

**PRESIDENTS REPORT
HARC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
13 November 2016**

This has been another very eventful and successful year for HARC. All that has been accomplished occurred with the active participation and support of a remarkably able Executive Committee, and with the active help of an engaged Club membership. For this support, I want to express my sincere thanks to Executive colleagues and other members alike. Again this year, there is an extensive set of activities and events to report on which I will do only in relatively schematic form. It's not possible to name everyone involved, so please do not be offended if you are not mentioned!

MAJOR PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2016

There were many activities undertaken by the Club in 2016, but there are **eight projects** that merit special mention because they represent an important advance for HARC.

Our **storage facility** at Cowie Hill was outfitted with shelves and racks to make possible the final move of all of our field operations equipment and other materials from Bloomfield School. This took place in the latter part of June, thereby, completely closing the Bloomfield period of HARC's life. In the process, materials no longer of value to us were either given away or sent to the appropriate junk yards. This facility remains a work in progress as there is maintenance on the container on a yearly basis.

The second phase of **archiving** Club records, photos and other historical materials at the HRM Archives in Burnside was completed. This stage also included interesting materials recovered from the Bloomfield site. This will be an on-going project. A CD of our history is available from the Club.

The **remote access** to our Club Station radio position was fully implemented and training was provided for interested users. A *User's Manual* was created and an antenna switch added to allow switching antennas remotely.

A high quality, commercial **electronics work station** was installed in the Library/Office to facilitate the maintenance of Club equipment and to provide a work station for Club members to use for personal projects. More test equipment has been added and training on this new equipment has been added to the training plan.

A dedicated **900 MHz communication's link** between the Club station and the EOC at Mt. Hope Avenue was installed, tested and made operational on a 24/7 basis. This is intended to provide dedicated communications between the EOC and St. Andrew's Community Centre in its capacity as a back-up emergency evacuation centre. This station is always on the air and tests are often run between various points in the local area.

Restoration of **Britt Fader's Collins A-3 Receiver** was completed by Fred Archibald, VE1FA, and is ready for installation in the Club Station. Perhaps, this will be just the first stage in the establishment of a Memorial Vintage Radio Station dedicated to all our silent keys. The transmitter is now being worked on and should soon be ready for operation.

Tom Caithness VE1TOM was appointed as **Coordinator of our Basic Radio Course**, and in 2016 has innovatively revised our curriculum and approach. This is a major Club activity of key importance to our future. In 2016 we have 23 students taking the course.

EVENTS

The HARC year is filled with a variety of events, some Club sponsored for members and many others that are a part of our public service and outreach.

The **Ham Radio Breakfast** was well attended on Saturday, 07 February at Tom's Restaurant in Lower Sackville. Well over 40 attended this event.

On Wednesday evening, 12 February, a group of 10 **Cub Scouts** and three of their leaders received a briefing about amateur radio, were provided a demonstration of various modes of operating and were permitted to make HF radio contacts.

On Saturday, 15 February, two groups of **Girl Guides** - one Guides and the other Brownies - visited our Club station. The 17 young girls and their 5 leaders also were given a briefing, mode demonstrations and access to operating time on HF similar to the Cubs. Our outreach to scouting is an important part of our annual program.

HARC was again present at the **Shearwater Hobby Show**, on Saturday and Sunday, 11 – 12 April. Although more "traditional" in its scope than "Geekquiox" (see below), it is an important venue for profiling amateur radio and extending our contact network. Organized by Craig MacKinnon, VE1JMA, our table provided a demonstration of several modes of operating and information about both Ham Radio and HARC.

On Saturday, 25 April, a **Fall Protection Training** course was hosted for 11 of our Club members. A course is arranged by our Safety Officer, Terry Bigelow, VE1TRB, and usually given each year.

On April 25, 26 a unique gathering of “Geeky” hobbyists met at the “Geekquinox” with interests in anime, science fiction, fantasy, gaming, comics, steampunk, contraptions and creations of all kinds!” HARC was there for the second year to share amateur radio with them and to extend our search of the greater universe for kindred souls. In this era of rapid technological and social change, one needs to explore new spheres of interest in order to make new connections for our hobby. Amanda Schreiber and Jayne Jackson (both studying for their ham radio certification) were responsible for organizing our participation.

On Saturday 2 May, HARC assisted The **Rover Scouts** in running an event modeled after the TV Show, “The Amazing Race”. Eight teams of 3 - 5 Venturers had to complete tasks in both Halifax and Dartmouth, several involving use of amateur radio to communicate, and return to the Grand Parade starting point by a set time. The HARC Club station acted as the central communications node.

The period from late **May to late August** is a period with a great number of Club activities that are regularly parts of our activities calendar. Let me list them for you, including the nature of our participation:

25 May	The MS Walk Communications coordination
11 June	The Down East Flea Market Social event and sale of ham gear
25/26 June	The ARRL Field Day test of emergency preparedness
20 July	HARC Summer Social gathering for Pizza
23/24 July	MS Bike Tour Communications coordination
26/27 July	IOTA Contest Islands on the Air Contest
2/3 August	Int'l Lighthouse/ship Event Special event from VE0MMA
17 August	HARC Summer Social gathering for Pizza
23/24 August	Bluenose Auto Sport Club Communications coordination for the Ledwedge Lookoff Rally

HARC participated in the **Greenwood Flea Market** on Saturday, 22 October with tables selling our surplus radio gear, promoting the Club and distributing QSL cards from the Bureau we administer. As always, this was a nice social gathering too.

The 2016 HARC **Christmas Dinner** will be held at held at Boston Pizza in Bayer's Lake on 21 December.

Our ability to provide a **communications coordination service** is at the centre of our role with three community events and constitutes a major component of our public service. Three others represent **operating activities**, contests and special events that are opportunities to hone our radio skills under field and contest conditions and involve many Club members. The remaining three are **social events**, while one of these is an opportunity to buy and sell radio equipment.

ON-GOING FUNCTIONS

Dissemination of Information. There are several facets of our Club's communication with members and interested outside parties that strengthens the Club's performance and presence, including:

The Reflector which is a truly first class Club newsletter and is downloaded from our website and widely read by non-Club members far and wide. This is expertly edited by Lynn Bowser, VE1ENT.

Our Website itself presents HARC to the world via the web in the most attractive and useful way. It is managed and kept very up-to-date by Howard Dickson, VE1DHD

The Government and Media Relations Officer, Gary Murphy VA1GGM provides information about HARC and HARC activities thru press releases and targeted reports and submissions. This helps to build linkages between us, Government and other parts of our society.

The Take-15 Net, operating on our VE1PSR Repeater (147.270 MHz +), provides a weekly forum on Sunday evenings for the exchange of news and information. Net control rotates among members.

Educational Programming and Member Recruitment.

Our **Basic Amateur Radio Certification (BRC) Course** is one of our most important undertakings each year and it spawns a regular flow of new operators and active HARC members.

On a more ad hoc basis HARC offers a **BRC Self-Study Program** for those who cannot or do not wish to take the annual course.

A series of short **specialized continuing education seminars** are currently being planned.

Our monthly Club meeting frequently includes a speaker providing both educational and entertaining material for members.

We are working with **C.P. Allen High School** to help them develop a school ARC, a forerunner of a larger effort to introduce amateur radio to more schools.

We work regularly with the **Scouting organizations** in our region.

We encourage the technical education of young hams by offering annually the \$1000 **Britt Fader Scholarship**. This year it unfortunately was not awarded because we did not receive any applications. We are looking in to ways make the award better known and to attract credible applications.

For the second year in a row, we intend to present a **Rookie of the Year award** to acknowledge the contribution of a newly licensed ham radio operator and member of HARC.

Emergency Communications Preparedness and Safety.

Our work in contributing to emergency preparedness and supporting the HRM's Emergency Measures Organization is a major function that includes:

- Hosting monthly meetings of the EMO Amateur Radio Advisory Committee, Chaired by Barry Manuel, VE1JRG, who is the Director of the HRM's EMO Office.
- Training our members in emergency communications procedures
- Maintaining an active HARC Safety Officer, namely Terry Bigelow, VE1TRB, who insures that all our operations maintain mandated safety standards. This includes organizing Fall Protection courses for our climbers and monitoring that their certification remains up-to-date.
- We regularly provide assistance to members in safely erecting towers and installing antenna systems.
- We test our readiness with field exercises and with regular use of our Club equipment. For instance, our Station Manager, Jim Flowers, VE1JIM, participated almost daily in an International Operators Net.

Social Activities.

A basic component of our hobby is also enjoying friendships and socializing, including:

- Conducting regular social events, such as our winter Ham Radio Brunch and our annual Christmas Party
- Providing Saturday morning coffee and conversation at the Club.
- On a more informal basis there are several groups in various parts of the HRM that meet regularly for morning coffee
- During the summer our July and August meetings are a social gathering with pizza.

This is a long report of our activities, but I am sure that there is still much more that could be said. I have not tried to mention everyone who has been involved in our activities, projects and on-going functions, since it includes the major portion of our 140 or so members. Without this support we would not be able to achieve what we do, so once again my sincere thanks to all who have so ably and enthusiastically engage in the work of the Halifax Amateur Radio Club.

BRIAN C. ALLEN- va1cc
President 2015-2016
Halifax Amateur Radio Club