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The Bi-Monthly Magazine  
of the  
Redcliffe and Districts Radio Club Inc.

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June 2007

## Amateur Radio Stations VK4RC & VK4IZ



**The Parkes Radio Telescope**

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## **From the Editor**

Greetings to all Club members, radio enthusiasts, family supporters and friends.

Welcome to QRM for June 2007. I've just returned from a trip south which included the WIA AGM and accompanying activities at Parkes, and some time with relatives in Canberra and Kapunda in SA. The weekend at Parkes was a most enjoyable experience. It was very well organized, well attended and went off without a hitch. I met and caught up with lots of people and enjoyed being accompanied by my XYL, Judy, who also attended everything except the AGM, such things not really being within her interests. More is said later in this QRM.

Also featured in this packed edition, a report on the working bee held at the club repeater site at Wamuran. Our sincere thanks to all who supported this, and especially Peter (VK4YRU) for his tireless efforts to keep the repeater running. I think all would agree that maintaining our repeater is a major contribution of our club to amateur radio in this region. At our general meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April this year we were treated to an excellent presentation by George (VK4XY), and Bevan (VK4BCM) on CW operation and techniques. For those who may have missed it, George has kindly written it up for all to enjoy. I understand our club already has begun a CW net which is good news indeed.

We are also favoured by an article which might resonate with some of our "radio widows", or maybe husbands if it happens to be the lady who is smitten by the radio bug. Many thanks Jayenne, alias "Mrs VK4TGV", for sharing your experiences in such an amusing way, and good luck in your efforts to "join 'em". And now switching the spotlight to the devil (in this case) himself, we have two contributions from Peter (VK4TGV). The first on HF mobile land communications in Australia which I found very interesting and informative. HF is still alive and well. It also tied in neatly with my current reading of the excellent book by Rodney Champness "Outback Radio". Peter then tells us about his experiences on Morton Island using a dipole slung (with some difficulty it seemed) into the trees. This with trusted open wire feedline and a Yaesu FC40 antenna coupler gave him more or less multiband HF coverage. I have plans to try something like this when I go camping again, and have a suitable mobile/portable radio, which sadly at present I do not possess.

Before I leave this column, I must remind everyone of the upcoming club AGM. Please note that this will be the **third** Monday night of the month, not the second when we usually schedule our general meetings. This is to avoid clashing with the long weekend. So, ink Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June into your diaries. As well as the usual election of officers, there will be some important issues to be resolved at this meeting, not the least to consider a motion to increase club annual membership fees. Make sure you are there to have your say.

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# Report on the WIA AGM - Parkes

by *Alan Jenner (VK4KZ)*

I was fortunate to be able to attend the WIA AGM held this year at Parkes in NSW. WIA AGMs in the past have usually been held at capital city venues, and the attendance has been somewhat less than spectacular. But this year was different. It was held in country NSW, with accompanying events aimed at attracting a bigger attendance. And it worked. Over 120 members and partners attended, and the weekend was a brilliant success.

## **The Parkes Radio Telescope**

A major attraction of course was the visits to the radio telescope, popularly referred to as “The Dish”. The Friday evening event consisted of dinner at the “Dish Café”, followed by attendance of the Central West Astronomical Society meeting. The main business of the meeting was a presentation entitled “The Runaway Universe: the Influence of Dark Energy”, given by Dr Geraint Lewis, Associate Professor of Physics at the Sydney University. After this, the CWAS had a demonstration of a number of telescopes. Luckily, the sky was clear and we saw views of the moon, planets and some stars. Faint objects weren’t easily visible because of the moonlight.

On the Sunday we were divided into groups of about 20, and taken on guided tours of the telescope innards. We were very lucky in this, since such tours are rarely given. For the rest of the day we were free to wander about the visitors’ area and to see a couple of film presentations.

## **BBQ and Dinner**

A very pleasant BBQ was held on midday Saturday at a city area park called “Kelly’s Reserve”. We had to be careful not to eat too much because there was also a dinner that night after the AGM at the Coachman Hotel. We ate too much anyway! The dinner was accompanied by a guest speaker, this time one of “us” (an amateur), who gave a remarkable film illustrated talk on hobby rockets. What did this have to do with radio? Well, he photographed the rockets’ flights using high definition ATV – no mean feat. The movies were quite amazing.

## **The AGM and Forum**

The AGM was very well run, and only went over time by about half an hour which was pretty good considering the huge volume of information which was presented and discussed. The majority of the time consisted of the “Open Forum”, where most of the business issues, reports from technical working groups, etc, were dealt with. A few people raised some queries about the changes to the use of “Invigilators”, which seemed to be clarified. I will not elaborate on this here, as it is explained in detail in the May edition of AR magazine. One thing did hit home with me, and that is the huge amount of work that many people in the WIA are putting into areas such as BPL testing, technical committees, intruder watch, examinations, and not least the AR magazine.

It was especially enjoyable to be able to chat with so many WIA officials and fellow amateurs from all over Australia. In all, I thought the weekend activities were a tremendous success and a great credit to the WIA organizers, especially Robert Broomhead, whose idea it was to hold the meeting at Parkes.

*See radio telescope photo on cover page*



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## **2006/07 COMMITTEE MEMBERS & CLUB DIRECTORY**

<b>President</b>	David Close VK4FDRC	Phone: 3862 8700
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</b>	Steve Pearson VK4IT	Phone: 3284 8975
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President</b>	Peter Schrader VK4TGV	Phone: 0419676942
<b>Secretary</b>	Peter Richardson VK4TAA	Phone: 3261 4225
<b>Treasurer</b>	Glenn Wood VK4FZ	Phone: 3351 4295

**Meetings:** EVERY MONDAY with regular guest speakers and ongoing projects  
Time: 1930hrs (local)

**WHERE:** Redcliffe and Districts Radio Club clubhouse - Cnr Klingner Rd & Macfarlane St, Kippa Ring

**Clubhouse:** Open every Monday evening 1930hrs (local) INCLUDING PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

**2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month :** General Members Discussion Meeting

**CLUB NETS:** Sunday evenings at 1900K 2m on 146.925MHz Redcliffe repeater VK4RRC and 1945K 80m 3.618 MHz ± QRM VK4RC Net control : 27 MHz, channel 20, 27.205 MHz LSB, Thursday at 8pm

REDCLIFFE and DISTRICTS RADIO CLUB Inc.  
PO Box 20, WOODY POINT QLD 4019  
WEBSITE: <http://vk4rc.we.net.au>

EXAMS: Alan VK4KZ, Laurie VK4BLE & John VK4WX  
NET\_1: Sunday 1900K 146.925  
NET\_2: Sunday 1945K 3.618  
REPEATERS: VK4RRC VR 146.925, 438.325

**Contributions to Editor QRM - Alan Jenner VK4KZ**

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### **Forthcoming Events**

- General business meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of month
- Foxhunts, 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month
- Wednesday activities – mornings 9.00am each fortnight – next 6<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> June  
Contact Ken (VK4FKEN) **32832564** for further information or to offer suggestions for activities.
- Trivia Nights every Wednesday evening on 70 cm repeater, 7.15pm for check-ins
- \*\*\*\*\*AGM – Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June \*\*\*\*\*
- Monday 16<sup>th</sup> July, planned visit to the Telecommunications historical museum at Albion

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# Report on our Repeater Working Bee

by **Peter Richardson** (VK4TAA)

Well, the working bee held 26th May went well with nearly 10 members working on the mountain till around 2pm. On reaching the site we noticed the growth that occurred since the last working bee 18 months ago. The grass was 3 feet high and the hut was no longer visible from the road with all the trees regrowing to provide a natural green barrier.

We broke the group up into several teams to tackle the respective projects.

The grass and trees were trimmed to reduce the fire risk. The antenna array was changed to a diamond vertical whip for 70cm, and folded dipole for the 2 meter. Unfortunately the intended phased folded dipole array was not able to be installed due problems getting the SWR down to an acceptable level. This will have to be installed at a later date.

The Repeater shed roof which had developed a substantial dip in the middle, was lifted to be flat with the aid of some clever structural support, courtesy of the engineers working on that part of the project. They also came up with an ingenious plan to redirect water that was eroding under the slab of the shed. The plan came together when one of the group found an old water gutter and promptly dug it into the ground to redirect the surface water.

Both repeaters were left as is, with the 2 meter repeater using our backup Phillips 828 and the 70cm using the unilab radio. The replacement 2 meter radio is still on the work bench with some problems and the repeater manager - Peter VK4YRU advises he needs some time to resolve the problems.

In all a fantastic effort by the group with the completion of all projects ahead of schedule. My thanks to all who participated.

**QRM**



**----- Club second hand market -----**

Do you have any radio gear, components, bits and pieces you would like to sell or swap. You can advertise in QRM for free. Please call, email or send details to the QRM Editor, Alan (VK4KZ). Similarly if you want something you think someone might have, you can also advertise in QRM. Your Club is there working for you. For current items for sale/wanted, see below.

**FOR SALE**

**Coax cable** 100m RG 214 Brand new still in original box.  
no connectors fitted **\$200.**

**Coax cable** 100m RG 213 Good condition PL259 plugs fitted **\$100**

**Coax cable** Siemens type W42151 - A2 - xxx 50 ohm Half inch O.D.  
Fitted each end with male "N" connectors. Two lengths each 15m. and  
a double female adaptor to join them. New condition **\$60**

**Power cable** 100m 240 volt internal 3 core 2.5 mm sq and 7 strand  
earth wire New condition **\$120**

**Contact George VK4XY Ph 3285 5181 or [delgeo@star.brisnet.org.au](mailto:delgeo@star.brisnet.org.au)**

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**FROM THE CLUB**

**Lot 1** - Yaesu FT101ZD – in working order

**Lot 2** - Icon 211 – All mode 2m radio 10W Tx. – in working order

**Lot 3** - Icon 451 – All mode 70 cm radio 10W Tx – in working order minor cosmetic issues with buttons

The items will have a reserve set by the Executive & the bidding closes on 30 June 2007. Any items not being above the reserve price will be sold on Ebay or other means.

All items can be viewed at the club at any meeting. Please see one of the executive if you would like to check the gear out.

**Bids to Treasurer, Glenn (VK4FZ): [gb.wood@bigpond.net.au](mailto:gb.wood@bigpond.net.au)**

**A special welcome to new club members Harry (VK4DFG), Glen (VK4FLAN), Peter (VK4VW)**

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# CW PROCEDURE, TECHNIQUES AND ETIQUETTE

by **George Down (VK4XY)**

*Morse telegraphy is supposed to be the transmission of intelligence by means of Morse Code. Whilst I do not profess to be an expert, I guess that poor old Samuel Morse must have turned over in his grave many times listening to the Amateur Bands.*

As far as I know, CW is still based on a 3:1 ratio at about 15 W.P.M.

**An operator with a slow steady clean cut method of sending has a big advantage over the poor operator.** Good sending is partly a matter of practice, but good judgement and patience are just as important qualities of an operator as a "good fist". Operating knowledge of Standard Procedures and some "net know-how" as well as some contest techniques are necessary.

The best operators, both using "Phone" and/or "CW" observe certain operating procedures which are regarded as Standard Practice.

## 1. CALLS

VK4RC VK4RC VK4RC de VK4XY VK4XY VK4XY AR (a 3X3 call)

A long call is unnecessary and only causes frustration.

**CQ** is the general enquiry call. The length of repeated calls is carefully limited in INTELLIGENT Amateur operating. CQ is not used when testing or when the operator is not expecting or looking for an answer. Never send CQ "blind". **Listen to the transmitting frequency first.** If nothing is heard, then ask QRL?. (Is this frequency in use please?). It does no harm to enquire a couple of times before putting out a call.

**The Directional CQ.** To avoid useless answers and lessen QRM every CQ call should be made informative when possible. **Repeat, Do not answer such calls not applicable to you.**

eg CQZL CQZL CQZL de VK4XY VK4XY VK4XY.

Amateurs who do not raise stations easily may find that their sending is poor, their calls badly timed, or their judgement is in error. When conditions are right to bring in signals from the desired locality, you can call them with short calls at about the same frequency, with breaks to listen. This will raise stations with minimum time and trouble.

## 2. ANSWERING A CALL

After contact is established decrease the use of the call signs of both stations to once. When a station receives a call but does not receive the call letters of the calling station calling **QRZ?** may be used. It means, "By whom am I being called?"

**Note** QRZ should NOT be used in place of CQ

## 3. ENDING SIGNALS AND SIGN-OFF

The ending signals **AR K KN SK** and **CL** are often confused.

**AR** means end of transmission. It is recommended after a call to a specific station BEFORE CONTACT HAS BEEN MADE. eg VK4RC (x3) de VK4XY (x3) AR

**K** means to go ahead (any station). Recommended after CQ and at the end of each transmission during QSO when there is no objection to others breaking in. eg VK4RC de VK4XY K.

**KN** means to go ahead (specific station) and all others keep out. Recommended at the end of each transmission during a QSO, or after a call, when calls from other stations are not desired and will NOT be answered. eg VK4RC de VK4XY KN

**SK** means end of QSO. Recommended before signing the LAST transmission at the end of a QSO.  
eg VK4RC de VK4XY SK

**CL** means "I am closing down my station". Recommended when a station is going off the air to indicate it will not listen for further calls. eg VK4RC de VK4XY SK CL or SK VK4RC de VK4XY CL

**R** means transmission is received as sent. Use "R" only when ALL is received correctly.

#### 4. REPEATS

When most of the transmission is lost a call should be followed by the correct abbreviations to ask for repeats. When a few words on the end of a transmission are lost THE LAST WORD RECEIVED CORRECTLY is given, then send "**AA?**" which means "all after". This invites the station to repeat again all after the last word correctly received.

When a few words at the beginning of a transmission are lost then send "**AB?**", ("all before") and send the word which was received correctly.

The quickest way to ask for a fill in the middle of a transmission is to send the last word received correctly, a question mark, then the next word received correctly. Another way is to send "**BN**" (word) and (word).

Do not send words twice (**QSZ**) unless it is requested. Do not send QRM or QRN when you mean QRS

#### 5. GOOD PRACTICES

- (1) The letter "R" is often used in place of a decimal point. eg 3R5mhz or the colon in time designation. eg 2R30pm.
- (2) A long dash is sometimes sent for zero.
- (3) For best results send at a medium speed.
- (4) Send evenly with proper spacing.
- (5) No excuses for "poor or garbled copy".
- (6) Good operators do not anticipate.
- (7) "Swing" in a fist is NOT the mark of a good operator'
- (8) Unusual words are sent twice.

#### 6. GOOD SENDING

Think about your sending a little. Are you satisfied with it? You should not be, ever.

Nobody's sending is perfect, and therefore every operator should continually strive for improvement.

Do you ever run letters together, like Q for MA, P for AN or C for TR - especially when you are in a hurry.

Practically everyone does at one time or another. Tape record your sending and play it back to yourself. Can you read what you send? This will really show up your faults.

When conditions are poor don't keep repeating irrelevancies instead of the "meat of the message" eg do not send name, name, name. Send Peter, Peter, Peter. Similarly for QTH, QTH, QTH.

### 7. A FEW USEFUL TIPS

- (1) Never send a CQ at a faster speed than you can read.
- (2) Never answer a CQ by sending an answer at a faster speed than you can read.
- (3) If you receive an answer to your CQ at a slower speed than you are sending, slow down your sending speed to match the sender. (Tip (2) refers)
- (4) A high speed is fine when conditions are suitable and BOTH operators are up to handling it OK. It does not necessarily follow that because you are using a high speed you are a good operator.
- (5) REMEMBER The aim of the exercise is to get the message through OK without being asked for repeats. It is much quicker to use a slower speed with no repeats than using a higher speed and having to resort to repeating
- (6) Amateurs use abbreviations extensively and "Q" codes. Their usage "speeds up" the QSO and are easily learnt by good operating and using the recognised procedures.
- (7) If you make an error when sending, pause, send "E" eight times, then re-send the last word before the error word followed by the remainder of the message.

We all would like to be good operators. I hope this information helps.

**C U on the bands, 73 de Geo.....VK4XY.**



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## “Radios ~ you mean like CBs or something?”

by **Jayenne Conroy** (XYL VK4TGV)

This is the most common response people give when I tell them about Peter’s hobby, I mean passion, I mean obsession. Hell ~ it was the first thing I thought when he announced he was taking up radios. I had visions of the bad mullets and hotted up cars of my misspent youth; of “breakers” and “callsigns”, “10-21’s” and “lonely YLs”. Little did I know? We were (and still are!) renovating our Queenslander style home. Having raised it and built in underneath, I began to notice a collection of boxes with dials and knobs taking place, together with oddly shaped electrical components. Peter began to disappear down there regularly at times, participating in “skeds”. I found out later this stood for “scheduled transmissions”. Until then the only “skeds” I knew were sneakers.

These skeds seemed to be a lot more formal than the CB chats of my youth, lots of letters and numbers, callsigns and no handles like “Big Daddy” or “BJ & the Bear”. Unfortunately, some skeds were early on weekend mornings and as Peter’s radio room is under our bedroom, I would quite often be woken to the sounds of radio discussions! After I went down one Sunday morning and repeated, verbatim, the discussion being had – Peter bought a set of headphones. Ahh, headphones – the answer to every radio widow’s prayers.

The other essential to being a radio widow is the ability to overlook how much your house begins to resemble a lopsided Echidna. Aerials and antennas begin to sprout from all over the roof. There were even loops of wire all through the trees. Not only was Peter disappearing downstairs but now would often say “I’m going up onto the roof”, leaving me to hear bizarre thumps and bumps overhead. At one stage he even co-opted me (an avowed acrophobe) to come up and help him shift an antenna from the side of the roof. My role was to catch the antenna pole as Peter brought it down across the roof. Let’s just say you can’t always pick where an antenna will fall. The end result was the pole fell away from the roof and fell 2 metres down across the backyard. We now have a lopsided clothes hoist. Storms have also taken on a new significance, with various parts of antennas winding up in our backyard after them (increasing the lopsidedness of our Hills Hoist!).

However I have learnt that there are some upsides to being a “radio widow”. For starters, the ability to stay in contact no matter where you are. A couple of years ago we did a trek through the Simpson desert. Thanks to Peter’s knowledge and skills, we were able to regularly check in to the RFDS network and stay in contact, even when in the middle of the Simpson Desert. Even better, through the BCon Website we were able to printout an exact map of our daily journey and add that as a visual aid to our trip diary. I’ve also found the social side of radios to be a bonus. The Wednesday night trivia is a lot of fun (just in case you thought VK4TGV knew all those entertainment type answers – that was little ol’ me). I also recently attended the field day held out at Petrie and met many of the club members. Having looked around the setup (very impressive) and learnt a little about the competition, it was really interesting to see the different stations and how they were operated.

So, I’ve decided that if I can’t beat ‘em then join ‘em. Taking a deep breath, I’ve decided to try to study up and get my foundation licence. It should be interesting, and hopefully a lot of fun. So look out, in future there could be a new voice on the Skeds as Peter and I vie for the microphone.

**Signing off for now.....Mrs VK4TGV**



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## **HF Land Mobile in Australia**

*by Peter Schrader (VK4TGV)*

The HF Land Mobile service in Australia is quite unique in the world, in fact most other countries have looked to Australian innovations in this area. This is why Australian companies like Barret and Codan are the most dominate providers of HF radio equipment throughout the world. In my recent travels to the sub-continent, Middle East and Africa I observed just about every UN 4WD sporting a Codan 9350 Autotune antenna. I wrote this article as I sensed that most people I talk to at club meetings have no idea of the services available outside of the amateur allocations.

Most people now discount the value of such a radio service these days now that most Australian remote stations have satellite or microwave telephone service, and remote travellers have the option of three satellite phone providers (Globalstar, Iridium and Optus MobileSat).

However, HF Land Mobile is alive and well, and used by many organisations and people throughout Australia.

And HF Land Mobile is under threat from BPL just as much as the Amateur allocations.

An approved HF Land Mobile HF radio must meet several mandatory requirements, that is, easy to use, minimal controls, 125 W PEP, upper side band only, with an emergency call facility. Generally a Land Mobile radio has a channel select, volume, perhaps a clarifier, emergency call, on/off switch, and that’s it. At its most basic the antenna is a helical whip with taps. To change frequency you have to stop the vehicle and

manually change the tap to make the antenna resonant. A fancy Land Mobile has an autotune antenna, e.g. Codan 9350, with selcall and scanning. A Land Mobile radio HAS to be a rugged piece of kit because of the sometimes extreme conditions the radios are exposed to. Personally I have installed these types of radios in cranes, semi-trailers, 4WD's and a Mercedes. All vehicles went places people normally do not consider suitable for vehicles. There is an Australian standard stipulating the requirements, and the license conditions for the service mandate the use of a standard compliant radio. This Standard is the *Radiocommunications (MF and HF equipment — Land Mobile Service) Standard 2003*.

Now some background of the Australian HF Land Mobile service. John Flynn of the Inland, father of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, commissioned Alf Traeger to construct a powerful enough radio set easily used by anybody. This was the now famous pedal radio. The pedal driven generator provided the HV plate supply for the valve power amplifier, while batteries provide the other voltages. The RFDS still provides the "Mantle of Safety" so famously coined by John Flynn. It's hard to imagine how isolated the settlers in the early days of establishing the remote stations must have been, without some sort of communications to the outside world. The radio network, as well as providing medical service, also provided a "party line" chat facility on 2020 and other frequencies. Having listened to the chat in the evenings some 20 or so years ago, I can tell it was quite entertaining! I can't imagine what listening in may have been like in the early parts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The RFDS, or Flying Docs, provide emergency medical service via HF radio, activated via radio via a two tone alarm. This alarm is initiated via the Emergency Button, and is a mandated requirement of an Australian Standard Land Mobile HF radio. Calling a RFDS base via voice on a RFDS frequency will most often not get a response as the base station is scanning many frequencies, looking for the emergency two tone audio. The RFDS also offered traveller advice, telegrams and telephone connections. This is no longer an option for travellers, as most remote stations now have fixed telephones, hence the RFDS has stopped offering these services.

However, emergency calls to the RFDS are still answered, and if necessary medical help will be dispatched.

Before the days of satellite telephone, Telecom (now Telstra), offered a highly functional semi-automated telephone interconnect system called Radphone. This was very similar to the Marine VHF Seaphone service just recently made defunct. More modern HF radios were offered with Selective Calling (selcall), enabling the user to "dial" telephone numbers without requiring operator intervention. When the radio scanned the Radphone frequencies it was possible to receive telephone calls. The radio detected the base station calling via its unique selcall ID, and radio began to "ring". This selcall feature was also used to "call" other radios scanning the same frequencies, initially used primarily for commercial users of HF (mining, stations etc).

**VKS737** – This service was launched in 1992, under the title of the 4WD Radio Network. This non-profit benevolent association's charter is to provide information and emergency services to travellers throughout Australia. Regular scheduled call backs are conducted twice daily from each base station located at Charters Towers, Alice Springs, Adelaide, and Perth, on their allocated frequencies. While skeds are not happening members are free to contact any other members using selcall, and/or contact base stations for information, or in the event of an emergency obtain assistance. The service also offers direct telephone interconnects to many businesses, e.g. Birdsville Garage and the SA Police. The morning and afternoon skeds are brilliant listening when you are travelling, especially remote, as there is no better information on conditions than the actual guy bogged up to his axles! Personally, I was able to report on the condition of the Diamantina Developmental Road after 16 mm of rain. This information was used to advise other travellers, and to the disgust of others, that the Police had closed the road. Good thing too as the trip between Windorah and Birdsville should take no more than 4 hours. It took me 8 hours generally going sideways after that little bit of rain. Lesson learned. Outback roads are a hazard after rain, and very expensive for the council to grade. Respect the decision to close roads!

**Radtel** – This is a commercial enterprise working with VKS737. Generally this company uses the same base station locations to provide an Australian wide telephone service via your HF Land Mobile radio. Note that you need selcall capability to use this service. It's cool to call your friends from the middle of desert to say giddy! Serious application for me though as it meant that my work colleagues were able to contact me via

the message service. This works by having the radio scan the Radtel frequencies. Persons wishing to contact you ring Radtel, state the radio selcall ID and an approximate location. The Radtel base then attempts to contact your radio via selcall. You know that this happens when the radio starts to “ring”. The base operator passes the contact details on, and then you “telcall” the person.

**Bcon** – This company offers GPS tracking via your HF radio. The newer radios offer a GPS interface, in that they can accept NMEA-0183 messages from GPS units. Once the position has been collected by the radio, you are able to send this position using the selcall functionality. You can also request the position of another radio via the GPS Beacon feature. Back to Bcon ([www.bcon.com.au](http://www.bcon.com.au)), I asked this company if I could be a beta tester whilst on my latest outback adventure. I was able to send and receive short messages via the radio, as well as sending regular positions to their server.



The blue line, sorry, this is a black and white publication, shows our track throughout our trip. This service is not offered commercially yet, as they are still arguing with ACMA about the license conditions. The frequencies used by BCon are not approved for data use, hence they have more negotiations to endure with the regulator before they are able to go live.

So what do I use? A Codan 9323 and 9350 autotune antenna, shared with the Yaesu FT857 Amateur radio. I also have a Codan 8525 setup at home on a broadband dipole. This is technically naughty if I transmit on Land Mobile frequencies, but, the intent is that I have capability to help out in an emergency situation, so for the moment I listen in occasionally.

The up to date Land Mobile I would really love to buy is the Codan NGT. The head unit is the microphone, very compact, and the DSP makes SSB communications a lot easier for radio ignorant people. This model is compatible with the 9350 antenna, meaning a very easy retrofit to my existing vehicle installation. Oh well, nice to dream, but I don't have a spare \$3000 to spend on “another” radio.

Please note that Amateur radio equipment is NOT approved for the land mobile service, and it is a definite no-no to use Amateur radios on non-assigned land mobile frequencies in a non-emergency situation. To use RFDS frequencies you must hold an Outpost Non-assigned license. This license requires no exam; just give the money to ACMA and you get it! VKS737 and Radtel require membership payments to help them cover the significant license fees imposed on them by ACMA, and to maintain the base station network. Transmitting on their frequencies without a license issued by them, in a non-emergency situation, is illegal.

I hope this gives the reader an idea of the other real world application of HF Radio in Australia, remote travellers should seriously consider utilising this service. Besides, sat phones are boring.



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## Operating Portable – Moreton Island

by Peter Schrader (VK4TGV)

Following on the recent technical talks and experiences at JOTA, with open wire feeder, I decided to better utilise my now superfluous Yaesu FC40 antenna coupler whilst on a camping trip to Moreton Island. I installed the coupler on the cargo barrier behind the passenger seat headrest and coax fed it via a coax switch. This allowed me to either select the Codan 9350 autotune screwdriver for mobile or the Yaesu coupler for stationary portable use.

The stationary portable antenna was nothing complicated, about 20 metres of 300 ohm transmitting grade open wire feeder and two equal lengths (I'll measure it someday) of insulated multistrand wire. I do know the legs are much longer than what is required for an 80 metre dipole, so it meets the requirement of a multiband doublet. Making the antenna was the easy bit, getting the thing up nice and high and flat was a bugger of a job. Our campsite was very treed, which was great with the heat, but not much fun when trying to throw weights over limbs of trees. Never the less I persisted and overall it ended up about 12 to 15 metres off the ground and reasonably flat.

The theory was, because of the proximity to the salt water (20 metres at high tide), I would have an excellent ground plane. Well at least it tuned up on every band from 160 to 6 metres, which was nice. The Yaesu FT857/FC40 combo worked very well together (obviously), where the coupler remembered its previous settings when swapping bands.

I had arrived at the campsite on a Sunday, so I managed to get up on the club's 80 metre net on the 9350 only. Plenty of other things to setup first, like my tent! I spent the next day (Monday) fighting and swearing at the trees getting the dipole up. Monday evening I gave it a good run on the 80 metre DX window (75m), to no avail. I heard plenty of US stations, but they could not hear me; it seems 100W just ain't enough sometimes. A few local stations contacted me and gave excellent reports, which was encouraging and demonstrated at least the array radiated. The next night I ran into VK5ZSA (Jim) from Adelaide on the band. He called CQ with company, but again the US stations were unable to hear me over their noise floor. Maybe I can setup a portable 4 square next time?

The next few nights were disappointing; too many storms about and that dammed radar wiped 80 and 40 out for several more nights. Finally toward the end of the 10 days I heard a signal on 160, yeah well it was the WIA news broadcast which I received very nicely on AM. The callback after the news was very cool, my first contact on 160 ever, even though it was only Beachmere. The next night I participated in a 160 net, and got into the Hunter Valley with a 5-9 report. At least I did something new this time, but next time I'm taking an amplifier!

**QRM**

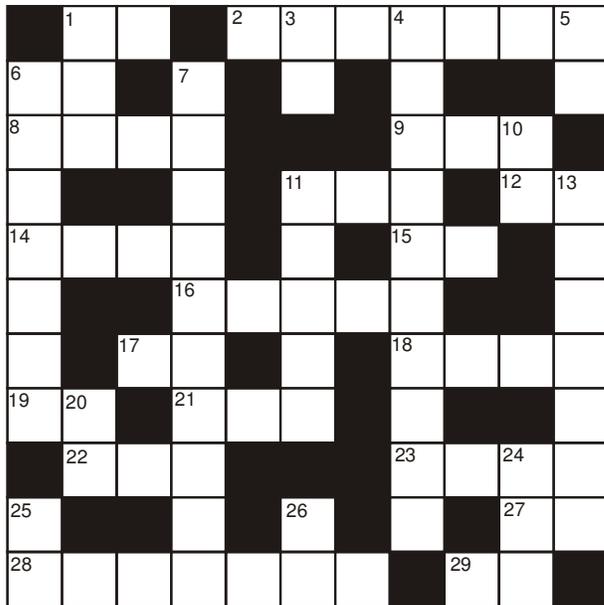
### ----- Special notice of a motion for the AGM -----

**That the club raise its fees from \$27.50 per year for single person to \$30 & for a family \$33 to \$35 with the date of effect being 1/7/07.**

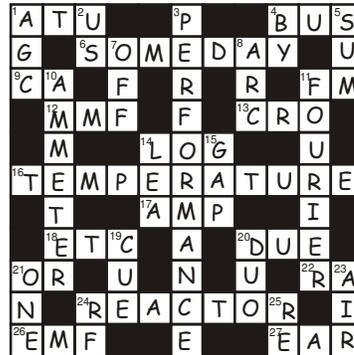
**It takes a lot to run the club & keep the facilities in order. I believe that we haven't raised the fees for several years. Donations always gratefully accepted.**

Peter Richardson, Secretary

**R & DRC Crossword No. 18** (Solution next QRM)



**R & DRC Crossword No. 17 solution**



**ACROSS**

- 1 Arsenic - chemical symbol
- 2 Unwanted spurious responses in receiver
- 6 Astatine - chemical symbol
- 8 Integer neither positive or negative
- 9 Light beam
- 11 Listener (abbrev)
- 12 Frequency range 30 to 300 kHz
- 14 Single channel (prefix)
- 15 Amplifier between mixer and detector in receiver (abbrev)
- 16 Item of cutlery
- 17 Direction away from earth's surface
- 18 Oscillations which are not damped are said to ----
- 19 Mercury - chemical symbol
- 21 Unwanted audio noise
- 22 Unity
- 23 Said after speech on air
- 27 Medical doctor's degree (abbrev)
- 28 All amateurs must have one
- 29 WIA magazine

**DOWN**

- 1 Consume food (past tense)
- 3 Technology relating to computers (abbrev)
- 4 Arrangement of two transistors to achieve high gain
- 5 Tin - chemical symbol
- 6 Horizontal coordinate of an object's position in the sky
- 7 Region of atmosphere useful for HF propagation
- 10 Young lady
- 11 Atmospheric disturbance
- 13 Diode bias resulting in current flow
- 20 Move
- 24 Electromagnetic emission (abbrev)
- 25 Chlorine - chemical symbol
- 26 Current flow in one direction (abbrev)

© aj&jh

----- Contest Calendar -----			
ANARTS WW RTTY	9/10 June	Portugal Day DX (SSB)	9 June
Asia –Pacific Sprint	9 June	All Asian DX (CW)	16/17 June
Marconi Memorial HF (CW)	23/24 June		

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## Notes from the Executive/Club Meetings

### General Meeting, 16/4/07

#### Reminder the membership fees due 1/7/07.

- Welcome to new members VK4DFG – Harry, VK4FLAN – Glen, VK4VW - Peter
- 2007 call books are in stock. Please let Glenn know if you want one.
- Foundation books available. Cost \$16.50. Get your copy from Glenn.
- WIA badges are also available from Glenn. \$8.
- Glenn will order 10 more foundation manuals & 2 Swainson advanced theory texts
- Special thanks to Eddie for generous donation to the club

### General Business

**Natural disaster planning / Jupiter's Community Fund Grant** – Peter VK4TGV – is over seas again & Reg is on holidays

**Redcliffe City award & the round Australia rally awards (ToBar award)** – John VK4WX presented the second Redcliffe City Award to David VK4FDRC. This & the ToBar awards are available to anyone so please have a go & tell your friends & contacts.

**Amateur Licence training courses** – 4 people have completed their foundation licence. Next Foundation course is expected after May as Alan will be away. Advanced licence course is near completion.

### General business from the floor

- **Redcap grant** – Peter advised that the RCC have advised that we are successful in obtaining \$7800 for the building of disable toilet & shower facilities. Peter advised that this is based upon a \$ for \$ spent by the club & council & that we plan to conduct as much work as possible ourselves to keep costs in check. We have Plumbers, builders & electricians in the membership. The Exec will now complete a detailed plan on the how, when & where.
- **The “ Big Shot”** was a huge success in launching ropes for the installation of antennas during the John Moyle. The only problem we got so good that we damaged the lead pole. After discussions with the manufacturer, we have decided to build a sturdier pole.
- Ces VK4VKC moved that a motion for the AGM be listed to increase the membership fees for both single & family by 50c. An amendment was moved by David VK4ZMG that the Motion be changed to Single \$30 & Family \$35. The amendment was seconded by VK4TAA & carried. This motion was then put to vote for approval to put the motion at the AGM. Carried.
- VK4FKEN & VK4FWEN (Wendy) thanked the club for its assistance in obtaining the Foundation licence.
- **Repeaters** – We will be holding a working bee in mid May to replace both the antennas & the 2 meter repeater at the repeater site. The working bee will also mow & remove the undergrowth around the building to minimise fire danger.
- Charlie asked if members would be interested in a visit to the Rothwell Radio telescope. All agree this would be great.. Charlie to investigate.
- Bevan asked if members would be interested in a visit to the Telstra historical museum at Albion. All agree this would be great.. Bevan to investigate.

- Mark VK4DGG mentioned that he was thinking of going to the WIA AGM at Parks & enjoy the extra activities which include a specially arranged Park's radio telescope tour. If you are interested in joining mark please let him know asap 07 5497 6946. This will be a fantastic event, one not to be missed so let Mark know ASAP....
- VK4WX raised that the club should take the opportunity to Purchase a HF for competition work. We used Glen's Icon 718 during the John Moyle which proved to be an easy & stable performer. Seconded VK4YZ – carried.
- Charlie & Ces laid some carpet in the radio room... Looks great guys but a bit smelly... Well done for taking the initiative! Glen advised he will bring down a steam cleaner & Ken offered to clean the carpet... Great team work guys....
- Ces – VK4VKC asked about a scanner / printer. Meeting asked ces do some checking on prices.
- Gal VK4FBYE asked about broadband access at the club. David advised we were keen but need to find a cost effective way that the club can afford... ie little \$ as our budget is small.
- Meeting closed at 9 pm follow with a lite supper. After the meeting George VK4XY & Bevan VK4BCM gave an informative talk on CW. We have some software which will be available plus George & Bevan will do a sched every Tuesday night at 8pm on 28.600 where members can listen & hone their CW reading skills. Everyone is welcome to join in... As /when they feel confident.

## **General Meeting, 16/4/07**

### **General Business**

- **Natural disaster planning / Jupiter's Community Fund Grant** – Peter VK4TGV – raised the need for a WICEN Co-ordinator position. Need to include this in the AGM. Currently working on Std operating procedures for the club.
- **Redcliffe City award & the round Australia rally awards (ToBar award)** – John VK4WX ongoing

### **General business from the floor**

- **Redcap grant** – The Executive is developing the plan for the toilets & showers & talking to contractors.
- The “ Big Shot” was upgraded by VK4FZ – beefed up the pole...
- **Repeaters** – We will be holding a working bee Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May. Meet at Wamuran petrol station on the Kilcoy side of town at 8am. We will be on the 2m repeater. Bring your tools, mowers, brush cutters saws, chainsaws etc. to remove the undergrowth around the building to minimise fire danger. We will also be dropping the antennas to upgrade both arrays & the building needs some work to fix leaks. We have 6 starters – we need some more.....
- Charlie asked if members would be interested in a visit to the Rothwell Radio telescope. All agree this would be great. Charlie to investigate. C/o
- Bevan asked if members would be interested in a visit to the Telstra historical museum at Albion. All agree this would be great.. Bevan reports this is doable. We plan the July tech talk night to meet at the museum at Albion (16/7/07). More on this next month.

- Ces – VK4VKC provided some information on a scanner / printer. Meeting endorsed Ces purchasing one to max \$120. Ces to also check on bulk purchase possibilities.
- George moved to renew the FISTs Membership. Carried. Bevan spoke about our club being a foundation member of this organisation.
- Ken reminded everyone of the Wednesday meetings. We have some children coming in from Caboolture special school. We meet every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday... 16/5/07 next meeting.
- VK4TGV moved that we sell FT101ZD, Icon 211 – 2m all mode & icon 451 – 70cm all mode. Seconded VK4TJF – carried. We will sell these items by ballot. All bids are to be to the Treasurer Glenn by 1/7/07. A reserve price will be set & if it is not reached items will be sold on Ebay.
- The CW net has started & George / Bevan reported good numbers joining in. A voice net occurs after the CW net to discuss issues or learnings. Tuesday nights at 7.30pm 28.600.
- The AGM will be held on 18<sup>th</sup> June. Normal June meeting 11<sup>th</sup> June.

### **CELEBRATIONS** (*March/April*)

**Birthdays:** Alison Pritchard (VK4HAD), 1<sup>st</sup> May  
Graydon Murdock, 7<sup>th</sup> May  
Steve Harris (VK4HRS), Ray Beutel (VK4UG), 30<sup>th</sup> May  
Robert Bradley (VK4KRB), 9<sup>th</sup> June  
Aubrey Bannah (VK4AI), 12<sup>th</sup> June  
Daniel Pritchard (harmonic VK4BLE, VK4HAD), 13<sup>th</sup> June  
David Rimmer (VK4ZMG), 17<sup>th</sup> June

**Celebrations:** Laurie (VK4BLE) & Alison (VK4HAD) Pritchard, 1<sup>st</sup> May  
Bevan (VK4BCM) & Sally McAleer, 10<sup>th</sup> May  
Alan (VK4KZ) & Judy Jenner, 13<sup>th</sup> June  
Sandy Tencatti (XYL, VK4TEN), Don Laing (VK4KZT), 23<sup>rd</sup> June

*Congratulations and best wishes to all above.*

**Apologies to anyone who has been left out. If you are not the Celebrations List, please give Secretary Peter your details as soon as possible. Peter is currently updating the list.**



### **Silent key – VK4DC**



**It is with sadness that we report the passing of Don Clark VK4DC. Don was a life (and I think founding) member of the Redcliffe Radio Club. Don was a keen CW operator, served on the WIAQ and was QSL manager for many years. He helped me and doubtlessly many other members while I was studying for my Amateur Radio licence. Don's son is Brian Clark VK4BC. He was laid to rest at the Garden Chapel at Albany Creek on Friday 25 April.**

**Vale Don**

*Supplied by Charlie VK4YZ*

   **NEW WEBSITE**   

The Club has a new website, the URL is <http://vk4rc.we.net.au>  
Thanks to Brad VK4FAAF and his ISP business we.net.au for his generous contribution to the club. If you have internet needs, Brad can help you, and you would be supporting a member and sponsor of our Club – see advertisement at back page: wenet.au.

----- **WIA Membership** -----

Please let the Secretary, Peter know if you have recently become a member of WIA. WIA membership of our Club members is important because we are able to derive insurance benefits. If you are not in WIA, please consider this seriously – it is our representative body.

**AMATEUR RADIO THEORY COURSES AT RECLIFFE**

If you would like to get your amateur license, upgrade, or do a refresher course, you can study for the theory, regulations and practical for Foundation, Standard or Advanced at Redcliffe Radio Club. See Alan VK4KZ, Laurie VK4BLE, Glenn VK4FZ, or anyone from the Executive. You don't have to be a Club member to participate. Special courses will also be arranged to prepare people for the Foundation License. Please let one of the above know if you wish to attend one of these. There may be limits to class sizes.

My contact details (Alan VK4KZ) are under "Contributions to Editor QRM", page 4 of this magazine. If you do contact me, please keep in touch, to make sure I don't forget (which unfortunately I am sometimes inclined to do). The dates for future courses are not known at this stage but will depend on demand at the time.

**MAINTAINING REPEATER RADIO EQUIPMENT**

The Redcliffe and Districts Radio Club's VHF and UHF repeaters are available for all amateurs to use, and all are welcome to use them, however, the radio equipment must be maintained and upgraded from time to time. If you would like to make a donation towards this upkeep, it may be forwarded to: The Secretary, Redcliffe and District Radio Club Inc, PO Box 20, Woody Point, QLD, 4019.

----- **Geary Fawk** -----

All club members wish Geary a speedy recovery and return to good health

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