

1945 ALBURY HAMFEST!

From VK3VG, Sgt H.A. Vinning, 133 Wing, No2 Coy. IASTB Bonegilla. He reports:

“I am on the staff at the school the Army is running here and occasionally we are lucky enough to have the pleasure of teaching a ham. About five months ago, I noticed that one of the students was more interested in how the rig perked instead of the often met aptitude of ‘punch the key and hope for the best’ Suddenly this particular student grabbed the key and rattled out a snappy little ‘CQ DX’. I pricked up my ears and he signed VK2ACX ... and that is how it all started, and from then on we swapped lies and bashed ears to no small order. Next course a new officer took over command of the school to wit Lt Arthur Stowar (nee VK2ACX).

Since then ACX and myself have held, almost daily, a two-ham hamfest. We were constantly on the lookout for other hams, as this place, being a signal depot, is the place to find hams. One by one we managed to QSO them and 2ACX is pleased to relate they nearly all QSL, and he is gradually filling the wall with QSL cards of those who have been contacted. Finally 2ACX suggested that seeing we had quite a few hams in the area, it was time to hold a hamfest where we could all get together for some unrestricted ragchewing. The arrangements were completed and our dinner was held at the Albury Hotel at 18.00 hours on April 19th.

Those present were: Signalman Reg Flood VK2BN, Lieutenant Arthur Stowar VK2ACX, Albury Businessman Noel Arnold VK2OJ, Sergeant Fred Bull VK2AJM, S/Sergeant Alan Jocelyne VK2AJO, Sergeant Fred Smith VK3FR, Lance Corporal Jim Watson VK3NQ, Sergeant Howard Vinning VK3VG, Lieutenant Ron Williams VK3ZD, Sergeant H. Loiser VK5LO, Captain Bob Manuel VK5RT and Jim Todd (no call).

Naturally enough the only topic of conversation was Ham Radio and we concluded the ragchew at about 22.00. 2OJ said it was the most hams he had seen altogether for many years and I suppose it was one of the biggest gatherings of the clan since that fateful day of the red telegram. A good time was most certainly had by all.”

[AR, May 1945, p10 (extract) *Slough Hats and Forage Caps* by Jim VK2YC]