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**BLenheim BRANCH ISSUE**



# A RECORD OF THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF BRANCH 22 NZART MARLBOROUGH

by MICK SPIERS ZL2KQ



This is a record of the 50th Anniversary of Branch 22 Marlborough, still very active and going stronger than ever.

On November 16th 1932 a few keen hams and some enthusiastic radio listeners got together and formed the Marlborough Branch of NZART.

Wally Dance ZL2LK was elected as President; Tom Eckford, Vice President; H. D. Simonsen, Secretary-Treasurer; and the Patron was N. E. Chandler. The committee comprised of Jack Furness, Ed North, E. Golding, Les Cox, D. W. Best, L. Fowler and J. Broadmore.

It was resolved that local subs be set at 2s/6p per annum, and that a general meeting be called for Wednesday 30th November at 7.30 p.m. to adopt a constitution. The general meeting was held at Griffiths Brothers' rooms. Those present were — Morry Dix, W. Stent, A. T. Dunckley, I. R. Winteringham, R. Wilkinson, N. Chandler, T. S. Eckford, L. Fowler, W. E. Dance, H. D. Simonsen, E. North, E. Golding, S. Tucker, J. Furness, R. Wildash, D. W. Best and J. Broadmore.

At a meeting on March 1933 the following also were present: L. Coker, E. Coker, H. Rush, J. Dermody, and apologies were received from Alex Riley, Colin Knight, T. Warner, J. Cuddon, T. Clouston, V. Ward, J. Garrick, K. Satherley. They met regularly each month and it is interesting to compare the following prices for food and entertainment with today's prices: Club stationery 2/6, advertising 6/-, hire of the dance hall £4.10.0,

£2.0.0 allocated for the dance supper, and 2 masts for the club antenna 10/-.

Mr I. Winteringham donated the use of a room in High Street for the Club Rooms, a club transmitter was built and used under the call sign ZL2BH. The pre-war years passed by with continued activity and many new members coming and going. Keen radio listeners sat their ham tickets and became keen Radio Amateurs to further strengthen the Club. Came the War and a lot of our club members joined up in the Services and some served with great distinction.

There was a great deal of competition and rivalry and discussion on the various methods of modulating an AM phone rig during the 1930's. Some hams favoured Telefunken modulation, others swore by the Heising method of plate modulation and others favoured the simple method of grid modulation. It must also be remembered that at this time our transmitters consisted mainly on oscillators with no following amplifier and the old faithful 210 valve was the favourite, usually running with the plate pretty well red-hot. Antennas used were: Zepps, Windoms, and Long Wires. Coaxial cables were unheard of in those days. Tank coils were wound using  $\frac{1}{4}$ " copper pipe, tank condensers had about  $\frac{3}{16}$ " to a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " spacing, and most ham gear was mounted on the top of a wooden board, called breadboard construction. Standing waves were things we didn't know much about and we reckoned they should be used to row your boat on. Every night on 80 metres was real entertainment as hams either had a rag chew or played records. But through it all hams observed the golden amateur codes above all courtesy, good manners, and no four letter words or swearing were tolerated.

After Peace was declared there was an influx of new members and the Club was under way again.

The Club was stuck with no place to hold meetings and a solution was found in a strange way. ZL2KQ had purchased a property at

Springlands about this time and had several large fowl sheds and a concrete store shed for grain and fowl food. We had a working bee, cleaned out the store shed and installed ZL2KQ's ham gear, put in electric light and power, and remote controlled his transmitter from the house about 50 yards away. We used the shed for our Club meetings for some time. Later on a small building was bought and installed in Manson Street for our club headquarters, and later again the club headquarters was moved to the Police Station, in Main Street, which was also our Search and Rescue Headquarters. Even later the clubrooms were moved to the Civil Defence Headquarters in John Street, where we worked in close co-operation with Civil Defence, undertaking to look after all their communications in the event of an emergency or disaster. Here we had a good lockable equipment and transmitting room, a club room and kitchen and toilet facilities, plenty of parking room, plus 2 steel 60' towers and other antenna poles. Civil Defence acquired a mobile van which was equipped with facilities for cooking and sleeping, good operating facilities on all bands with telescopic antennae and all mod-cons. It was made available for Search and Rescue, and to the Branch, and made our work much more comfortable. Marlborough is a large area to police with Search and Rescue as we have a long coast line, two large rivers, and remote lakes and mountainous country to cover. In addition we have the large area of the Marlborough Sounds and river flooding to cope with, plus the fact that Blenheim sits right on the top of a fairly active earthquake fault. We never know when it may start to play rough and it's comforting to know that the Branch, with its keen and efficient members with 50 years of experience behind them, feel reasonably sure they could cope with most situations if they should come our way communication-wise. It is impossible to mention everyone past or present in the club, but here are some of the past or post war members that I can recall (please forgive me if I have not mentioned your name as memory, time and space are working against me): H. Hester, Don McKay, Jim Plaikie, Don Ballontine, Bill Bate, M. Drummond, Doug Heffer, D. McNicol, Don Oddie, Bill Richards, Cliff Voss, Cliff Dixon, Bernie Lankshear, T. Goodare, Frank Stretch, M. Brown, J. Heffer, J. Neal, J. Dyer, G. Fergus, J. Ferguson, John Cuddon, C. Neville-Green, John Beaven, Graham Struthers, Bob Dixon, Lloyd Thwaites, D. Jamieson, D. Baker, Doug Sandford, D. Donachie, A. James, Les James, Paul Rennie, D. Giles, Tom Grey, N. White, T. Wilkie, W. Jackson, Harry Fittis, Lister

Hadfield, S. Kingston, David Duthie, T. Seater, K. Browning, Bill Brunton, H. Wortendyke, G. Simpson, I. Scott, K. McKenzie, Gordon Buckton, D. Daniels, A. Wallace, Bill Parker, R. York, M. Bishell, R. Chisnel, B. Penny, Terry Knofflock, C. Moore, W. Pearce, R. Carter, L. Fell, J. Gilbert, J. Elvy.

The present club as at this date consists of the President, Treasurer (R. York), Vice-President (L. Pickering), Secretary (W. Pearce), AREC Section Leader (F. Stretch), Committee and members, and our new clubrooms are at the Wither Road Extension at CD Headquarters. To all members of Branch 22 Marlborough, I would like to say congratulations for a good job well done, by all past and present members, and I know that a lot of other old timers will join me in wishing you well for the next 50 years to come.

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#### Some of the present day members of Branch 22.

##### PAGE 5:

<b>Robin York</b> <b>ZL2BGD</b>	<b>Ron Chisnall</b> <b>ZL2OG</b>
<b>Bernie Lankshear</b> <b>ZL2AZK</b>	<b>Luke Pickering</b> <b>ZL2BMM</b>
<b>Wayne Parker</b> <b>ZL2AIE</b>	<b>Lister Hadfield</b> <b>ZL2TOV</b>

##### PAGE 6:

<b>Grant Simpson</b> <b>ZL2BK</b>	<b>Graeme Struthers</b> <b>ZL2AYV</b>
<b>Robin Carter</b> <b>ZL2UCU</b>	<b>John Crampton</b> <b>ZL2TTE</b>
<b>Frank Stretch</b> <b>ZL2AZE</b>	<b>Terry Knofflock</b> <b>ZL2AHK</b>

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