



ZL2VH Newsletter – February 2020

President's Report

First one of the year. We still meet every Friday evening at 7.30 at the clubrooms, come down to catch up and find the latest gossip, rumours, facts, fiction and fantasies.

Our replacement antennas for 730 have been delivered to the local agents and will be picked up this week. Partial funding for these was a grant from the Upper Hutt Cossie Club so the clubs contribution was approx. \$2700. Thanks go to our treasurer Gavin ZL2ACT for his efforts with this funding.

John ZL2TWS has decided to step down as Repeater Trustee at the upcoming AGM ... see email attached at the end of this newsletter.

John also has a rapidly dwindling stock of antennas and mounts that he found while he was in Singapore, first in first serve. Contact John via email: zl2tw@wysocki.nz

- 1) AML Gutter mount heavy duty. \$30 [One only]
- 2) Diamond CR-77 144/430 MHz 100W antenna \$30 [Two only]
- 3) Diamond K-TRII bonnet/trunk lid antenna mount \$30 [One only]
- 4) Diamond RH3 Stubby BNC antenna 144/430/1200 MHz (120/150/300/450/800/900 MHz) \$20 [Five only]
- 5) Diamond SRH805S Stubby SMA antenna 144/430/1200 MHz \$20 [Two only]

- 6) Diamond EC-H 4m RG-58U cable with PL-259 plug to SO-239 socket to use with antenna mounts. \$15 [Four only]
- 7) Diamond MRK adjustable magnetic (strong magnet) mount with 4m EC-H cable \$60 [One only]
- 8) Diamond K-44 adjustable pipe mounted antenna mount \$30 [Two only]

Some items like 1 x MRK and more 4 x EC-H cables are still on the ship and will not be back in NZ until the end of March.

Anyone interested are to email and arrange pick-up.
Payment via internet banking.

(Some of these may be sold by the time you read this....)

Brian ZL2CHV continues to host radio playdays at the Kaitoke Gliding Club, keep an eye on the ZL2VH Facebook page for dates.

Jock White Field Days are going up around 23 Feb, hopefully at the Gliding Club.

AGM will be held in April

73 and good DX

Mike ZL2NSA

Branch 63 Repeater Update

Nothing received this month. (Ed.)

From Malcolm ZL2UDF:

Subject: [NZART-Members] Irirangi (Navy HF Radio Com's Station),
Waiouru.

A book about the history of HMNZS Irirangi has been published, called
"Morse Code and Snowflakes".

Incidentally the name means "to speak from the sky".

ZL2TC

FYI: Lower Hutt library has the book. Not sure on Upper Hutt library.
Main Title: Morse code and snowflakes : the story of HMNZS Irirangi, the
Naval Radio at Waiouru and of the people who served there in war and
peace / David Davies.

Author: Davies, David, 1932-

Imprint: [Levin, N.Z.] : D. Davies, c2007
ISBN: 9780473125394 (pbk), 0473125390 (pbk)

Some may be interested in this article:

<http://navy.mil.nz/downloads/pdf/navy-today/nt238.pdf>

Page 15, "Navy Today", Nov. 2019, re: Irirangi HF station.

73, David ZL2DW

We are always looking for articles to fill the pages of newsletter. Please
forward anything, no matter how large or small, to the editor - Eric
ZL2SET – ericwilby@gmail.com.

Happy New Year to Branch 63 Members

I give notice that from the 2020 AGM I will step down as a Branch 63 repeater trustee. This letter gives sufficient notice to the Branch 63 executive to advertise for a replacement trustee.

The burden of maintaining Mount Climie (MCL) to my standard and expectations has taken its toll on me. I no longer enjoy doing this work I was previously so passionate about.

Members and Non members within the Amateur community expect MCL to be everything it has been from the 1980's to the present day. Repeater use however has dwindled to almost zero. Unfortunately over the last 5 years or more, Branch 63 has lost skilled members who shared the trustee work load looking after repeaters and beacons. Many of those Ex members also provided 4 x 4 transport to MCL for routine maintenance.

The "facts of the matter" is that Branch 63 can no longer effectively maintain the MCL site to previous high standards and should consider its options as to what should be retained or retired from MCL. Minimal traffic on most repeaters cannot warrant or support the level of funding and hours of work. While we share this commercial site, enjoy free rent and power our installations should be to a high standard in order to retain this "free" status.

Most antennas only last, on average, a few years. The repeater assets are aged however still maintainable. Improvements to antenna poles have been made. Antenna maintenance is now easier than before to carry out. The weather extremes still cause antenna to degrade and eventually fail. This is ongoing and relentless.

My recommendation is that each repeater or beacon system be maintained by one individual or a sub group of individuals as is currently done with the 3cm 10GHz beacon and WiFi 5GHz link. If a repeater or beacon fails it is the responsibility of that person or group to maintain that asset.

My frustration since the April 2017 AGM has never gone away causing me undue stress and anxiety continuing to hold the role as one of the repeater trustees. The responsibility of a repeater trustee is to monitor and test the assets on a regular basis and if found degraded arrange appropriate maintenance. This is a responsible role that is no longer sustainable for me. This vacancy offers an opportunity for another technically qualified person to step up and gain experience.

Social media and on air comments regarding the poor performance of Branch 63 assets cannot be tolerated or ignored. I have accepted that anything spoken about on Branch 63 repeaters is analysed and often scrutinised via social media without direct contact with those having the on air QSO's. We are radio operators expressing our right to freedom of speech and not breaking radio regulations. It is now time for change for not only me but Branch 63 and the Wellington region amateur community.

Stepping down from the role allows someone new, with a fresh approach to trustee duties, to make changes and face head on the comments as mentioned above in a diplomatic way. A "new face" as a Branch 63 trustee could make a difference to any new direction the club may have to consider.

I concentrated too much on retaining “the status quo” and expected others to have the same enthusiasm I do. Adding more assets to the MCL line up, in order to promote ham radio, has not worked.

An example of this being the under utilised 395 6M and 1292 23cm repeaters.

D-Star has been over taken by the cheaper DMR option but remains as a legacy and superior DV system. Promoting more repeaters and beacons is a bad assumption on my part thinking others want to progress the hobby with the same passion I have.

I thank Branch 63 for it’s support and encouragement over the years and wish the replacement trustee continued support with the maintenance of the MCL assets.

73. John ZL2TWS. 1st January 2020

NZART Branch 63 Incorporated

Council Depot

Park Street

Upper Hutt

President: Mike ZL2NSA

Secretary: Justin: ZL2UGL

Treasurer: Gavin: ZL2ACT