

Mowby June 10th 1985

Amateur radio operator will soon be a part of the past



THE traditional amateur radio ham crouched over his radio set speaking to other enthusiasts in far-flung corners of the globe will soon be obsolete.

The new technology, which will replace the radio set, was on display at the Tasmanian Amateur Radio Convention at the Montrose Bay Yacht Club during the weekend.

About 1,000 people saw examples of the latest innovations in computer digital communication and an exhibition of antique radio equipment dating back to 1910 from the Max Loveless Pioneer Memorial Collection.

The state president of the Wireless Institute of Australia, Mr Peter King, said amateur radio was experiencing a radical change from voice communication to high speed digital communication.

Mr King said the display included examples of the latest technology, including packet radio, which is a

By ANNE HUXLEY

digital communications device.

Some of the items were not available on the commercial market.

There were also demonstrations of amateur satellite equipment, amateur television demonstrations and lectures, and a home built equipment competition.

Mr King said the traditional picture of a radio ham was changing to an amateur sitting in front of a computer terminal communicating using high speed digital technology rather than voice.

He said a five minute verbal conversation could be transmitted in a split second which meant that amateurs would be able to use the bands more effectively because they could pass much more information in a given period of time.

Mr King said it was only in the past year that the latest techniques have been adopted in Tasmania, and these new developments internationally

● The secretary of the Tasmanian division of the WIA, Mr Barry Risely, with the oldest television receiver in the State which received the first television signal from Melbourne.

over the past three years had opened new frontiers in scientific development.

There are about 400 licensed amateur radio operators in Tasmania, ranging in age from 15 to over 80.

Mr King said these people came from all walks of life and their hobby allowed them to communicate with people all over the world, and experiment in ways that meant they were involved in the latest scientific and technical developments.

This year the Tasmanian division of the Wireless Institute of Australia commemorates the 60th anniversary of its formal incorporation and 1985 is also the 75th anniversary of the WIA, which is the oldest amateur radio society in the world.

Hobart airwaves ring with history

A HISTORIC re-enactment of the first ship-to-shore wireless signals in Tasmania in 1901 was held in Hobart on Saturday.

The re-enactment was held as part of the Tasmanian Amateur Radio Convention, organised by the Tasmanian division of the Wireless Institute of Australia (WIA) in Hobart over the weekend.

This year is the 60th anniversary of the incorporation of the Tasmanian division of the WIA and the

Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (later King George V and Queen Mary).

These experiments took place only four years after the original experiments were made by Marconi in Wales in 1897.

Special permission had to be obtained for the re-enactment on Saturday as spark transmitters have been outlawed, and officers of the Department of Communica-

Rotary Club have erected a plaque on the Blinking Billy Lighthouse to commemorate the event.

The message was transmitted to the vessel Marie Frances, then back to shore to a receiver at the WAI convention, and then to Cardiff in Wales.

Through amateur radio bands three messages were sent from the Lord Mayor to the Mayor of Cardiff, from the Tasmanian divi-



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This year is the 60th anniversary of the incorporation of the Tasmanian division of the WIA, and the 75th anniversary of the WIA, which is the oldest amateur radio society in the world.

On Saturday about 150 people witnessed the historic re-enactment of the experiments, which were some of the first to take place in the Southern hemisphere, at Blinking Billy Point on the Derwent River.

The 1901 experiments in Tasmania were made by "Pop" Medhurst from the Blinking Billy Lighthouse to the British warship, HMS St George, which was a naval escort vessel during the visit of the

Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (later King George V and Queen Mary).

These experiments took place only four years after the original experiments were made by Marconi in Wales in 1897.

Special permission had to be obtained for the re-enactment on Saturday as spark transmitters have been outlawed, and officers of the Department of Communications put together a replica of the original device using a valuable World War One spark transmitting apparatus and more modern components.

Because international communications conventions were put aside to enable the re-enactment to take place, organisers believed that it would be the last time a spark transmitter would be legally put to air.

The Lord Mayor, Mr Brian Broadby, was present at the re-enactment, and the Sandy Bay

Rotary Club have erected a plaque on the Blinking Billy Lighthouse to commemorate the event.

The message was transmitted to the vessel Marie Frances, then back to shore to a receiver at the WAI convention, and then to Cardiff in Wales.

Through amateur radio bands three messages were sent from the Lord Mayor to the Mayor of Cardiff, from the Tasmanian division of the WIA to counterparts in Wales, and from the Sandy Bay Rotary Club to the Cardiff Rotary Club.

The re-enactment tried to duplicate a similar ceremony held in Cardiff, Wales, on May 12, 1948 which celebrated the first transmission signals over water made by Marconi in May 1897.

This was commemorated by the unveiling of a bronze plaque erected by the Cardiff Rotary Club near the spot where the original experiments took place.