



QST63

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

President's Report

Hi everyone... well what a month - storms, no mains power at Climie, and then the big earthquake. Never a dull moment I suppose!

So let's start at the mains power lost at Mt Climie. The Wellington Region suffered perhaps the most destructive storm since the Wahine Disaster of 1968, when the big southerly storm hit overnight Thursday/Friday 20/21 June 2013. The storm caused a great of damage to many beaches and areas open to the south. Oddly enough, the weather at my QTH wasn't that bad, with my wife and I just thinking it was another wet and windy night in Wellington! We lost no power or suffered any damage for once. Of course that was lucky for us this time.

Unfortunately the mains power supply to Climie was cut which wasn't unexpected, as this has happened many times in the past with such storms. What we didn't know at the time was the length of the outage that would follow. As I am writing this report it has been all but five weeks. Although we reported it to the power company, and requested the usual priority to restore it, this time we where a long way down the list, with priority given to the 30,000 odd residential homes first. All the other services on the Climie ridge switched to generated power with at least a weeks or more fuel supply so they were not concerned initially.

On the recent installation of the new 730 antennas we took the time to replace all the batteries on site, thanks to Mark ZL2UP

we have 400 Ah for 730, and 300 Ah for 5425/860 D-Star repeaters plus the D-Star controller.

For 730 this equates to about 10-14 days of power (transmitted output is reduce to about 12 watts of RF). The D-Star rack about 7-8 days of power with 860 (transmitted output reduced to 2.5 watts and 5425 still running at 25 watts. (See Simons report for the 5425 power relay required to operate on the SRC250C power supplies. With a low power cut off. Thanks to John ZL2TWS who did the 860 batteries cut off mod, and has now done the same for 5425.)

By Friday 28 June we had decided to try generating power on site, so Sunday 30 June was agreed as the day. The D-Star stack failed on the Saturday. All battery supported equipment has a low voltage disconnect, so the batteries are not drained and their life effected. 730 was still going strong. Once on site we did various tests and found that we could generate sufficient power not only to our equipment but the whole hut. We ran the generator for about 30 minutes on full load to see if it would hold the load of the whole hut, this load was about 10 AMPS at 220 volts.

After this test we ran the generator overnight to see how long the fuel would last. After a suggestion from Gavin ZL2ACT, we decided that we should power the whole hut, so we commenced doing so from 4:00 pm on Monday 1 July 2013 (Note this date, as a letter from the Upper Hutt City Council was written on this date).

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Issue 78

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Upcoming Events

**International Lighthouse
Lightship Weekend**
17th-18th August 2013
(Contact Tom ZL2HGR)

We powered the whole for several days, doing twice-daily visits on site to refuel the generator. Normally this cycle is three days of double visits, then single visits for two days. This cycle gets the batteries to about 80% charge in three days, with two days of top up.

I'll take this opportunity to thanks all the members of the club, who have given up their time, provided transport and gone that extra mile (so to speak) to ensure that the whole of the Mt Climie site (the main hut for us) was powered.

We have now done three visits like this over the five weeks - with about a week of non-generated power in between each visit. This has now become the longest period of time a power outage for us at Mt Climie, the previous record was about 7-8 days a few years ago when after power restoration we had continuing supply issues.

This effort has proved to many people the expertise that we as amateurs have, our willingness to get involved, solve a difficult issue and to get on with it in times of hardship. Although we fly under the radar a lot these days, and not wishing to blow the trumpet too loud I think on this occasion we should. So well done to get one involved.

On a less-than-positive note you will all have been sent and read the letter from the Upper Hutt City Council, dated 1 July 2013. Thank you to all that made the effort to turn up the Special

Meeting on Friday 5 July to discuss it. Since then an initial meeting has had with Council representatives and a Submission on this letter is now underway.

We all hope for a good outcome, time will tell.

Finally, as our tenure is somewhat under threat at the clubrooms, we have decided to stop the purchase of any new equipment for the club – this includes a new ICOM IC-2820H for the Caravan and replacement Antenna Analyser(s). The funds

raised to date have been banked and depending on the outcome of the Submission maybe required in other areas.

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

Mark ZL2UFI
President

Wellington Project 8

The repeater known as "Wellington Project 8" was installed on Thursday 25th July. Sited at the Maungaraki Reservoir 245m asl and running 13dBw EIRP (21w)

Since the recent earthquake and southerly storms a Wellington PRS repeater would be a good alternative to social media in case of a telephone or internet outage.

We have a generous host, Hutt Radio FM 106.1.

We hope to raise funds to eventually pay for the repeater and might build a second repeater if there is enough interest.

Bruce ZL2ABC along with others have made donations to finance the licence. The duplexer and antenna were purchased by John ZL2TWS in order to make a tidy single antenna installation.

Donations are most welcome as we are a long way off meeting our fund raising target. Please contact Bruce ZL2ABC on (04) 938-7147 to add your support.

The repeater consists of two commercial Vertex Standard radios, a VK5DJ controller and a Duplexers.eu cavity filter feeding an RFI COL5000 Omni directional antenna. Repeater TX 476.600 MHz RX 477.350 MHz.

The controller box was built by Paul Smith ZL2UGR and donated by Neil Gibbons ZL2TNG. Mark ZL2UFI has donated a test reference antenna for the trustee.

Casa modular systems have assisted with cable and connectors at very reasonable prices.

My idea to promote this project was to encourage radio use by the 4 x 4 club, general public and amateurs.

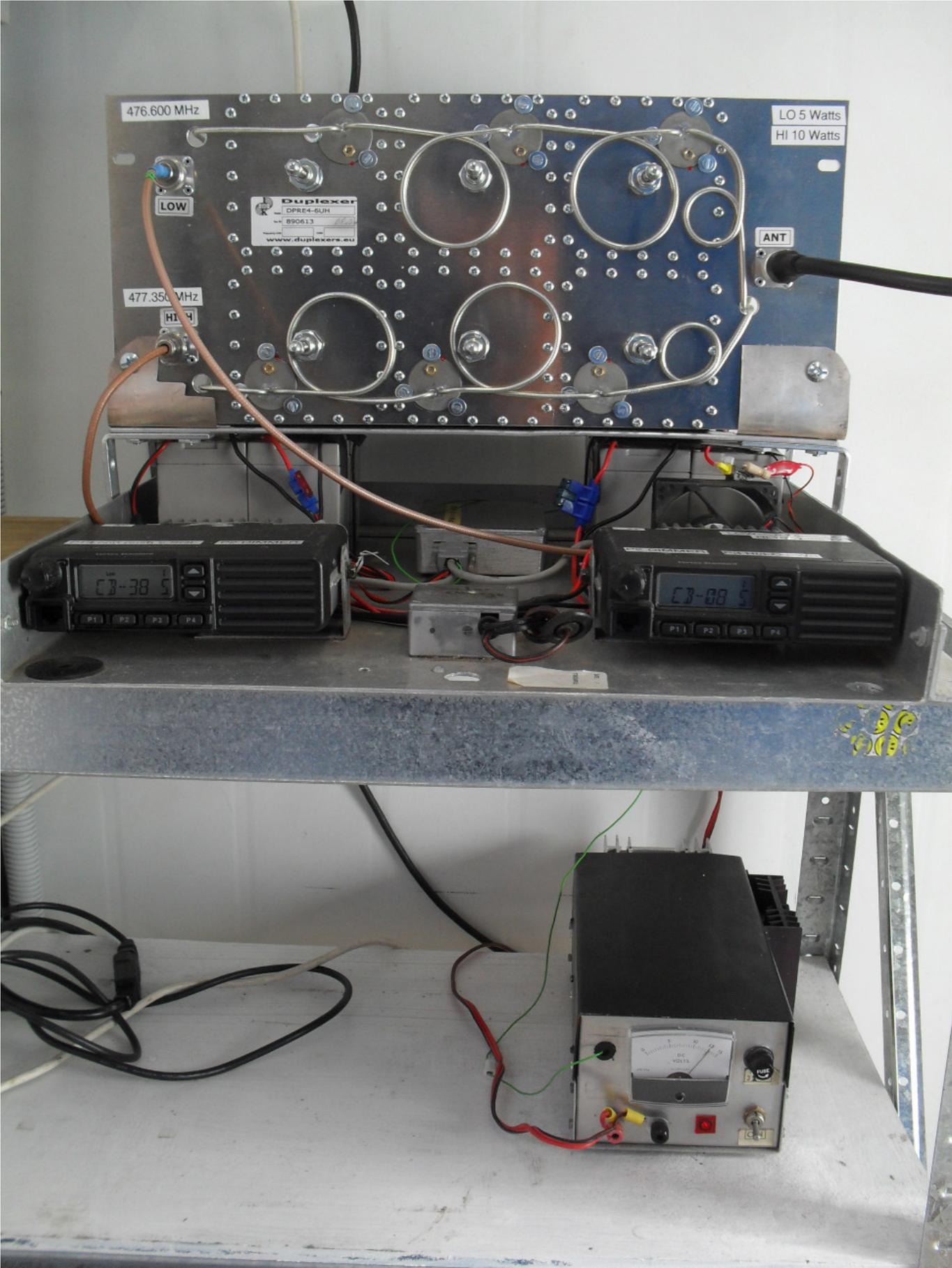
I believe that raising the public knowledge to use two way radio will eventually introduce radio proficient users to amateur radio and grow the ham population once again.

The idea of this licence at Maungaraki is to trial the concept for 12 months, see what sponsorship can be raised to keep the licence going and how much interest there will be for a higher elevation site second repeater.

Thank you for your support

73, John ZL2TWS





Wellington Project 8

Generator Refueling Trips to Climie



Snow at Mt Climie on Sunday 14 July 2013



Snow at Mt Climie on Sunday 14 July 2013 – on track looking north



Snow at Mt Climie on Sunday 14 July 2013 – looking south at Telecom Tower



Tunnel Gully Gate Sunday 18 July 2013



Snow at Mt Climie on Thursday 18 July 2013 – remains of the snow still on site



Mt Climie on Thursday 18 July 2013 – Gain ZL2ACT (left) and Steve ZL2SFM

Repeater Report

Editor's note: mains power was restored on 27th July, after the time of writing

Branch 63's Repeater Installation at Climie is still waiting for power restoration, 5 weeks have gone since the power outage.

The Club installed its generator on site to charge the standby batteries and provide power. With many trips to by many members to keep the generator fueled. Many thanks to all those who assisted. There does appear to be some light at the end of the tunnel, power restoration is expected to be completed within the week.

3cm & 10m beacons
10m off air pending mains power restoration. Work continues on 3cm.

1292 Repeater
1292 off air pending mains power restoration

860 D-Star
Running in low power mode with intermittent internet connectivity, pending power restoration.

5425 D-Star
The 5425 repeater has been removed to fit a low power mode relay. Will be re installed when mains power is restored.

730 2m FM Repeater
Running in low power mode, pending power restoration.

6m FM Repeater
The 6m repeater has been repaired by John ZL2TWS. He also improved the transmit audio quality. John is also working on a improved antenna design. However the repeater is off air until mains power is restored.

Simon ZL2BRG
Repeater Trustee



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