

NEW ZEALAND & AUSTRALIAN AMATEUR RADIO



VOL. 5 NOVEMBER 2025

NEW ZEALAND & AUSTRALIAN AMATEUR RADIO MAGAZINE

Photograph DX World

NEW ZEALAND & AUSTRALIAN AMATEUR RADIO MAGAZINE

Email: ZL1GUD@proton.me

So why a FREE Amateur Radio Magazine?

I enjoy writing and have had over a hundred articles published, (mostly on adventure and survival) and having been a radio amateur since around 1990 as ZR1XZT, then ZS1GD and now ZL1GUD I believe that the amateur radio scene needs a kick in the pants and needs to attract more (young) people.

New Zealand Amateur Radio magazine is free and includes Product News, International Amateur Radio News, DIY projects, Interviews, POTA and SOTA news and DX Pedition news. Club news is for the clubs and will not be included in the magazine.

If you want to be featured or have a project that you want to feature then email me the details and we will include it.

Greg
ZL1GUD

Copyright Disclaimer

All content in this magazine, including text, images, graphics, and other materials, is the property of the respective authors and creators and is protected by applicable copyright laws. While this magazine is distributed free of charge, all rights are reserved unless otherwise stated.

This magazine can be distributed to any interested amateurs and clubs.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher or editorial team.

If you believe any material in this magazine infringes your copyright, please contact us immediately at ZL1GUD@proton.me

Note: Right click on text for link to website.

www.thehamshack.co.nz

This issue:

- Page 01 Introduction
- Page 02 Guohetec PMR171
- Page 03 From the Editor
- Page 04 Q_Codes
- Page 05 Parg Fest
- Page 06 DX On Air
- Page 07 DXpedition News
- Page 08 Flex Radio
- Page 10 AARL School Club
- Page 11 Competition Calendar
- Page 12 A to Z of the IC7300
- Page 13 Amateur Radio History
- Page 14 Telescopic Masts
- Page 15 Ballarat Hamvention
- Page 16 G90 Project
- Page 20 Understanding dB
- Page 22 JOTA Success
- Page 23 People ZL1PDT
- Page 24 Grenada DxPedition
- Page 25 People ZL3GMT
- Page 27 Morse Code KD2GUT
- Page 28 POTA Matt ZL4NVW
- Page 34 Rakaia Social
- Page 35 Kaikoura Social
- Page 36 Africa Correspondent
- Page 38 Rosebud Radio Fest
- Page 39 YL Raisa
- Page 40 Classified





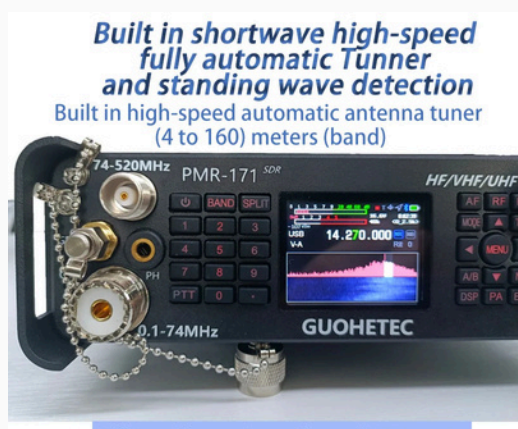
**LOTS of STOCK
is being shipped
and will be here
late November**

Perfect for SOTA & POTA

PMR 171



- HF, VHF & UHF
- All Mode incl. FT8 & RTTY
- ATU
- Waterfall
- Comes with a battery & charger
- CW decode
- Optional backpack
- Military style antenna options
- 20w HF & 10w VHF & UHF



Achieve fast tuning of standing waves



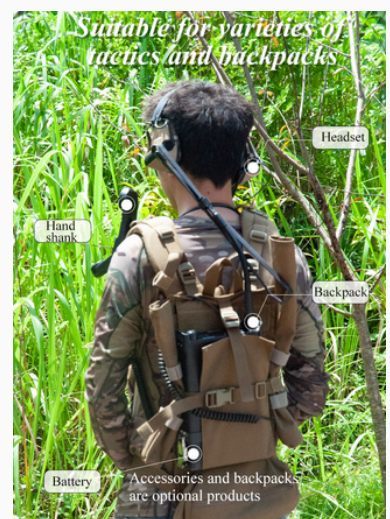
SWR detector quick view in All bands



\$1295.00
incl. battery
not an empty battery box



GUOHETEC



Suitable for varieties of tactics and backpacks

Battery Accessories and backpacks are optional products

www.thehamshack.co.nz

Official agents for New Zealand & Australia



From the Editor

Last month we had a great Radio Amateur Social and late October we held another one. this time on Rakaia Island. We have had some rain and crazy wind but it was good seeing the people and having a face to face QSO.

We also had East Fest in October, our bi-annual South Island get together. East Fest is a combination boot sale and convention with some very interesting speakers.

It does seem like POTA/SOTA is taking over among the newish hams and lots of us older hams alike, and every Saturday and Sunday will find a dedicated group either calling "CQ Parks on the Air" or the hams at home chasing them. 7.085Mhz and 7.090Mhz liven up and when propagation allows getting 30+ contacts is relatively easy.

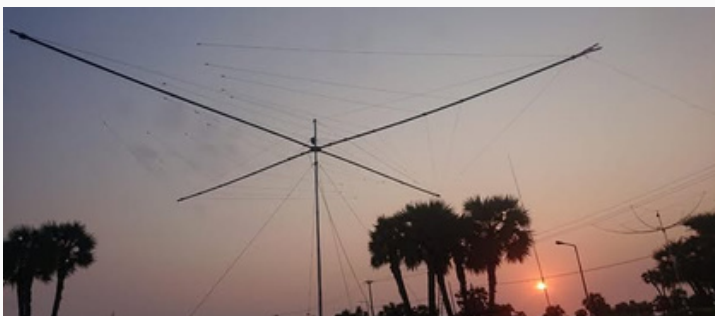
For me another biggie for October was that our samples radios arrived from Guohetec and we are now officially the Guohetec agents for New Zealand and Australia. This small 20w HF, VHF & UHF radios which include all the gadgets are going to take over the POTA and especially the SOTA market with the manpack configuration. The PMR 171 comes with a battery pack that clips on the radio so one small backpack is all it takes.

Thank you for all the contributions this month. New Zealand and Australian Amateur Radio Magazine is a community magazine so we do rely on your news, events and articles.

Also a big thank you to DX World for giving us access to their logo and articles and phot graphs from their website. We do ask for permission to use informations and photos and DX World respond quickly.

73's

Greg



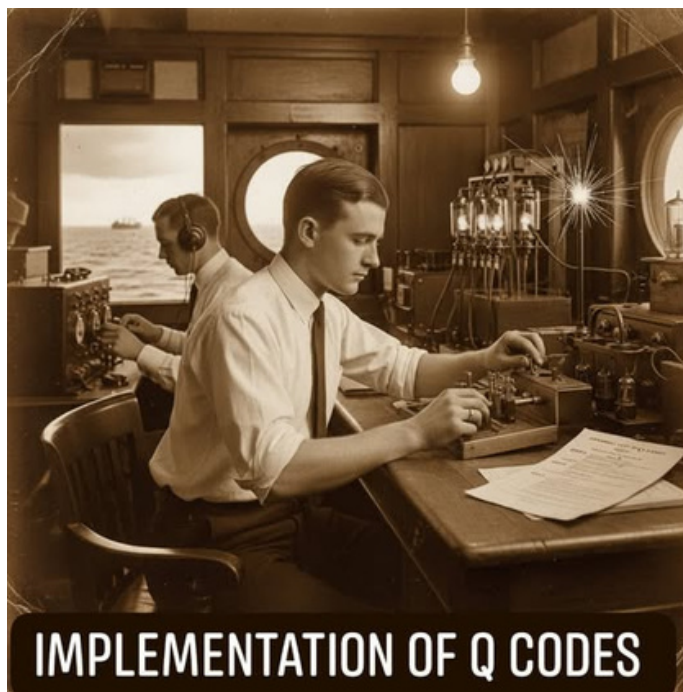
Let's get ready for one of the biggest contests next weekend: CQ WW DX SSB.

The rules are: Work everyone on each band. Your own country is a multiplier, but it does not count for points. Different scoring for North America than for the rest of the World. Try to get as many DXCCs and CQ Zones as you can. And most importantly, enjoy working in the crowded bands



www.thehamshack.co.nz

Q Codes



The Invention and Implementation of Q Codes in Morse Communication

In the early 20th century, long before voice radio became widespread, Morse code was the primary means of wireless communication across ships, aircraft, and telegraph stations. However, language barriers often made international communication difficult. A British initiative solved this problem by introducing the Q Code system, a standardized set of three-letter abbreviations beginning with the letter “Q.”

The Origin of Q Codes

The Q Code was first developed by the British government in 1909, primarily by the British Post Office, to simplify and standardize radio communication among ships and coastal stations. The goal was to create a common language that could be universally understood, regardless of nationality or spoken language.

Since English was not universally spoken by all radio operators, these three-letter codes helped operators quickly exchange important information using only Morse code. Each code represented a complete question or statement.

For example:

QRM – “Is my transmission being interfered with?” or “Your transmission is being interfered with.”

QRN – “Are you troubled by static noise?” or “I am troubled by static noise.”

QTH – “What is your location?” or “My location is ____.”

This made international communication both faster and more reliable.

Adoption and Expansion

By 1912, the International Radiotelegraph Convention officially adopted the Q Code system, and it soon became a global standard. It was expanded beyond maritime use to include aviation, military, and amateur radio communications.

The codes were grouped by function:

QRA–QRZ: General operational information

QSA–QSZ: Signal quality and strength

QTA–QTZ: Message handling and procedures

QRA–QRZ: Identification and station details

This organization allowed operators to instantly identify the meaning based on the prefix range.

During communication, the operator would send these letters followed by a question mark (if it was a query) or by relevant data (if it was an answer).

For instance:

“QTH?” → “What is your location?”

“QTH London” → “My location is London.”

This short format dramatically reduced transmission time, saving valuable bandwidth and minimizing operator fatigue during long shifts.

Q Codes in Amateur (Ham) Radio

With the rise of amateur radio (ham radio) in the 1920s and beyond, hobbyists quickly adopted Q Codes because they were concise and universally understood. Even today, Morse code operators and voice radio users continue to use many Q Codes, often mixed into casual speech.

For example:

“My QTH is Paris.”

“There’s heavy QRM tonight.”

Such expressions remain part of ham radio culture, linking modern operators with their historical roots.

Conclusion

The invention of Q Codes represents one of the most practical and enduring solutions in communication history. Created over a century ago to overcome language barriers, these compact three-letter groups made Morse code faster, clearer, and truly international.

Even in the era of satellites and the Internet, Q Codes continue to remind us of the ingenuity of early radio pioneers who turned simple dots and dashes into a universal language of connection.

Peel Amateur Radio Group

PARGFEST Swap-Meet
Saturday 7th February 2026



Mandurah Bowling Club
89 Allnutt Street, Mandurah WA.

Huge
annual raffle
draw!

PARGFEST
- WA's best!

Barista
Coffee
Hot Food

Lucky Door
Prizes

Doors Open:
0800 – Exhibitors & Sellers
0900 – 1230 Buyers
Entry Fee - \$5.00 per person
See you there amongst the raffles and bargains

Please check www.parg.org.au/whatsnew for last-minute updates.
Call-in to VK6ARG in PARG1 – AllStar & 146.850Mhz with 91.5Hz sub-tone
For more information call Peter 0432718026 or email parg.secretary@gmail.com

DX WORLD Flags for your DxPedition

DX World have sent us their high def logo and given us permission to print their flags for our events and DxPeditons
If you want the file (not flag) please email me and I will send the file to you.
I have just had 4 flags made 900 x 600mm for under \$10 each.

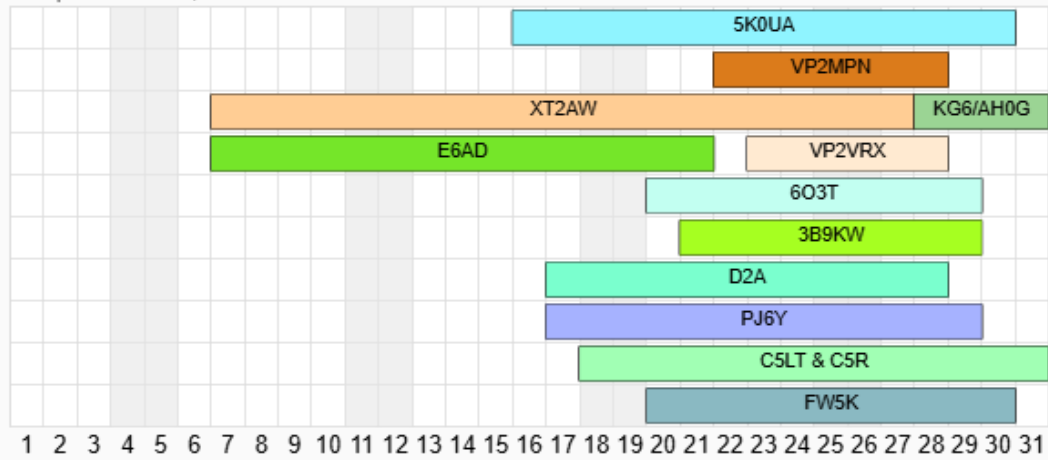
ZL1GUD@proton.me





DXWORLD.net
FEATURED DXPEDITIONS TIMELINE

Last update: October 20, 2025



Edited by MM0NDX

OCTOBER

© IK8LOV Max Laconca



Look out for Rikk, WE9G to be active from Palmer Peninsula, Antarctica as WE9G/KC4 in early February 2026. More info to follow on this one..

QSL via LoTW, QRZ, ClubLog & HRDLog.

*Rikk was recently on DXpedition to Guam. He has also been active as V6WG, WE9G/VY0, VP2V/WE9G, JW/WE9G, WE9G/KH8, V4/WE9G, FY/WE9G and soon from Bermuda as VP9/WE9G.



Courtesy of DXworld.net





SABA Island DXPedition 2025

The PJ6Y team has just surpassed 20,000 QSOs, marking a major milestone in their on-air operations. The young amateur radio operators are taking full advantage of excellent propagation conditions, sharpening their operating skills, and connecting with stations worldwide.

Operating around the clock, the team currently has three local and two remote stations active on the air. The on-island contingent of 14 operators is joined by approximately 30 young remote operators from around the globe — a truly international collaboration showcasing the next generation of DXers.

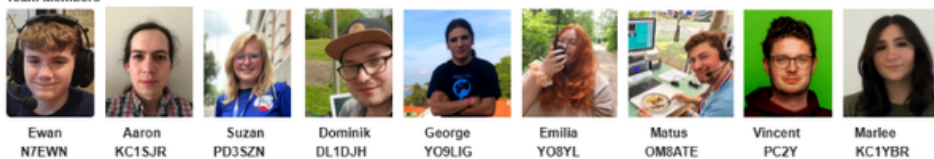
“We have a bit of antenna work to complete today in advance of our participation in CQWW SSB,” shared Gregg, W6IZT. “The weather has been somewhat of a challenge, with frequent showers and lightning. With heavier rains forecast from Thursday through our departure, we’re accelerating our contest preparations.”

Despite the challenging conditions, spirits remain high.

“What an amazing and awesome group of future DXpedition leaders!” said Glenn, W0GJ. The team extends a huge thank you to sponsors, supporters, and off-island Elmers, whose encouragement and contributions have made this adventure possible.

For updates, and donations please visit www.pj6y2025.com

Team Members



It's great to see 4 YL's in the DxPedition team

Band	CW	SSB	FT8
160M	1827.5 kHz		1836 kHz
80M	3527 kHz	3760 kHz	3567 kHz
60M			5357 kHz
40M	7027 kHz	7082 kHz	7056 kHz
30M	10103 kHz		10131 kHz
20M	14027 kHz	14210 kHz	14088 kHz
17M	18079 kHz	18130 kHz	18095 kHz
15M	21027 kHz	21285 kHz	21091 kHz
12M	24897 kHz	24932 kHz	24911 kHz
10M	28027 kHz	28305 kHz	28091 kHz
6M		50105 kHz	50313 kHz

In periods of slow activity standard FT8 frequencies may be used.



www.thehamshack.co.nz





Flex Radio

\$12,500 excl GST and import/transport costs

Features

Inside every AU-510M:

- 500W high-efficiency transmitter
- Integrated power supply (80–264VAC input)
- Automatic antenna tuner
- SmartSignal™ adaptive predistortion for enhanced spectral purity and reduced IMD
- Controlled Envelope SSB (CESSB): Up to 3 dB more talk power with reduced peak-to-average ratio—boosting signal presence without distortion
- MultiFlex™: Dual-operator capability with independent SmartSDR sessions—perfect for contesting, remote ops, or shared stations

With everything built in—transmitter, tuner, amplifier, power supply, and front panel—the AU-510M eliminates bulky gear and external cabling, delivering true plug-and-play power and performance.

Ideal for remote HF projects, the AU-510M's compact design, low heat output, and single-plug AC input make it easy to deploy in off-grid or hard-to-access locations—bringing serious power to your remote station with unmatched ease.

AU-510M 500W Integrated SDR Transceiver with Maestro Front Panel

The AU-510M redefines HF/6m operation—combining a full-featured SDR transceiver, 500W amplifier, power supply, and tuner into one compact, high-performance chassis. It's the world's first truly integrated 500W software-defined radio, engineered for today's most demanding amateur radio operators.

At the core is a groundbreaking 500W transmitter module operating at up to 80% efficiency, delivering more power with less heat, lower input demands, and a dramatically lighter footprint—all within the size of a typical 100W PA system.

The AU-510M includes a built-in Maestro front panel, just like the FLEX-8600M, offering full touchscreen control, responsive knobs, and an all-in-one user experience—no PC required. Whether you're in the shack, on the road, or operating remotely, the AU-510M puts advanced SDR performance at your fingertips.

The AU-510M is a single SCU (Spectral Capture Unit) radio—ideal for most operating needs. An SCU is the part of the radio that digitizes the RF spectrum, enabling slice receivers, panadapters, and digital signal processing. A single SCU supports up to 2 slice receivers and 2 simultaneous panadapters, simultaneously covering from 30 kHz to 54 MHz, offering plenty of flexibility for everyday operating, DXing, or contesting.





\$10,200 excl GST and import/transport costs

Power Genius XL

Amplifier Feature Highlights:

- 1.8–54 MHz coverage
- Full legal power 1500W (100% duty cycle ICAS), in all modes, up to 2000W
- First ever MEffA™ system (Maximum Efficiency Algorithm) control efficiency as a function of output power
- Fully SO2R capable — 70dB nominal isolation between exciter inputs
- Smart control of cooling — real-time settings of drain voltage, drive and fan speed for best thermal performance
- Exceptional spurious performance owing to diplexed filters for carrier and harmonics
- Ultrafast SWR protection
- Remote control with desktop application in LAN or WAN networks
- CAT, Band decoder, LAN interface for operation with other exciters
- The Amplifier is shipped without a power connector on the end of the power line. Customers are urged to work with their electrician to finalize AC power delivery.
- Shipping info: 24" x 12"x 19" 45 lbs



Tuner Genius XL

\$4,250 excl GST and import/transport costs

Tuner Specifications

- Tuning: Fully automatic and manually tuned operation
- Frequency Range: 1.8 to 54 MHz continuous
- Radio Interface: Works with all radios using Flex radio LAN, RS232, CI-V, BCD, Pin-to-Band (PTB), or use the built in frequency counter
- Alarms and Warnings: Low drive, Frequency Out of Range, Wrong band, and High power
- Matching Range: Up to 10:1 SWR. Resonant antenna frequency range memories will bypass the tuner automatically
- Tuning Time: Tuning solutions (2 to 12 seconds) are stored in memory automatically. Stored memory switching is 20ms
- Tuning Power Requirement: 10W – 200W

About School Club Roundup

School Club Roundup is an amateur radio event for clubs and individuals, especially those that are associated with elementary, middle, junior high, high schools, or colleges. The objective is to give young people experience, with on-air activity in a contest-like format, by exchanging QSO information with any amateur radio stations.

There are two School Club Roundups during each school year in October and February. Each 5-day event runs Monday through Friday from 1300 UTC Monday through 2359 UTC Friday. A station may operate no more than 6 hours in a 24-hour period, and a maximum of 24 hours of the 107 hour event.

October Session: The third full school week of October.

February Session: The second full school week of February.

October Session: October 20-24, 2025

February Session: February 9-13, 2026

All amateur bands except 60, 30, 17 and 12 meters are permitted.

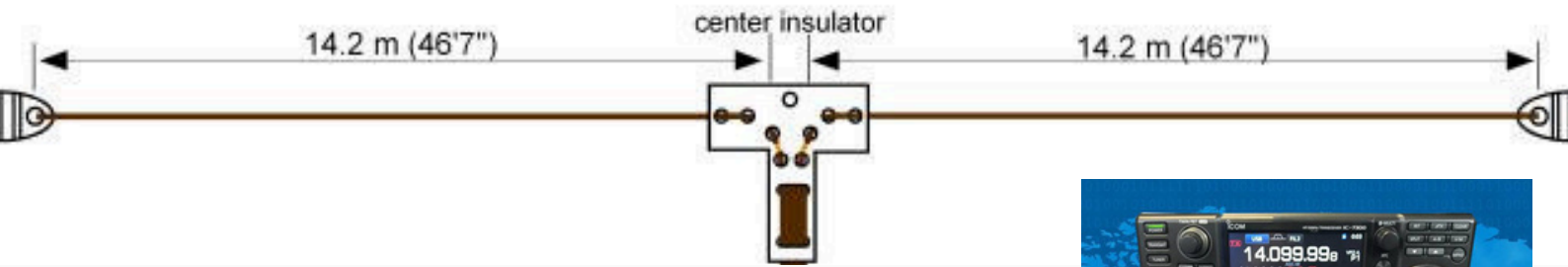
Repeaters are not to be used. Only recognized simplex frequencies may be used. U. S. A. examples include 144.90-145.00; 146.49, .55, 58; and 147.42, .45, .48, .51, .54 and .57 MHz. The national calling frequency, 146.52 MHz, may not be used. Similar restrictions apply in other countries.

Suggested HF Frequencies:

Phone (MHz): 1.855-1.865; 3.850-3.880; 7.225-7.255; 14.250-14.280; 21.300-21.330; 28.440-28.460

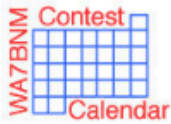
CW (MHz): 1.800-1.810; 3.530-3.540; 7.030-7.040; 14.030-14.040; 21.130-21.140; 28.130-28.140





COMPETITION CALENDAR

Competition consol
for the Icom IC 7300
available from
www.thehamshack.co.nz



Powered by ICOM

- Home
- 8-Day
- 5-Week
- 12-Month
- Perpetual
- State QSO Parties
- Log Due Dates
- Historical
- Alphabetical
- Customize
- Cabrillo Names

Follow @wa7bnmcalendar

October 12 - 19, 2025 October 20 - 27, 2025 October 28 - November 4, 2025

	Oct 28 Tuesday	Oct 29 Wednesday	Oct 30 Thursday	Oct 31 Friday	Nov 1 Saturday	Nov 2 Sunday	Nov 3 Monday	Nov 4 Tuesday
Classic Exchange, CW								
Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest								
QCX Challenge								
ICWC Medium Speed Test								
Phone Weekly Test								
A1Club AWT								
CWops Test (CWT)								
Mini-Test 40								
Mini-Test 80								
CWops Test (CWT)								
UKEICC 80m Contest								
CWops Test (CWT)								
CWops Test (CWT)								
NCCC FT4 Sprint								
Weekly RTTY Test								
NCCC Sprint								
K1USN Slow Speed Test								
YBDXPI FT8 Contest								
IPARC Contest, CW								
Silent Key Memorial Contest								
UK/EI DX Contest, SSB								
ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW								
IPARC Contest, SSB								
EANET Sprint								
High Speed Club CW Contest								
Classic Exchange, Phone								
K1USN Slow Speed Test								
ICWC Medium Speed Test								
OK1WC Memorial (MWC)								
ICWC Medium Speed Test								
RSGB 80m Autumn Series, Data								
ARS Spartan Sprint								
Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest								
ICWC Medium Speed Test								

www.thehamshack.co.nz

THE ICOM IC 7300



I recently purchased an Icom IC-7300, and after such an acquisition, the first thing I like to do is hit YouTube, to find out more on the rig.

I was pleasantly surprised to find a series of videos from Tom (WA2IVD) on the features of the 7300.

Some readers whom have their own 7300 may not have seen these videos.

Thinking they are well presented and worthy to view, it was useful to create a contents page to the YouTube URLs for my own reference. This now may be of interest to the readers out there.

John Linschoten | ZL2JTL
Titahi Bay Amateur Radio Club



Wayne County Amateur Radio Club Wayne County, Pa.

HOME ABOUT WCARC ACTIVITIES GALLERIES RESOURCES

IC-7300 From A to Z by WA2IVD

A very informative collection of videos covering the Setup and Operation of the

Icom IC 7300 Transceiver

Tom began producing these videos when his channel was named "Ham Cured Smoke".

In the summer of 2021, Tom changed the name of his channel to "Ham Radio A2Z" to better reflect where he would like to go with his channel and continued producing videos for it under it's new name.

All videos have been produced by and are the property of

[THOMAS APALENEK, WA2IVD.](#)

[Click on the image above & below and follow the link to see the videos](#)

I'm Tom. I was first licensed in 1974 when I was in high school. I was lucky enough to have some great Elmers in the ham radio Explorer Post that I belonged to. (Exploring is a branch of Boy Scouts). I have dabbled in many different facets of ham radio over the years. I have spent most of my active time doing public service and emergency communications. I worked many public service events, emergency drills, and events in Broome County, NY, where I grew up. In 2005 my wife (N2LZN) and I traveled to Mississippi, where we worked as SATERN volunteers after Hurricane Katrina. When we moved to California in 2009, I became active in the local SATERN group in San Bernardino County. Our two boys took their technician tests while we were in California. They are KJ6VQC and KJ6VQD. My wife, sons, and I also volunteered as Safety Patrol members for the Baker to Vegas race for several years. This is a 120-mile running relay race open to law enforcement. Teams come from agencies around the world to run in the race.

I have participated in Field Day many times over the years, first with the Explorer Post I was in and then with various clubs and groups. I really enjoy Field Day. I mostly enjoy the comradery of setting up, tearing down, and coming together with a group of people for a fun weekend. I also like the emergency preparedness aspect of the event. It is always a learning experience.

I enjoy contesting on a casual basis. I've participated in contests with groups over the years and also on my own for a number of them. When I participate on my own, it is mostly to hand out some points and for the fun of making contacts. I am not really into going all-out win. Although, it does look like something that might be fun to try someday.



AMATEUR RADIO HISTORY

Douglas Walters (G5CV) and fellow amateur radio operator George Jessop (G6JP)

In September 1934, Douglas Walters (G5CV) and fellow amateur radio operator George Jessop (G6JP) carried out a groundbreaking ultra-shortwave (56 Mc/s) radio experiment from a glider over Dunstable Downs, England. Their goal was to prove that reliable radio communication could be achieved for glider pilots, both for long-distance flights and training purposes.

On a clear Sunday, Walters and Jessop—fondly known as “the old firm”—arrived with a car packed full of 56 Mc/s gear. Among it was a custom-built 5-meter receiver, designed by Jessop himself. Compact for its time, the unit measured just 6 × 5 × 2½ inches, housed in an aluminum case with three valves. Power came from a 60-volt HT battery and a small sealed accumulator..



A HUGE VARIETY OF TELESCOPIC POLES

Telescopic poles	Application	Top diameter	Length	Cost
Spiderbeam 12m	Base or Field Station incl. collar and clamps	8mm	12 m	\$316.00
Spiderbeam 10m	Base or Field Station	6mm	10 m	\$239.00
Sotabeam Tactical 7m	Field Station or POTA/SOTA	4mm	7 m	\$265.83
Sotabeam Tactical 6m	Field Station or POTA/SOTA	4mm	6 m	\$175.45
Sotabeam Carbon 6m	Very light weight 5m useable. QRP lightweight antenna.	2.4mm	6 m	\$163.75
Sotabeam 4m	Very light weight. QRP lightweight antenna	2.2mm	4.1 m	\$84.75

*The lightweight masts can support very lightweight wire antennas only. They cannot support balun/unun/dipoles. Ideal for helically wound verticals

SPIDERBEAM

12M
HD INCL CLAMPS & GUY COLLAR



SPIDERBEAM

10M
HD



SOTABEAM

7M
HD



SOTABEAM

6M
HD



SOTABEAM CARBON ULTRA LIGHT

6M
VERY LIGHTWEIGHT APPLICATIONS



SOTABEAM

4M
VERY LIGHTWEIGHT APPLICATIONS



WE HAVE LOTS OF STOCK OF ALL MODELS



www.thehamshack.co.nz

AUSTRALIAN HAM EVENTS



Ballarat Amateur Radio Group Inc. (BARG)

HAMVENTION

Sunday February 1 2026

At the Ballarat Polocrosse Club's Facility,
207 Airport Rd, Mitchell Park

Display and Sales (setup from 8am on the day)

Trade Table \$20.00 includes one admission,
(Space for 70+ tables, this is a big one!)

General Admission \$ 10.00 (accompanied under 15 free)

STRICTLY 10:00 AM START

BBQ and drink will be available on the premises

Enquiries and up to date details: BARG on the web www.barg.org.au

2025 HAMFEST CALENDER											
JANUARY	4	5	11	12	18	19	24	25			
							REAST	Dural			
FEBRUARY	1	2	8	9	15	16	22	23			
		BARG			PARGFEST	WESTLAKES		Werribee			
MARCH	1	2	8	9	15	16	22	23	29	30	31
	Yarra Vally						SCARC Car Boot			EMDRC Car Boot	
										Dural	
APRIL	5	6	12	13	19	20	26	27			
			Redfest								
MAY	3	4	10	11	17	18	24	25	31		
		WIA Bendigo		Moorabbin				Dural			
JUNE	1	7	8	14	15	21	22	28	29		
		ORARC	ORARC								
		Mt Gambier	Mt Gambier								
JULY	5	6	12	13	19	20	26	27			
	GGREC							Dural			
AUGUST	2	3	9	10	16	17	23	24	30	31	
							Tokyo	Tokyo	Redcliffe Car Boot	NCRG	
SEPTEMBER	6	7	13	14	20	21	27	28			
			Sunfest	Shepparton				Dural			
				EMDRC							
OCTOBER	4	5	11	12	18	19	25	26			
								AREG			
								Westlakes			
NOVEMBER	1	2	8	9	15	16	22	23	29	30	
				Gold Coast	Mienna	SPARC		Illawarra		Dural	

School Holidays
 Long Weekend

IT'S IN THE CAN!

DIY YOUR G90 INTO A GO-ANYWHERE AMMO CAN RADIO Carmel Morris VK2NO



I love going portable, often at local parks and remote locations. However inevitably something is forgotten; antenna leads, mic, key, power cables, connectors, battery, etc. Most folk use backpacks, floppy bags, or Pelican-style cases (Hamgeek have a nice generic radio/G90 case with panel facia for around \$300 –but doesn't hold a battery). I like to have most things in one place for quick setup so as to just focus on the antenna, be it a reel-out end-fed dipole or telescopic vertical such as the MFJ1979 et al.

Quick digression; a couple of years ago I built a copper-wound loading coil for less than \$10, using junk parts and a simple alligator wander lead. The commercial coils that can cost hundreds use steel windings which are great but I found the copper to be somewhat less resistive. Yet I still wanted a radio I could connect directly to the base of a telescopic antenna (when feeling too lazy to put stakes in the ground, guy lines etc.) with similar mounting much like the PRC Clansman-type military radio a few in our club have. Hence the ammunition can aka bullet box idea had some merit and the G90 has an internal antenna matcher for unruly verticals, (though prefer resonant antennas where possible).

To start, all I had was an old 50 caliber ammo can. Recently, Mark at qslcomms.com had a special on the G90 so I purchased one to use for my all in one field radio, which would be a change from my old home-built four-watt NE602 transceiver or my uSDX five-watt. I thought the ammo can would be a great opportunity to provide my G90 a convenient home; a ready-to-go radio box without the messy setup.

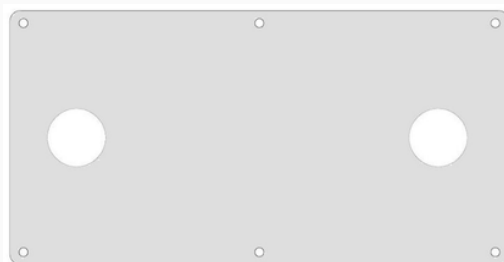
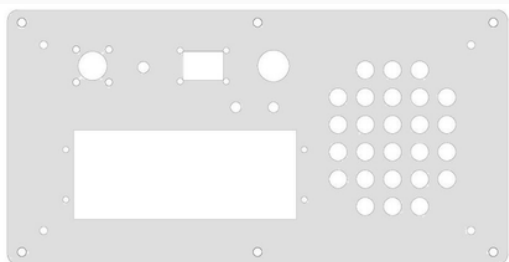
The concept of radios built into ammunition cans, or 'hammo cans', for portability has been around for years with many radios built into the case and fixed by brackets etc. The only G90 in-a-can I know of is by a fellow who made a beautiful wood-crafted panel for his G90. I wanted something a little different; a completely separate module that can be pulled out when necessary for swapping out batteries, changing/adding connections and so on.

I decided to design the module using all metal components for better shielding and durability. My old 50 caliber ammo can lay around the garage for years and it has loosely held radios in the past. It required a cleanup and re-paint but you may not need to do this as there are plenty of neat units for sale online; ex-army surplus and new.

The dimensions of my ammo can are common; 25cm high x 28cm wide x 15cm deep. This allows room for the radio, battery, and enough room to accommodate the control head and underlying connectors.

Essentially, this project is ideal for many radios having remote control heads. The G90 has mic and headphone connectors on the side of the control head. If you have a Yaesu for example, you'd need to add a RJ45 panel mount connector and 3.5mm panel sockets for headphone, key, etc., (which I did for the Xiegu COM and KEY ports).

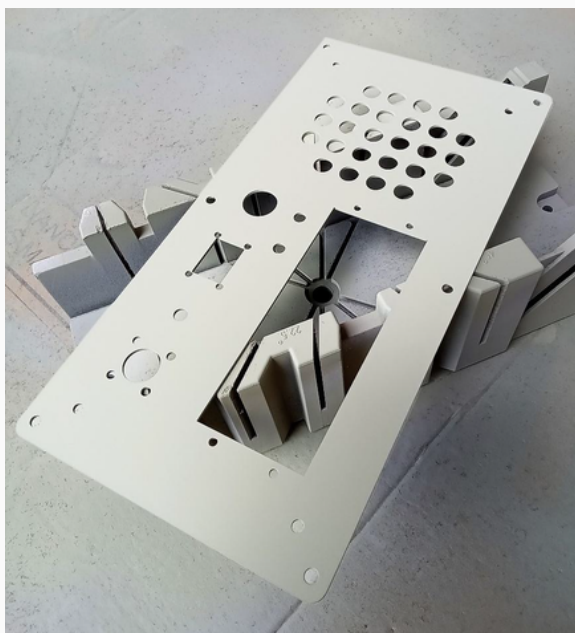
My own example design in the following diagram was done in SolidWorks but can also be done in Visio as there are no dimensionality requirements (other than the angle brackets to affix the control head, which can be made from junk parts if desired).



Basic three-tier design using threaded posts to hold it all together. Use as a guide only for your radio. Measures 276 x 140mm for a neat fit inside the ammo can. The lower two panels have holes where you can feed through cables. Make them any size and shape to suit your needs.



A lithium battery sits nicely on the bottom plate. Double-sided tape is used to hold the battery though brackets may be better.



Front-facing laser-cut panel spray-painted in etch primer, then sprayed in Army Green and sealed with clear coat. I could have had it powder-coated but that would have cost more. Most of the mounted components are fixed using hex screws (a hex key is less likely to slip off and scratch the paint when compared with a Phillips screwdriver).

My G90 already weighs 1.62 Kg. Although somewhat heavy for backpack POTA etc. as some folk say, a G90 is a lot heavier in the ammo can. My aim is for mostly local field work though it could be taken anywhere at a total of around 7 kilos, still lighter than a PRC-320 Clansman at around 11 Kg (the soldiers carrying those in the Falklands War were hardy).

While mine isn't a backpack radio, it has enough weight to sit on the ground or a bench and have the telescopic whip antenna mounted straight to the radio panel (plus on a binding post the required counterpoise similar to what the military did with their field radios, having lengths of ground wire trailing from the radio).

Getting there; the stock G90 front handles were mounted in reverse which conveniently aligned to the threaded posts so as to zip tie securely. Note: the cable running to the head unit may pick up some multiplexing noise from the display driver board. A couple of ferrites is recommended.

Top view. A 3D-printed Anderson panel connector was used, though similar commercial ones can be found online.





Top view. A 3D-printed Anderson panel connector was used, though similar commercial ones can be found online. This G90 is the latest version having Anderson connectors and better cooling with added vents. Some folk add heat-extraction fans to their ammo cans for various radio models. I found no need for them here as the radio stayed cool (and I rarely use the full 20 watts). I did however include a 'speaker opening'; while an external speaker could be included, I found no need as the G90 speaker sat below my speaker 'vent', allowing decent air flow and this revision had much-improved sound quality. Interesting aside; on my version of the G90 control head, there is an impedance switch on the underside to make the external headphone socket into an external speaker-out. Neat.

Finally I cut out some cardboard stencils and sprayed my call on one side of the ammo can. It slipped a little, but then it is amateur radio.



The following table provides the BOM (Bill of Materials) that would mostly apply to this type of project.

Quantity	Description
1	Ammunition can 25cm H x 28cm W x 15cm D
3	Laser cut 1.4mm mild steel plates
6	M4 threaded posts (one was cut to fit the radio; you may not need to)
12	M4 dome nut caps (for top panel, and used as 'feet' for bottom panel)
24	M4 nuts
18	M4 spring washers
1	Right-angle (UP-facing) RJ45 adaptor if required*
1	Panel-mount Anderson connector
1	SO239 panel mount antenna socket
1	Coax jumper from SO239 to radio
1	Binding post for ground
1	Master switch
2	Handles to remove module when needed (module is not bolted to can)
2	Right-angle brackets to mount G90 head unit
1	8Ah or better battery measuring approx. 12 x 6 x 8 cm (Wattcycle 12.8v nominal used (specified), sits around 13.3 volts settled after charge)
Leads	Various leads: power to battery from Anderson panel mount and power from battery via switch to radio
Zip ties	Where needed to secure radio
Mic bracket	If required, for non-OEM microphone handset etc.
Speaker mesh	Use anything you like (I used aluminum fly screen, painted in Army Green and affixed under the laser-cut grille)

*It was a little difficult pulling out the mic plug, so I made a right-angle flat tool to help lift it out. You can also purchase a right-angle (UP-facing) RJ45 adaptor.

All installations will differ and you may wish to vary my panel design to your requirements. For example, you may prefer to use an external battery only. You can have an internal and switch to external, or just external if you want a shorter height box to mount the radio (in which case the threaded post lengths will differ).

Allow around five centimeters internal room from uppermost radio panel to top edge of ammo can to allow for radio head height so the lid closes properly. In this space I've been able to add a five-meter feedline, a magnetic CW key, and the Xiegu standard mic within the unit, lid down. This makes it a handy all-in-one box. However, I did add a steel bracket to one end of the ammo can to hold the PRC look-alike knockoff military handset.

All up this has been a very successful experiment in radio portability on a minimum budget, the only major expense being the panel laser cutting, costing around \$85.00. If you have a 3D printer, I believe there is an ammo can G90 frame design though completely different from mine; a quick search will find it, but I do prefer all-metal for durability.

Carmel Morris VK2NO

Understanding dB in Ham Radio



Understanding dB in Ham Radio — Made Simple!

Ever wondered what all those “dB” numbers really mean when you’re tuning your rig or checking antenna performance?

Let’s break it down.

“dB” stands for decibel, and it’s not a fixed unit like volts or watts — it’s a ratio. We use it to compare two power levels, signal strengths, or gains. Why? Because signals in radio can vary a lot, and using dB makes it easier to handle huge differences without writing out tons of zeros! Here’s the cool part:

A +3 dB increase means you’ve roughly doubled the power.

A -3 dB drop? You’ve lost half the power.

+10 dB? That’s 10 times more power.

-10 dB? You’re down to one-tenth!

In ham radio, we use dB to describe:

Antenna gain (how well your antenna focuses energy)

Filter attenuation (how well unwanted signals are reduced)

Signal reports and amplifier performance

So when someone says their antenna has 6 dB of gain, they’re saying it delivers 4 times more power in a given direction compared to a reference antenna. Pretty neat, right?

Remember: dB doesn’t tell you absolute power — it tells you how much more or less power you have compared to something else.

73 from PY6CJ - João Grisi

Also see <https://www.satsig.net/Inb/db-calculator.htm>



ALINCO



3RD CONSIGNMENT HAS ARRIVED!

**WE ARE THE OFFICIAL AGENTS FOR
NEW ZEALAND**

Alinco was established 55 years ago and manufacture a range of VHF and UHF radios as well as Power Supplies.

Radios include DMR as well as VHF, UHF and Dual Band



IP67
DUAL BAND +
RECEIVE VHF AM AIR BAND
& FM BROADCAST



60 WATTS HIGH POWER



15 HOUR BATTERY TIME
WIDE/NARROW FM TX/RX - PROFESSIONAL-GRADE VOICE COMPANDOR
RECEIVE VHF AM AIRCRAFT BAND AND FM BROADCAST



8 WATTS HIGH POWER



DMR



70 WATTS HIGH POWER



DMR



www.thehamshack.co.nz

JOTA 2025 SUCCESS!



On 18 October 2025 GCARS hosted a JOTA event for the Girl Guides from the Gold Coast. There were 17 Guides and 7 leaders.

The programme included learning how to solder, put together an electronic kit plus getting on air and making a QSO in order to earn a badge. Unfortunately, the HF bands were not cooperative this day so the Guides were setup on the 2 meter band where they were guided by Ashleigh, VK4DRA. Kaye, VK4VKS, helped by making many contacts with the Guides and Ken, VK2KEN was in contact via Echolink whilst on holiday in Rotorua, NZ. The Guides were so happy to be able to communicate over the radio including having a QSO from New Zealand. The guides were coached by Ashleigh to use proper phraseology and proper use of the radios. Craig, VK4AHC, setup a hotspot on his phone to link up with guides in other locations participating in JOTA event.

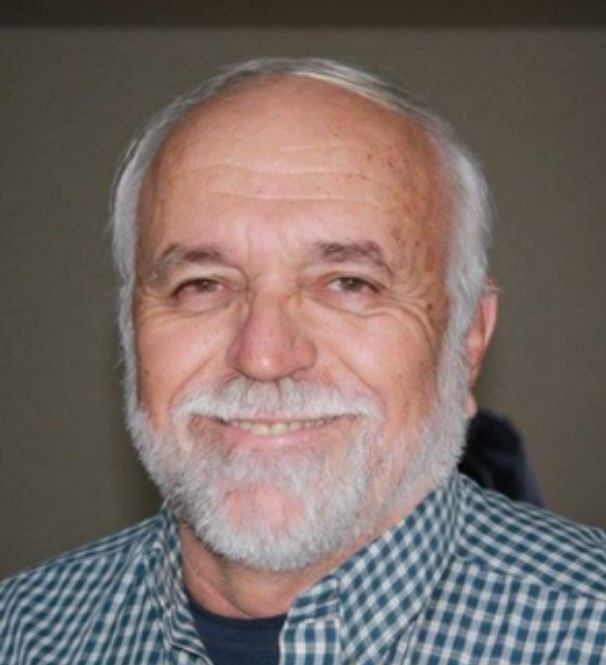
In the kit-building stage the guides were coached by Aidan VK4APM and John VK4BJT in the proper method of using a soldering iron and how to solder components to a circuit board. Happy to report there were no burns.

These types of events are how GCARS gives back to the community plus, some of the Guides might decide to become licensed amateur radio operators in the future. This was a team effort to make this event a success. Members that helped with the setup: Ashleigh, VK4DRA Aidan, VK4APM, Craig, VK4AHC, John, VK4BJT who also cooked the sausages. Matt, VK4TRK and Sholto, VK

4CSB helped with the pack up after a long day. Thanks to Ashleigh for photographing and reporting the event.

secretary@gcars.org.au





PEOPLE

ZL1PDT/ ZL1LIG / ZS1PDT PIETER DU TOIT

I asked Pieter if I could include him as our first radio amateur profile and he said yes. I met Pieter many years ago, I guess around 20 to 25 years ago. I was ZS1GD and he was ZS1PDT and we did lose contact for a while and then reconnected in New Zealand.

Pieter and his wife Petro, originally came from South Africa, this being the second time they have lived in N.Z. Pieter (pronounced as we would spell Peter) had the call sign ZS1PDT in South Africa and obtain ZL1PDT here in NZ.

The common letters to both call signs relate to the business they owned and operated in S.A. for about 10 years, "Plant, Dozer, and Tractor Services" = 'PDT'. They closed the business down when they first came to NZ in 2003. Pieter is a qualified Diesel Mechanic, specializing these days in hydraulics, mostly on heavy plant.

He grew up in Boksburg, about 25 miles from Johannesburg and was fascinated with radio from an early age. Inheriting an old and defunct Philco multiband valve radio from his father at about 11/12 years of age he "fiddled" with it and got it going which got him hooked on the hobby. His radio progression was, like many of us, via CB in his earlier days which proved very useful travelling around with his servicing work. He had wanted to become a Radio Mechanic but as math's was not one of his better scholastic subjects, he decided instead to become a Diesel Mechanic and has spent the greater part of his working life in that field, servicing mostly heavy plant and machinery, tending to specialize in Hydraulics.

As a young man (18 yrs. old) he, like other lads of his age, was conscripted into the S.A. Defense Force. He worked mainly on Tanks and Armored Cars, but had the opportunity to become involved with the installation of communications equipment in these vehicles. During this period, Pieter met his wife to be, Petro.

At Pieter and Petro's QTH in Ngongotaha, he mainly works the 20-40-80m HF bands, exclusively on Phone, also VHF and UHF both mobile and base. His antennas (which he has a strong leaning towards constructing and experimenting with) include a multiband Hex Beam brought with him from SA, a 40/20m trapped wire dipole, an 80m dipole connected to a Yeasu FT-101ZD, Icom IC 707, IC 706mk2, IC 7100, Icom ic-705, IC 229 mobile, FT 690R on 6m (2.5 watt) Maxon ant, VHF Slim Jim, and a UHF modified TV antenna. He also has a couple of different sized magnetic Loop antennas and plays around with EFHW's.

His Hex Beam has a history, being the antenna that was used on Bouvet Island in 2000 with the late (Chuck Brady).





J38W – GRENADA

[UPDATE] by Jamie, M0SDV

I am thrilled to announce that preparations for my upcoming DXpedition to Grenada, designated as J38W, are well underway. With just 33 days to go until my departure, I've ramped up my preparations in recent weeks. My journey began in the picturesque Shropshire countryside, where I dedicated a day to set up the masts I intend to use. I meticulously arranged the guy ropes and laid the foundations for the antenna itself. I am happy to share that the hex-beam has been successfully erected and is ready for operation.

In the coming days, I plan to conduct a final preparation session outdoors to complete the low band transmit and receive antennas, ensuring they are ready for packing.

Back at the shack, I have taken the time to organize all my equipment. I've set up the Icom IC-7300, amplifier, and laptop, connecting them together and conducting successful test QSO's in CW, SSB, and FT8. I'm pleased to report that these tests were successful, and this part of my equipment has been neatly packed away in my suitcase, set for transport to Grenada.

I'll be staying in Grenada on the North side of the island, until 3rd December 2025, where I intend to make QSO's primarily in SSB and FT8 on all bands ahead of the CQWW CW contest. During this time, you will also find me on CW across the WARC bands. During CQWW CW, I will be operating in the Single Operator – All Band category using high power.

I look forward to sharing the experience of J38W with everyone and can't wait to get on the air from this beautiful location.





MIKE ZL3GMT

OXFORD, CANTERBURY
LICENSED 2024

It was a dark and windy night the guy ropes were starting to rise and fall with some violence as the antenna mast twisted with the swirling wind gusts, the sun had just set and it was almost pitch black as I climbed up the ladder to lower my antenna yet again! It had been down at ground level for 3 days now, due to the strong spring Canterbury Nor-west winds, no international DXing tonight, again.

Amazingly I have had some contact QSO's in the Far North Island approx 5 or 600km away with the antenna, a 40 and 80M dipole, barely above or partially on the ground.

Anyhow, that's my intro my name is Michael McCarthy (ZL3GMT), a new ham from Oxford North Canterbury here in the South Island of New Zealand. Oxford township is located approximately 50 km (or 30 Miles) north west of Christchurch which our largest city in the south.

I had wanted to become a licensed Ham Radio Operator for many years having been fascinated with radio and the magic of how it worked from a very young age. I remember listening to the children's stories on the radio, this was before the days of a television in every home. I had built a crystal set as a youngster and even had an old reel to reel portable tape deck that I had tweaked to list to radio "I" from Auckland City late at night, under the bed covers when I was supposed to be asleep. In short I had the bug.

Cutting a long story short, life got in the way and even though I was still interested in amateur radio, I could never get around to the study required so put the dream of building radio antenna's and talking to people in distant foreign shores, on the back burner for a very long time. A close neighbor who I knew was a ham operator, Brian ZL4WX, and I had a conversation in which he suggested (yes it's all his fault), that I could easily pass the license test, all I had to do was to go to the Christchurch Amateur Radio Club "Hamcram" course, do the study and pass the test, this was only 3 weeks away. Then to my surprise my wife, Linda (ZL3GWX) said that she would be interest in getting her license as well, that was a surprise!

The end result we are both now licensed hams me since November 2024 and Linda from January 2025. We are active in two of our local radio clubs Branch 68 in Rangiora and Branch 05 located in Christchurch.

It has been an interesting journey so far, I am strongly interested in the technical aspects of the hobby, the antenna systems and the electronics of the transceivers, this includes the older valve (tube) radio's and HF amplifiers. In fact I have decided to re-purpose my existing sleep-out as my new "radio shack" and it appears now that it is much to small for the collection of gear that I have begun to accumulate!

To me, an older piece of radio gear's interest actually extends beyond the mere technical capability's of the hardware, it's in the story of it's prior owners, the thousands of hours that it may have been the pride and joy of some earlier ham, it's real value is its history.

In other word's I like both the old and the new.

My current radio collection includes the humble Baofeng UV-5R Handheld, my first purchase as a licensed ham but of course it was not powerful enough to reach all the way to Christchurch to access the local vhf repeater on 145.625Mhz so I had to build a Yagi antenna recycled from and old television antenna.

Following that, on the advice of yet another very helpful ham Phil ZL3CC, I then went on to invest in a Xiegu X6100 10W HF portable transceiver followed by a Xiegu G90 20W - both very useful rigs.

You can see where this is going but it turns out they work well with a better antenna so naturally an antenna project was on the cards.

My current main antenna is a home brew twin dipole antenna tuned for the 40M an 80M bands with separate coaxial feed wires one for each dipole.

It is supported at a height of approx 9 meters above ground level on a guyed mast made from 16mm diameter gazebo pole sections stacked on top of each other.

This antenna, while fairly simple and basic, has allowed me to made distant (DX) contacts with hams in Spain, Germany, Italy, Australia and Uruguay to name a few.

It's an absolute buzz when you finally make that elusive contact on relatively low power compared to some of the larger International stations running 1KW or more of transmitter power.

I have future plans for many more antenna's in the pipeline. These include verticals, fan dipoles, yagis's ,quads, moxon's, loops, delta's and more.

Of course more power is always handy. My transceiver line up now includes a vintage Yaesu FT101 valve/tube radio, an Icom IC-735, an Icom IC-7300 which is currently my main rig.

My current amplifiers which are intended to be used when contacts may be hard to make include an Ameritron AL-84 approx 400w, an Ameritron AL-811 approx 600w and a Collins 30L1 1KW approx. the Collins has yet to be tested. These are all valve/tube type older linear amplifiers. I also have some other second hand home brew amplifier projects for build, repair or restoration in the queue.

For new hams, you don't need to have higher power amplifiers to make good local and international contacts in the hobby, they can certainly help though :-)

I currently take part in one of our local morning HF net the "Mainland Net" on 3.730 MHz at 7.30am, when I have rolled out of bed in time, I seem to stay up late at nights either DXing or listening to the bands often. I also participate intermittently the on the "Home Brew" Net at 5.30pm on 7.123 MHz, most call ins on this Net are in the North Island. This is the net I made my first "International" (Inter Island) contacts on with a full 5 Watts from my Xiegu X6100.

I am active in our local Oxford PRS (Public Radio Service) net that is held weekly here using 5W UHF band radio systems. These require no license and can be very useful if the normal communications systems may be down due to accident or disaster or just Murphys law.

I also take part in the monthly Alpine Fault net call in exercise's <http://afn.org.nz> . Here in the South Island of New Zealand we are in a high earthquake risk zone and a Major earthquake event is quite possible, according to some quake specialists (a very large quake may be about 300 years overdue), so HF emergency radio systems alongside PRS radio systems are perhaps a good idea.

Other areas of interest include supporting other hams SOTA POTA LOTA etc competitions this is where where people take their portable, often low power transceiver radio's on the road so to speak. Checkout <https://ontheair.nz> for details.

I am currently / slowly learning morse code (CW) as an additional emergency communication method, a morse signal with it's dit's and dah's will often get through and be understood when conditions are poor and the human voice may be not be clearly heard.

Somehow I have also become involved with the new "RadioTek Two" classes that will be running at Christchurch Amateur Radio Club in 2026. Apparently when you act as a chauffeur for your wife by driving her to a meeting you have also automatically volunteered to help out!

So in summary in my opinion "amateur radio" can be a very interesting and challenging hobby with lots to learn many things to try and a lot of satisfaction when you make a successful contact (QSO).

Amateur Radio can be a great way to meet new people with similar interests, you can meet with people from other countries over the airwaves, you may even meet some of them in person at a later date either through you travels or theirs.

I highly recommend becoming involved in the Amateur radio hobby if you have an Interest in how radio works or have an interest in the electronic technology, antenna's and the like.

Many of the hams I have met have been very generous with their time, equipment and knowledge, so if you are sitting on the fence and reading this I highly recommend giving it a go :-)

Btw with the high wind two of the neighbors 80M tall antenna support structures (trees) made their way to my property but they won't be very usefull as they are now horozontal.

Taking the antenna down was the correct choice it appears after all :-)





MORSE CODE - STORIES

CARYN KD2GUT

"Squirrels are the best thing to grow on trees."

It's not always a question of how you send your CW but where.

The choice is easy enough at the home QTH of course – most likely it's going to be your shack or your back garden – but those of us who also enjoy portable operating get to choose from a more vast catalogue of locales, from summits to parks to various moving vehicles via land, water or even air. For those of us pursuing POTA activations, the careful selection of a park can make all the difference in the world.

This one surely did:

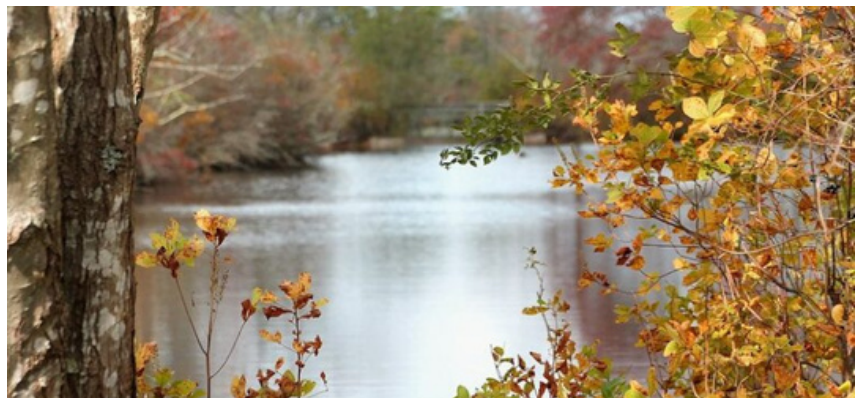
In mid-September, I drove an hour east of home to the David Sarnoff Preserve, a more-than-2000-acre public property in New York that has strong ties to broadcast history. The land now covered by pine and mixed oak trees was once pulsing with a small forest of massive longwave antennas owned by the Radio Corporation of America. The Russian-born Sarnoff, a former wireless operator with the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America, was promoted through his years in the industry and when the Marconi company was absorbed into the Radio Corporation of America, so was he. He continued his career path upward and ultimately became its president and later, chairman of the board.

Like the trees there now, history grows strong in this park and its roots are deep: When RCA no longer needed this privately owned land – satellites communication had arrived on the scene -- the company gave it in 1978 as a gift to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, which has preserved it as parkland. Its active status in the Parks on the Air programme is an even greater gift for us hams.

The modest vertical antennas (resonant hamsticks) I used that day would clearly have been dwarfed by those long-ago RCA antennas. The powerful transmitters would have laughed at the 30 watts coming from my FT-891. But my signals made their trips successfully. I was there long enough to consider it a good activation and long enough to log a deeper appreciation of where we've come from in this world of radio.

When you carefully choose where you send your CW, you don't just you're your log, you can fill your head with wonder and history. – Caryn Eve Murray, KD2GUT

Caryn
KD2GUT





SOTA OPERATORS

MATT ZL4NVW

BITING OFF MORE THAN I CAN CHEW

Part 2



Beyond [ZL3/MB-136](#) the ridgeline broadens, the beech forest becomes more established and good game trails provide easy travel to the open tops at Ada Flat, which we reach in under an hour. A final 5km walk along the Alpine Route leads us past Slaty Peak [[ZL3/TM-073](#)] (already activated) to the comforts of [Slaty Hut](#) tucked at 1400m on the bushedge.

Distance: 15km

Elevation gain: 1500m

HEMA: 2 summits, 28 QSOs

SOTA: 2 summits, 24 QSOs.

ZLOTA: Slaty Hut, 8 QSOs

DX: VK2HRX, F5PYI

Timings: 7:30am - 5:00pm

Day 5

At Slaty, we've reached the apogee of our orbit of the Pelorus Tavern. We left the narrow, dry, crumbling exposure of the main Richmond Range backbone at Ada Flat, and now start the loop back along the northern side of the catchment, descending onto the broad tops and ore-stunted vegetation of the Nelson mineral belt. We also leave behind the commitment of that main range - with its steep, dry, exposed ridgelines, deep, flanked by tight valleys offering little hope of escape. The ever-present need to reach the water-tank of the next hut before dusk.

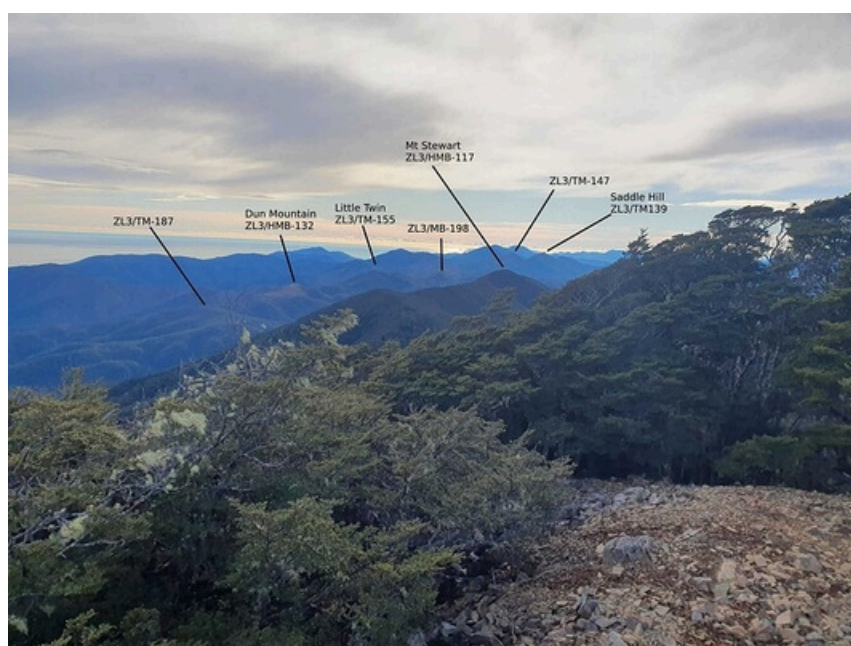


Leaving Slaty Hut, early morning - [ZLH/MB-049](#)

A final ascent along the Alpine Route to Mt Starveall (also bypassed, previously activated) and we swing NE along the Bryant Range. A good, informal, taped route leads through the last scrubby saddle to Hacket Peaks [ZL3/TM-099](#) for the first SOTA activation of the day.



Looking back at Hacket Peaks [ZL3/TM-099](#) (right) with Mt Starveall beyond
The final 3 days of the trip stretch out before us, fading into the haze.



Beyond Hacket Peaks we drop off the high tops onto meandering bush ridgelines. Going is depressingly easy - goats have chewed out any semblance of an under-story and no recruitment of new-growth seems to be occurring.



Chewed-out bush on Mt Stewart - ZL3/HMB-117

A steep descent off Mt Stewart leads to Totora Saddle and the start of the tracked section of the Bryant Range. The grey fractured rocks of Slaty and Starveall are replaced by the crumbling colours of the mineral belt. For long sections the mineral concentrations become so strong that woody vegetation is restricted to turpentine and stunted manuka. Where trees do exist they are sparse, shallow-rooted and windfall prone.



Approaching ZL3/TM-187

Rocks Hut tempts me as we approach it with 45 mins till dark, but smoke billows from the chimney and I press on up the final ascent of the red boulder-face to Dun Mountain Shelter rather than face a night in a shared hut. Again, the shelter is 100m from the limit of the summit's activation zone - unfair!



Nelson Bay from Dun Mountain

As it's name befits, Dun Mountain Shelter is basic and sleeping is on a sleeping mat on the floor. Sadly, my thermarest develops a leak and the appropriate patch kit is mysteriously missing from my survival kit. I patch it instead with a tent repair patch, but it is not fully airtight and goes flat every two hours - not something I can sleep through on the sub-zero shelter floor. The views over Nelson are, it must be said, wonderful. But I'd have preferred a good night's sleep!

Distance: 24km
Elevation gain: 1450m
HEMA: 2 summits, 26 QSOs
SOTA: 2 summits, 39 QSOs.
ZLOTA: Dun Shelter, 1 QSO
DX: VK1AO, VK4ANS, VK2IO
Timings: 7:30am - 5:45pm

Day 6

Having activated Dun Mountain the night before, we pass quickly over the summit and continue to descend NE along the Bryant Range. The bush-clad Little Twin is the first summit of the day.

Progress is good, and I arrive at Dew Lakes with time to make the planned side-trip to the unnamed [ZL3/MB-198](#). A tapped, cut route through marshy scrub to the saddle is a pleasant surprise and we are left only to find our own way up the ferny forested face to the outlying summit.

Stopping for lunch, and to activate Dew Lakes, ZLL/0087 we reach the low Maungatapu Saddle nearly an hour late at 12:45. I drop all but radio and survival gear at the saddle and make the unwelcome 500m climb back to tops with lightened load. I'd been hoping for a quick return trip to Saddle Hill, but a worryingly old signpost at the saddle states 'Track Permanently Closed, No Longer Maintained'. Uh-oh.

Thankfully the signpost may well have been recycled from elsewhere, as the track proves to be in good condition with just two major windfalls to negotiate. I steam past [ZL3/TM-147](#), knowing that if I stop now I'll not have the energy to continue to Saddle Hill. We arrive at Saddle Hill at 2:15pm, 15 minutes after my absolute cutoff to leave it! A rapid, brusque activation ensues before returning to activate [ZL3/TM-147](#) on or way back to the Maungatapu Saddle.

Repacking all the tramping gear into the pack at the saddle is cruel, the body now accustomed to the lighter pack. But with the last light of day colouring the sky we head down the 4WD Maungatapu Track to where the truck awaits 7km away on the valley floor: present, tyres and windows intact, battery charged and ready to drive us back to the Pelorus Tavern.

Distance: 24km
Elevation gain: 1450m
HEMA: nil
SOTA: 4 summits, 51 QSOs.
ZLOTA: Dew Lake, 12 QSOs
DX: VK2IO
Timings: 7:30am - 5:45pm

Day 7

The late arrival and subsequent closer deployment of the truck meant that the final days tramping along the ridgeline from Saddle Hill over Mt Duppa and down to SH6 was not an option. But it seemed a shame to leave the last two SOTA summit unactivated.

So the next morning we're up before dawn on the usual 630am alarm, and head off in the truck along State Highway 6 to the Mt Duppa access track. An easement along forestry roads leads to the park boundary at 500m, leaving just a 650m climb to the Mt Duppa [[ZL3/TM-156](#)] summit - the first summit of the trip to have previous activations logged against it!

A clear frost morning gives crystal views from the summit, and the short 2-summit day gives time for an enjoyable, relaxed, leisurely multi-band activation.



Pelorus Valley from Mt Duppa - [ZL3/TM-156](#)

The track ends at the summit, and we're back to bushbashing as we drop north to the final peak of the range. Things start well, but descending to the saddle we soon enter tortuous scrub. Stumbling on an old hut-site, I guess the area was logged and farmed in the past.

We pick up a decent game trail at the hut, and whilst it does not provide great going, it does at least indicate where to go! It takes 3 hours to travel the 4km to the final summit on [ZL3/TM-206](#), where thankfully open bush provides space to string an antenna.



Thankfully improved vegetation of ZL3/TM-206

Well, there's no way we're going back the way we came, so we take Plan B for an exit and drop to the boundary of commercial forestry and follow the boundary across a steep gully to where it touches the access road. The only good thing about this plan turns out to be that it is shorter - the vegetation has been logged in the past, and is even worse!

Distance: 11km

Elevation gain: 950m

HEMA: nil

SOTA: 2 summits, 34 QSOs.

ZLOTA: nil

DX: VK4NH, VK1AO, VK3SQ, VK2IO, VK3GJG, VK3TDK

Timings: 8:30am - 4:00pm

Back at the Pelorus Tavern for a rest and a feed. What can I say about the trip?

Mostly - that what it needed was at least 2 hours more daylight in each day. That would have made the radio relaxed and enjoyable rather than rushed and pressured. But longer days would have meant hotter days, and so water would have been a real issue on the dry tops. And travelling, as it did, for two days along the route of the internationally popular Te Araroa long distance hiking trail, huts would have been chocka. So the winter activation was a compromise, but one probably worth taking.

There was a real feeling about midday on day 2 that I'd bitten off far more than I could chew. We completed the trip, but expectations and behaviour had to change to achieve this. Radio etiquette became efficient and brusque - far more so than I'd have liked. I was forced to abandon our VK colleagues through dropping the higher bands - though thanks for those that did persist on 40m.

But thanks for those many chasers who did persist with me, and tolerate the rapid activation style. I hope that it was an interesting journey for us all.

So did I learn my lesson about biting off more than I can chew?

Well - I did resist the opportunity to try the Pelorus Tavern's signature foot-tall burger challenge. So maybe.

Matt
ZL4NVW



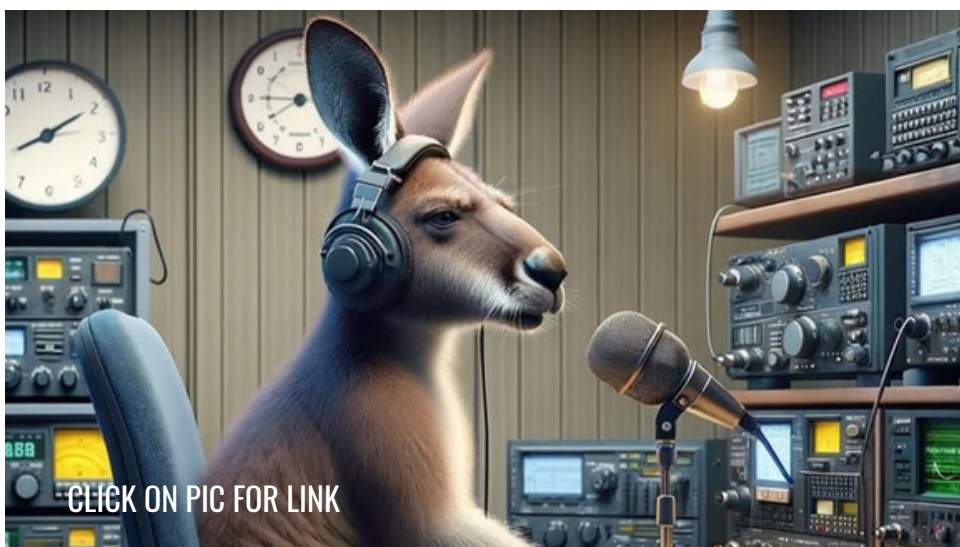
RAKAIA ISLAND AMATEUR RADIO MEETUP/SOCIAL

The October Social was held on Rakaia Island for a few reasons. Blair ZL3TOY suggested moving the social around Canterbury to get more people involved and I thought that was a great idea. The only problem was that I forgot it was a long weekend so the turnout was small, however we did have Link ZL2CLT from Havelock stop by to say hello, Paul ZL3TX, Phil ZL3PAE, Michael and a few locals were fascinated by the 12m Spiderbeam pole and antenna.

The day was amazing considering the storm a few days ago and we had anticipated the area to be flooded but water levels were no different to the last time I was there doing an activation with Nick ZL2NEB six weeks ago.

We connected the PMR171 to the linked dipole and managed enough contacts to activate the island with great reports from Blenheim 5/7 whereas the local ground wave contacts were more challenging. Thanks to ZL2BHF, ZL3GMT, ZL3RIK, ZL3OY for answering the calls and ZL2JML and ZL2MR for activating.

The November Social will be held in Kaikoura where we hope to get radio amateurs from the Blenheim and Nelson regions to join the Canterbury crowd for a meetup and activation or two.



CLICK ON PIC FOR LINK

NEW FB GROUP

VK SALES AMATEUR RADIO ONLY



29th & 30th November 2025

Amateur Radio Social Northern South Island

KAIKŌURA



TWO DAYS OF RADIO FUN AND EVENTS

Saturday will be a social “get to meet one another” day.

The venue will be at a POTA site for activators (the actual place will be advertised nearer the time)

The POTA activation is ideal for hams that want to try their hand at POTA/SOTA

Lunch will be supplied by **The Ham Shack**

After lunch there will be a competition for POTA/SOTA operators

You will have to set up a pole that is guyed, get everything connected and be ready to make a contact.

The event is timed. (prize sponsored by **The Ham Shack**)



Sunday will be a fun day with a DX Competition using the PMR171

Operator sequence will be by a random draw

There will be a prize for the most contacts in 20 minutes (prize sponsored by **The Ham Shack**)

Lunch will be supplied by **The Ham Shack**

The event will finish at around 2pm

PARTICIPATION IS FREE OF COURSE.....



ZR1AAH - Africa Correspondent

SWARTKOP PEAK SOTA ZS/WC-057

ALLEN WOOD



Swartkop Peak is above and just to the South of Simonstown. This was another of my solo efforts, activating the peak in August. Coming across a massive puffadder (snake *Bitis arietans*) laying in the path while on my way down gave me a hell of a scare as these buggers are a big danger when hiking alone.



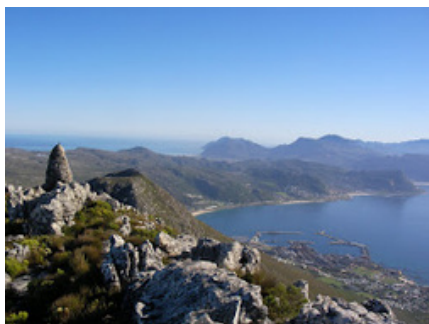
Looking Southwards to Cape Point



The Swartkop beacon, looking across False Bay with Cape Hanglip in the distant background.



My radio equipment (FT 817 and Elecraft T1 tuner) and base of my telescopic mast / antenna.



The old beacon on the peak with Simonstown Naval Base below.

Then it's the walk back to my car.

Another awesome day in Africa.

73's Allen

Australian Hamfest

"The SPARC Rosebud RadioFest"

Sunday November 16th 2025 at Eastbourne Primary School
Allambi Avenue, Rosebud, Victoria.

RadioFest Forums 2025

* **ANTENNAPALOOZA**

Learn about this unique event & some of its incredible antennas.

Presented by Ian Jackson - VK3BUF

* **POTA, SOTA & Silos On The Air**

An Aussie flavour for one of AR's most popular outdoor activities.

Presented by Graeme Knight - VK3GRK

* **Making Amateur Radio Great Again –
*Amateur Radio, Politics and Community Engagement –
Growing our hobby and clubs in a changing world.***

Presented by Neil Patton - VK3ZVX

R1BIG

OH7BG

YL RAISA

I was QRV from the KYOTO Radio Club Station and I got a "taste" of the Japanese radio waves! It was a real challenge! The conditions were bad. But I still made 340 QSOs! This is an invaluable experience that proves even under tough conditions, you can achieve great results.

I started on 40m, there were many Japanese stations. It was a pleasure to use the few Japanese words I've managed to learn. Every "arigato gozaimas" after a QSO brought a special warmth and a feeling of a real, live contact.

Later, I moved to 20m. The Oceania Contest was happening right at that time and I was amazed at how many stations from VK and ZL I could hear so clearly. Not possible from my home QTH! So, I was happy with every single QSO.

But I was especially thrilled to finally meet my good friend Indy VK2XB on the band for the first time. This is a special QSO for both of us! And another contact — not the first time, but joyful — with Marcelo ZL1MTO. It's moments like these, when a friend's voice comes, that remind you radio is pure magic, creating a sense of closeness no matter what.

This day once again proved that our community is ONE BIG FAMILY.

A huge thank to my Japanese friends JA3FGJ Tosy, JA3KGF Hide, JH3KCA Kou, JP3AYQ Mayumi, JJ3CIG Sanny for such a unique opportunity and support!





CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE - TOWER



Commercially made centre pivot tower
 10 m high/long including 4 x new 1m long
 mounting bolts with nuts. Top plate
 includes bolts at standard Yaesu rotator mount
 centres.

Great condition
*Reason for selling I have found a 24m lattice tower
 that I am going to install.*

Cost \$1,325 (it is on the ground but you will need a
 haib and truck to relocate)

Location - Loburn, Canterbury

Greg ZL1GUD@proton.me
 +64 221 229 240

FOR SALE - TH3 3 element yagi for 10, 15 & 20m Pre-Owned



Gain: 5.8 dBd (avg.).
 F/B Ratio: 25 dB (avg.).
 Max Power: 600 Watts PEP.
 Boom Length: 12 Feet.
 Longest Element: 27 Feet 3 inches.
 Turning Radius: 14 feet 9 inches.
 Mast Diameter: 1.25 - 2.0 inches OD.
 Surface Area: 3.35 sq. feet.
 Net weight: 21 pounds.
 Wind Survival: 80 mph.

Cost \$500

Location - Loburn, Canterbury

Greg ZL1GUD@proton.me
 +64 221 229 240

EARTHQUAKE PROOF YOUR HOME



Survival Kits, Grab Bags and Emergency Preparedness Gear
 Designed for New Zealand Conditions. Home of the 20 Year
 Shelf-Life Emergency Food Rations and Survival Food Rations

<https://www.next72hours.com/>

www.thehamshack.co.nz