

# Loose Gravel

Newsletter of ROADS

Volume 3, Number 5

AB7X + KD7VLP -- Editors

7 May 2007

Good evening everyone, the warm days of Spring are upon us! It is time again to think about getting out there and do some maintenance on antennas and feedline. And the garden! We have ours ready to plant, and it looks like tomorrow is the day. A bit of horticulture in the curriculum, eh?

Before I go any further in this edition, may I remind you all that this Thursday evening at 1900 hrs. is our regular monthly meeting. Board members are reminded to arrive at 1800 hrs. for a necessary discussion and wrap-up of some loose agenda items.

Without further delay, here is QRK de KD7VLP, our distinguished President of Vice....

\*\*\*\*\*

## **QRK de KD7VLP**

It is that time again...having received no input from any of our Roads brothers and sisters, I will have to find something from the past to include in this newsletter.

Some of the earliest forms of transmission of information using electricity occurred in the eighteenth century. Although an earlier method that involved pith balls and paper is referenced in the following, I use this somewhat later example because of its unique utilization of personnel.

*"... The idea of the electrical telegraph tickled many a great mind on its way to realization... Salvá's first proposal is similar to the one described in Scot's Magazine. It uses a separate wire for each letter of the alphabet, a Leyden jar to transmit a spark across these wires, but peculiarly, instead of the pith ball electroscopes and indicators, Salvá specifies a number of people, one for each wire. Upon receiving a sensible shock, each of these people, presumably servants, was to call out the name of the letter of the alphabet to which he corresponded. A twenty seventh person, presumably literate, was to write down the message so shockingly spelled out. This is probably the system that Salvá operated between Madrid and Aranjuez in 1798. Whether Salvá's abandonment of pith-ball electroscopes in favor of human receivers was due to problems with electrical dissipation in the moister climate of Barcelona, a cheaper labor pool, or the relative ease of transcription of 26 vocal sources into a coherent message are questions that only further researches into his work might reveal. Nonetheless, the scene of a hall filled with the sighs, whispers and moans of humanity being shocked into literacy seems an appropriate and emblematic image for the events of 1789. ..."* (from *The Messenger*, Paul DeMarinis, 1998)

Moving right along...an "improvement" to the Salva method was developed in Bavaria:

*"A complex telegraphic system, based on an electrochemical current, is designed and demonstrated before the Munich Academy of Science by S. T. von Sommering (or von Soemmerring) (1755-1830). Commissioned by Margrave Leopold of Bavaria, an ally of Napoleon, the electrolytic telegraph consisting thirty-five wires, one for each letter of the alphabet and one for each number. At the transmitting end of his system, arrangements are provided for passing currents from a "voltanic pile" through any one of the signal wires. At the receiving end each wire is connected to one of a series of thirty-five electrodes that are immersed in an acid bath. Completion the circuit caused the evolution of bubbles of hydrogen at the electrode corresponds to a particular letter or a number"*

That's about all we have time for today. Just think about having to build your own gear back in the day. Finding twenty-six "lackeys" to stand there and yell out the appropriate letter when shocked must have been quite a chore. Think about the turnover in personnel...the letters did not have much chance of advancement, other than becoming the scribe one day. The replacement of letter yellers with acid baths could be considered an

improvement in human resource, but it must have been a bit messy and hazardous to the operator.

Source:

[http://people.deas.harvard.edu/~jones/cscie129/pages/comm\\_chron1.html](http://people.deas.harvard.edu/~jones/cscie129/pages/comm_chron1.html)

---

---

This month's recommended books are loosely related to medical topics:

**A Study of Telegraphists' Cramp**

May Smith, Millais Culpin, and Eric Farmer

*Medical Research Council, Industrial Fatigue Research Board.*

*HMSO, 1927*

**The Mesmeric Guide for Family Use**

S.D. Saunders

*H. Bailliere, 1852*

How to cure all known diseases by hypnotizing your spouse, children, etc. Its fifty pages give concise instructions on curing deafness, cancer, consumption and the common cold.

---

---

**Now for something completely different:**

Let us remember a momentous event that occurred seven years ago:

*“On May 5 of the year 2000, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn will be aligned with the earth for the first time in 6000 years. On that day the ice buildup at the South Pole will upset the earth's axis, sending trillions of tons of ice in the water sweeping over the surface of our planet”*

*---5/5/2000: Ice—The Ultimate Disaster by Richard W. Noone*

I think I missed this...

\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks to Dave, our newsletter comes to fruition every month, even if NO ONE ELSE bothers to submit anything for publication. There is space available to ANYONE who wants to offer advice, opinion, elmering, antenna plans, fun projects for the club, or even a good HAM recipe! Don't be shy....just let Dave or me know if you have something to offer and we

just might make it anonymous if you prefer to remain that way! Let's bypass any more guilt-trips from me and get with it, eh?

I am thinking that between the times of the Rickreall events we should entertain a bit of buy-sell-swap of our radio gear.

To start this operation, I offer a very nice QRP+SSB/CW rig, serial # 0241. This rig comes with a manual. It needs a microphone, and either a key or paddle (a jack for each kind in the back of the rig). Internal speaker works, and the rig receives well. I am asking \$300 obo., or trade for...? Photos on request. Contact me: [AB7X@arrl.net](mailto:AB7X@arrl.net) , 541-754-1136.

Nominations are happening this Thursday evening, and by now you all should have decided who you want in the various offices: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as Board members. I am going to step down as President and let a more qualified person take over the control levers of the office. Be prepared to make your bid or make your nomination!

### **ROADs Information page...**

Web page: [www.W7ORE.com](http://www.W7ORE.com)

We meet on the second Thursday of each month at 1900 hrs. local time. Next meeting is May 10<sup>th</sup>. The meeting place is the Polk County Courthouse: Commissioners Conference Room---entrance on the East side of the courthouse.

Further information: [AB7X@arrl.net](mailto:AB7X@arrl.net)

ROADs sponsored VE sessions: Second Saturday at 0900 hrs. local time every other month. Next session is May 12<sup>th</sup> in the Polk County Courthouse: Commissioners Conference Room---entrance on the East side of the courthouse.

Further information: [W7HO@arrl.net](mailto:W7HO@arrl.net)

Officers....

President:	AB7X	Harry Martin	<a href="mailto:AB7X@arrl.net">AB7X@arrl.net</a>
Vice President:	KD7VLP	David Moellenberndt	<a href="mailto:KD7VLP@arrl.net">KD7VLP@arrl.net</a>
Secretary:	K7IJK	Irene Koubek	<a href="mailto:ijkoubek@aol.com">ijkoubek@aol.com</a>
Treasurer:	W7NLI	Dudley Berry	<a href="mailto:W7NLI@wvi.com">W7NLI@wvi.com</a>

---

### **Program for the May meeting will include:**

W7TDN, Trent Newcomb, discussing VHF and HF nets, but be sure not to quiz him about the 'secret frequencies'!

K7QXG, Bob, *may* be on hand to talk about 10-10 nets and events, but unknown for sure at this time.

I have nothing further at this time. We hope all of you can see fit to attend this meeting, as we anticipate a full turnout! Best regards to all of you...and I am looking forward to seeing all of you Thursday evening!

AB7X  
Coyote  
CN84jo

