they will come to our State. A great many are coming by wagons overland. Every steamer is loaded to its fullest capacity by people who are seeking a country where crops never perish of drouth. To them, exaggerated reports of Oregon rains are no longer a terror. Our climate they find, is preferable to drouth, deserts and starvation.

Willamette Farmer

June 29, 1877

There you have it, the finest from Dave's Archives! We look forward to the interesting info you provide us every month. Thank you...!

We have purchased a power table at Swaptoberfest, which is next month, 21 October. Bob, W7LOU, and I will be doing the setup and initial table-sitting, but would appreciate some help in the form of giving one or both of us a break now and then during the event.

Anyone who is willing to do that should sign up on a volunteer form at the meeting tomorrow evening. The meeting is at the usual place and time, Polk County Courthouse @ 1900, second Thursday of every month.

We also need people to volunteer for the refreshment committee. Since the club picks up the cost of supplies, the only involvement is purchase of cups, flatware, napkins, beverages and something to munch. Last time it was apple juice, green tea, and a choice of cookies. Ideas anyone???

There will be a VE Testing session at Swaptoberfest this year, details provided by Bob, K7QXG, at the meeting tomorrow evening.

It is late evening in Coyoteville, and Shadow and I just got back from helping a friend put together a futon bed so he can get his first good night's sleep in Oregon! I'm tired and am going to go to sleep. I hope to see you all tomorrow evening. Bring a friend, bring a wife, bring a girlfriend, bring your children, but most of all bring yourselves.

Peace and 73...

Coyote

AB7X

erstwhile President, ROADs

CN84jo

