



QST63

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Newsletter of The New Zealand Association of Radio Transmitters, Upper Hutt Branch 63, Inc.

APRIL 2009

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President's Report

Hi everyone...

Field Day was held on the last weekend of February - Saturday 28th and Sunday 1 March 2009. Morrie ZL2ADP has stated that a good log was obtained from the weekend's efforts, with the club entering the 80M Phone Section. Some 300 plus contacts were made which is good to hear, although the weather was trying at times.

By the time you read this the Wellington EXPO will have come and gone. It's amazing that this year marked the 5th year of this event - where has all the time gone!

Just a reminder about the NZART Conference in on from 29 May - 1 June 2009, located in Hastings this year. I would suggest that as the location is well within driving distance that you consider attending the conference especially the AGM meeting held on the Saturday. It's always good to experience and hear first hand the issues of the day - solutions on offer, and meet new and old friends alike. Also the Hawkes Bay is always a great place to visit and not too far from Wellington.

For those of you interested in Weather Stations and the like I have been running my own weather station from home since November of last year in fact. The details are uploaded every fifteen minutes to the internet at Weather Undergrounds web site:

<http://www.wunderground.com/weatherstation/WXDailyHistory.asp?ID=IWNWELLI2>

This Weather Station uses an allocation within the Amateur 70CM band at 433 MHz, to wirelessly connect the anemometer and rain gauge to the main control unit, which in turn is physically connected to the internet PC. The information recorded is very interesting - anyway have a look.

Club AGM will be on Friday 24 April 2009, at 8.00 pm.

Well that's the news from me... 73's and good DX....

Mark ZL2UFI
President

Repeater Report

Recently there have been a couple of issues with the club's repeaters and their usage.

Faults

From time to time the repeaters require more than routine maintenance, so if you experience any issues that are out of the ordinary can you in the first instance note and record the date, time and the fault you are hearing, or not. This can be quite important when it comes time to try to identify the fault or issue, perhaps saving a trip up the hill to investigate if it is not required.

Climie 730 had a recent power supply fault, where the power was intermittent at the site and for some reason the battery power didn't kick in when it should have. 730 was off the air until this was fixed on site. If this happens again then we'll have to try to work out how this is occurring as it is not obvious at this time.

Climie 860 has had some ongoing issues with audio. Neil has narrowed the problems down to faulty modules, and has resolved it. The audio and now performance from 860 is better and that what is expected. That said, some minor fine tuning on the module is still required to get the repeater to perform as we would like. If you are using 860 while mobile or when walking around the place, can you report any issues to Neil, so we can work out from the location you are as to whether the repeater or your location might be the issue.

All other repeaters and beacons are working fine.

Usage

The usage of the repeaters appears to be like the economy at present, somewhat up and down. If you are using them for normal voice contacts please try not to let your operating skills lapse, and ensure you use full callsigns and names.

The IRLP Node usage has come in for some flak from club members and users alike. There appears to a habit amongst some not to announce their callsign, but to merely punch in the DTMF tones and then immediately disconnect again. The second issue, which is more current, is the linking to the NASA Shuttle audio available from two different IRLP Reflectors. While listening to these is no issue, and very interesting they can be at times, to simply connect the IRLP and leave it running for hours on end isn't perhaps what we as a club want. This unattended linking is at times annoying and can be difficult to break out of, especially as some users immediately re-link in the NASA audio, again without callsign identification when correct unlinking procedures are followed.

While not wanting to play policeman here and also not to deny users the opportunity to listen to the audio; unless some more maturity is shown then measures such as locking out the NASA audio channels may have to take place. This locking is a last resort.

Finally if you hear people dialling up nodes, or using the repeaters without identification can you please challenge them, and request they use the repeaters as is required by their amateur licenses.

We should always strive to be as professional as we can., so using correct radio operating procedure is to be encouraged and demonstrated by all.

Written by Mark ZL2UFI on behalf of
Repeater trustees Neil ZL2TNG, Peter ZL2HM.

Don't forget: Club Net every Tuesday evening on 3.715MHz at 0800UTC

AREC Report

In fine and dusty conditions the Kapi-Mana motorcycle Club held their first round of club championship races with a good turnout of riders.

There were a few spills on the day with one rider being transported to hospital in the Westpac rescue helicopter with a broken leg (Femur).

Communications were conducted on FM simplex 146.500 by John ZL2UX, Mark ZL4WT and Morrie ZL2ADP.

Morrie ZL2ADP

Field Day 28th Feb - 1st March 2009 at Kaitoke Regional Park.

Light rain was falling when we arrived at the Field Day site on Saturday and continued for the rest of the day and into the windy night. Mark ZL2WOL towed the caravan up to the camping ground after tightening up his loose towball at ZL2ADP's QTH.

The main antenna pole was erected by Tom ZL2HGR, Morrie ZL2ADP and Fritz DL3MHB and the 80m dipole was hoisted and ready to go by 1.30pm. The generator was filled with petrol and started up with signals being received at good strength on the FT857. At contest start time (3pm) nobody was answering us except a local station who reported a very distorted transmission. The audio gain and ALC was checked and the fuses removed from the power lead which was then connected directly to the battery. This did improve the supply voltage but not our transmission.

The next option was to brave the elements and drop the antenna to replace the coax line for a new one. This appeared to fix the problem as every station in ZL were anxious to work us for the next 30 minutes. We had been loading up an unknown length of coax!!

Fritz and Tom operated ZL2VH until Malcolm ZL2UDF came along to do the night shift. The next morning was fine and after coaxing the generator to start up again Malcolm stayed on the air until Fritz and Tom returned to take over operations.

The team handled 396 contacts including 7 VK's which was a very commendable effort considering the late start and inclement weather.

Thanks to those who took part including Gavin ZL2ACT who helped the boys to pack up and towed the caravan back to Upper Hutt on Sunday afternoon.

The pictures (on the following page) were taken by Fritz DL3MHB.

Morrie ZL2ADP

HF website

For all HF operators here is a very useful website which is updated every 2 minutes. Have a look at: www.solarcycle24.com I am sure there is something of interest for everyone.

Morrie ZL2ADP

Photos from Field Day taken by Fritz DL3MHB



Clublog

From Tom ZL2HGR: the below email could be something for the next news letter?
More info at www.clublog.org

-----Original Message-----

From: clublog@googlegroups.com [mailto:clublog@googlegroups.com] On Behalf Of G7VJR
Sent: Monday, 16 March 2009 11:01 p.m.
To: ClubLog
Subject: [ClubLog] Attracting new members

Hi everyone,

I'm keen to try and build the user base up on Club Log, especially outside EU, to balance up the most-wanted charts (and generally expand for the fun of it). The majority of members are CDXC members due to the way this project started. At the moment, the main way new members join is by using expedition log search tools, which include a link back to Club Log.

I notice Phil G4OBK kindly wrote a review of Club Log on eHam.net, which you can visit here:

<http://www.eham.net/reviews/review/78398>

Thanks Phil, very nice :)

If you can think of anyone else who would like Club Log, or have any ideas on how to attract new users, the performance fixes are done so the brakes are off...

73

Michael G7VJR