

February 2025

INTERFACE

MONTHLY BULLETIN

MARLBOROUGH AMATEUR RADIO CLUB INC. P.O. BOX 432 BLENHEIM NZ

CLUB CALENDAR

General Meeting;.... 13 Feb, 7.30pm, EOC
Social Group; 20 Feb, Dodson St Beer Garden
Committee Meeting; 27 Feb 2025, 7.30pm, via Zoom



HF Net Tuesdays & Saturdays
2030 hrs 3876kHz

VHF - USB Net Wednesdays
1930 hrs 144.150MHz

VHF Mondays 1930 hrs
146.950MHz,
145.600MHz, 147.225MHz

Net Controller;
Rob Carter, ZL2IW

Website: www.zl2ks.org.nz

BRANCH 22 NOTICES

1. Wine & Food Festival.....8 Feb
2. POTA Expedition15 Feb
3. Jock White Field Day22-23 Feb
4. Carluke BBQ with Nelson **RSVP to Caryl by 4 Mar** 8 March
5. **AGM**13 March

Editor: Caryl Simpson caryl@simtronics.co.nz

MARC Contact: marcbranch22@gmail.com

10 PIN BOWLING

14th Feb 2025 7:30pm

Simcox Stadium

Battys Rd

Lanes have to be booked so it is important you **RSVP**
to Don Laing marcbranch22@gmail.com

before 7th February

Prices, and what to bring, are on the poster here.

I see this is being held on Valentine's Day.

What better way to show your other half (if you have one) you love them than taking them 10 Pin Bowling?

RSVPs required for the following...

10 Pin Bowling - RSVP to Don Laing marcbranch22@gmail.com
before 7th February (see above & right)

Carl Luke Combined BBQ - RSVP to Caryl caryl@simtronics.co.nz
before 4th March (details P.3)

REPORTS: If you are the President, Treasurer, QSL Manager or AREC Section Leader, I need your AGM reports please. I already have the Social Group's report.

10 PIN BOWLING PRICES

No. of Games	Adults	Seniors (60+) Coll Students (with ID)	5yrs to 13yrs	Under 5yrs	Family Pass (2A/2C) or (1A/3C)
One	\$15.00	\$13.00	\$11.00	\$8.00	\$45.00
Two	\$23.00	\$21.00	\$17.00	\$12.00	\$70.00
Extra Game	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$6.00	\$4.00	\$25.00

OPEN FROM 10AM DAILY

www.blenheimindoorsports.co.nz

MARLBOROUGH AMATEUR RADIO CLUB COMMITTEE MEETING
via Zoom 30th January 2024 at 19:30 Hours

Present: John Errington (Chair), Greg Barton, David Rothwell, Graeme McKay, Paul Rennie, Nick Batt, Gary Lodge

Apologies: Don Laing

Silent Key: A minutes silence in respect of Ken Hynds ZL2KHZ and Phillip Middlemiss ZL3GP

Health & Safety: No issues

Minutes of last meeting 28/11/24 confirmed; No matters arising. *Moved JE/ Seconded GB, Passed All*

Correspondence: (since CM MOM 26/09/24)

Inward:

18/11/24	Registrar of Incorporated Societies	Law change review update
29/11/24	Kiwibank	Term deposit maturing
29/11/24	Sheila Cunningham	Help offer for summer season
30/11/24	Bernie Wills VK4ANT	Photo for Graeme ZL1BDS
02/12/14	Blenheim Accounting	Christmas holidays
03/12/14	AON Insurance	New account manager Jody Jansen von Vuuren
09/12/14	Cam Wood ZL1DKS	Proposed remit for amateur license technical class
14/12/14	John Errington	Re AREC change to LLC structure
25/12/14	Jeff King ZL4AI	DX expedition 2024-25
07/01/25	Nick Batt	Gerard van Antwerpen - Celebration of life
18/01/25	John Errington	MARC draft new constitution
21/01/25	Don Wallace NZART	NZART draft branch model constitution
24/01/25	Nick Batt	Brayshaw remote station access update
24/01/25	John Errington	New constitution - proposed acceptance process

Responses & distribution of the above Inwards as applicable

Outward:

29/11/24	Aircraft Logistics	Purchase of Bonderite1201
30/11/24	VCC	Loan of BBQ trailer for Onamalutu picnic
17/12/24	Dalley's Dummies	Portaloo booking for Field day
22/12/24	Glenn ZL2KZ	Sangster Shield receipt confirmation
06/01/25	EOC Operators	Draft EOC schedule Feb~May 2025
07/01/25	NZART Editor	SK - Gerard van Antwerpen Obituary
14/01/25	VCC	Loan of BBQ trailer for Carluke event
17/01/25	EOC Operators	Final EOC schedule Feb~May 2025
18/01/25	Graham King	Field day paddock access confirmation
21/01/25	MARC members	SK – Ken Hynds memorial celebration
22/01/25	NZART Editor	SK - Ken Hynds Obituary

Motion: *The Inwards correspondence be accepted and the Outwards endorsed*

Moved: JE/ Seconded: GB/ Passed: All

Matters Arising: Covered in General Business

Finance: (In Committee) Treasurer presented his report

Membership is now 49 paid (8 unpaid)

Income since last meeting \$2,065.18

Payments since last meeting \$468.01

Upcoming payments: Tent repairs (PO2502) \$350est

Motion: *The Accounts be accepted and the payments approved*

Moved: GB / Seconded: JE / Passed: All

Winlink Operational Funding;

JE reported that AREC had been asked to fund the operational costs of Winlink. They replied with an offer of a one-off payment for equipment to an amount of \$500. The committee did not feel this was appropriate and resolved to reply to AREC reiterating our requirement for operational funding and suggesting that we invoice AREC for \$500 contribution to operational funding.

Constitutional Review;

The draft constitution was tabled and agreed with minor changes. The process to adopt it was also agreed. It was also agreed to change the name at the same time if possible. These matters will be covered in a separate communication with members.

Events:

Wine & Food Festival - 8th February 2025. Stuart advised he had enough people, subsequently revised to one short, but in hand.

Field Day 22/23 Feb - Paul will bring the BBQ.

10 Pin Bowling - 14th Feb 2025 at 7:30pm. Call for names noted.

Summer Season - 15 Feb POTA Expedition (Coordinator: Gary L.)
AREC truck demo (Coordinator Paul R.)

Repeaters & Systems:

Maintenance Report - None

Repeaters - Resolved to disestablish the Kaikoura Repeater. The equipment would be held as spares for use on the other repeater sites. Some small repairs are still required to the repeater, and the duplexers still need to be finished and tuned.

Brayshaw Park - Operating normally

Website Access and Reverse Beacon - On hold

Winlink Update; Our Winlink RMS is fully operational. A separate summary has been prepared for Interface and is attached. The operating protocols contained in the summary were agreed.

The meeting discussed linking the Tuamarina Repeater to the RMS. Apart from a small antenna all the required equipment is on site and this was agreed.

AREC

There has been no further contact from AREC concerning their search for a new group leader. The meeting resolved to invite Lindsay Ross from AREC to address our April Meeting.

Fun Stuff & Meeting Schedule:

Note: The February meeting will go ahead on 13 February

- 13 February - Gary and Nick will talk about POTA.
- 13 March - AGM & George Timmermans on Mesh networks.
- 10 April - Lindsay Ross to speak on AREC and answer members' questions.
- 8 May - WinLink setup. A working meeting to set up members laptops with Winlink & to demonstrate its use.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

HamCram; JE to contact Bill Cousins with a view to setting dates for another Ham Cram. Two people have already expressed interest.

Notices for Interface: To be sent as required

Meeting Closed: 20:55

Next General Meeting 13th February 2025 at EOC, 7:30pm

Next Committee Meeting 27th February 2025, 7:30pm (via Zoom)

JOCK WHITE FIELD DAY - 22/23 February

Hi all, a heads up for field day which will be on the weekend of February 22/23.

Site: At the end of Dillons Point Rd, last driveway on the left.

When: Set up begins at 1200, radio ops start at 1500 to 2400, then 0600 to 1500 on Sunday.

Tear down at 1500 on Sunday.

We operate from the club's tent on 80 and 40 metres, phone and CW.

The idea is to contact other field stations (and some home stations participate) around the country. You contact as many as you can in each hour, then start again in the next hour.

New members are welcome and are encouraged to have a go at operating. Someone will guide you through what to do, if needed, after watching for a bit.

It is always a fun event, and this year we have left-over meat for a BBQ from the club's Onamalutu BBQ (it's been frozen, don't worry!)

Any questions, feel free to ask me:

clareandstuart@xtra.co.nz

Stuart Watchman ZL2TW
027 6877764



*2024's set-up.
Note there will be a Portaloo
for your convenience.*

WINLINK UPDATE

Our Winlink gateway, known as an RMS, is now fully operational on HF (80,40,20) and VHF/UHF (2M, 70cm). We are also running an experimental link through our repeaters, allowing WinLink traffic (email) to be sent via the Marlborough repeaters.

WinLink provides email by amateur radio. WinLink is available to licensed amateur radio operators worldwide. To use WinLink you need an HF or VHF/UHF transceiver and a connected computer. You also need software, available free from WinLink. You can send your email by radio to any RMS within range of your station.

WinLink does not need the internet or satellites but can make good use of them when they are available.

We have built a Winlink RMS in Marlborough. With a local RMS we can use high speed data on VHF/UHF and avoid some of the uncertainty associated with HF propagation. The end result is much greater traffic capacity.

AREC run a regular "Check-In" over Winlink. Participating in this helps maintain familiarity with the system.

All club members are encouraged to use WinLink and our RMS. If you would like help in this, contact any of the committee.

History

In April last year we were offered equipment to set up a VHF/UHF WinLink gateway. The offer was made via Greg, who had completed the WinLink check-in exercise.

We accepted the offer, and a VHF/UHF gateway was established at Greg's QTH. We also started the search for a permanent site.

An RMS needs to be sited in a location that is high enough to have good HF and VHF coverage, is electrically quiet, has sufficient power available, and an internet connection. The power and internet requirements are much greater than for a typical repeater.

We have built a permanent RMS on a site between Blenheim and Picton. We are choosing not to be too specific about the location.

At the same time as the site was being finalised, offers were made for the long-term loan of the equipment needed to set up an HF RMS.

The RMS is now fully operational on HF (80,40,20) and VHF/UHF (2M, 70cm). It is also interlinked to the 695 repeater and will soon be linked to the Tuamarina repeater as well.

User Information for Winlink

To use WinLink, start at www.winlink.org.

Review the client software at <https://www.winlink.org/ClientSoftware> and download the software you require.

For most users it will be Winlink Express (<https://www.winlink.org/WinlinkExpress>).

You will need to connect your computer to your transceiver. The technology is similar to FT8 or other digital modes, but a greater audio bandwidth can be useful. Many modern transceivers (for example the Icom 7300) have a built-in sound card and can be connected via USB to your PC running Winlink Express. If you need to provide an interface, try Digirig (www.digirig.net). Note you will need to purchase an interface and radio control cable(s) separately. Digirig have cables for a full range of transceivers. There are other interface options, including the well known Signalink brand.

Take care with RFI. RFI can corrupt the data passing between the computer and the transceiver.

For help to connect up your system talk to the committee, or try googling "Connect ... to Winlink" where ... is your transceiver model – the process is well documented on line.

Protocols for Using WinLink on a Repeater

WinLink messages can be sent via the Marlborough repeaters. If you wish to do this, please follow the following protocols.

1. Only use the repeater if you must – usually a simplex connection on either VHF or UHF will be available, and if available, the simplex connection is a better and faster option.
2. Keep messages via the repeaters short. Usually, a text message format is sufficient.
3. Remember that all WinLink messages are in plain text and include your callsign. Your callsign is also logged by the RMS.

Future Development

The focus in the coming months will be to reinforce the power supply to the RMS. We have some backup power available, but we plan to add better battery support.

We will also add provision for remote power cycling of the RMS – last gasp recovery when all hope is otherwise lost!

We will extend operation of the RMS to other HF bands. Modelling shows we would get very good coverage across our region on 160M. As many people have told me "No one uses 160M", and this of course is a very good

reason for us to use it. However, the antennas are very large and very difficult for most users to accommodate. We are still considering the options.

Several members are investigating low-cost options to access WinLink. Expect more details in the coming months.

We have asked AREC Head Office to contribute to the running costs. So far, they have declined, and we will be working on other arrangements.

Acknowledgements

To date, no club funds have been used to build a facility that will provide “top shelf” emergency communication to the benefit of all of Marlborough. The RMS has been made possible by:

- Provision of four recycled VHF/UHF transceivers and purpose-built interface units.
- The long-term loan of two HF transceivers, an interface and two ATUs,
- The long-term loan of a PC and assorted connectors,
- Access to a site that is as good as any WinLink site in New Zealand,
- The long-term loan of several VHF antennas,
- The construction of a robust multiband HF antenna
- The construction of a slightly less robust 70cm antenna
- Many hours of voluntary labour to put it all together.
- The generous provision of power and infrastructure to the RMS.

These things came from Graeme McKay, Foss Leach, Greg Barton, David Rothwell, Nigel Goldstone and myself, John Errington. Bill Cousins transported a campervan full of stuff for us as well. To you all, a very comprehensive thank you.

In late breaking news:

With 6 transceivers running 24/7, the power costs of running the RMS mount up. AREC have just said they will pay \$500 towards the RMS operating costs for 2025.



THE kv4p HT

To quote the developer’s website www.kv4p.com ...

- Turn your Android phone into a modern ham radio transceiver;
- kv4p HT is a homebrew VHF radio that makes your phone capable of voice and text communication completely off-grid;
- The radio simply plugs into the USB C port on your Android smartphone and transforms it into a fully-fledged handheld radio transceiver.

I came across this project and thought I had to try. The total cost was about \$40 so not a big outlay if it didn’t work out. Spoiler alert, it works just fine.

The hardware has two components, a microprocessor and a RF module. I believe the RF module is what is used in the Baofeng.

Vance’s (KV4P) day job is Android app development. The app just works.

The app has two functions (1) does all the audio to digital data conversions and (2) converts all the user interface stuff (frequency, repeater split, memory scanning, etc). All the app data is sent to the microprocessor and the microprocessor controls the RF module.

The radio is FM voice and APRS. The APRS allows texting/messaging as well as location data.

Max power out is stated as 1W, I can’t reliably measure at VHF so can’t confirm.

The radio is powered by the phone’s USB port, no external power required.

My version is scratch built. Other builders have made kits available, an example is at <https://www.aliexpress.com/item/1005008270279105.html>



POTA EXPEDITION - 15 FEB 2025

Several club members who are active POTA participants will take small groups to accessible parks to demonstrate the “activation” process.

Especially suitable for new hams and those wanting to get into portable activation activities

- Coordinator Gary Lodge, sign up by 1 Feb 2025.

AREC TRUCK DEMO - 16 Mar 2025 time - 2pm

- Coordinator Paul R. Signup by 28 Feb 25.



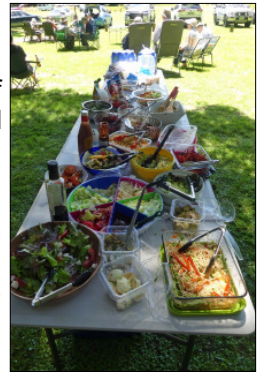
BRANCH 22 BBQ ONAMALUTU DOMAIN

Photos by Caryl & Greg

The weather could not have been better for the annual club BBQ at Onamalutu. We had a record number attend I think - 39 (including my daughter and two grandsons). There would have been more except for some last minute apologies.

Gary Lodge's caravan was set up for POTA, and attracted a lot of interest. See article P.5.

The Vintage Car Club BBQ trailer was fired up and Don L and Dave R made short work of cooking all the meat. There was the usual wonderfully varied selection of salads, stuffed eggs, beetroot and other accompaniments with many making sure they left room for dessert. Alex, my youngest grandson (aged 7) got a bit concerned while eating his sausage as he had a loose tooth and was worried he would swallow it, which is what happened to his last one (the Tooth Fairy still paid out though). He spent some time wriggling it hard before it came out. Luckily Nana had a small Ziplock bag to put it in so it wouldn't get lost. When he then worried that he was now bleeding, his Aunty Kelly (my daughter) said not to worry as the bread would soak it up and to pretend it was tomato sauce. This cheered him up no end and he happily finished off his sausage.



I think we outdid ourselves with the choices of desserts this year with boozy and non-boozy trifles being popular, a Philippine Malagkit (glutinous rice dessert, Dave and Maricel's specialty), cheesecake, pavlova, ginger snaps, profiteroles, freshly picked raspberries and cream plus others I can't remember. I managed to take a photo of the salads but forgot to get one of the desserts before they were devoured.

We had Jim Meachen ZL2BHF (pictured right) from Nelson attend and, as it was his birthday, I made him his favourite carrot cake. We tried to light the candles but the breeze was too strong so we gave up. It is hard to see a white carrot cake against a silver table in bright sunlight!



After lunch, those keen set off on the Fox Hunt. There were two foxes this year, one VHF and the other UHF. Both were won by Linc Teale (pictured left with the trophy) who was successfully single-minded in his efforts. Most of us sensible ones stayed in the shade happily digesting our lunch and chatting.

Overall it was a very successful day enjoyed by all.





Despite several warnings to take all your plates and utensils, I now have 4 small tongs, two which have a "B" written on them, plus a green handled fork which is obviously part of a set. If any of these are yours, note the different ends on the two sets of tongs, please let me know otherwise they will be added to the utensil drawer at Carluke Hall.

Below is Gary ZL1GA and Carol Lodge's caravan set up for POTA. They had stayed overnight the weekend of the club BBQ.



GARY, ZL1GA'S POTA (Parks On The Air)

Those of you who were at the club BBQ out at Onamalutu probably noticed my POTA setup. A simple Sotabeam 20/40 dipole from a 7 metre telescopic pole using an Icom 705 putting out 10 watts. In a half hour activation Greg Barton ZL2GBX and myself ZL1GA made 11 contacts spread between Ruakaka in the north and Christchurch in the south. Signal strength 3.4 into Ruakaka but otherwise 5.6 +

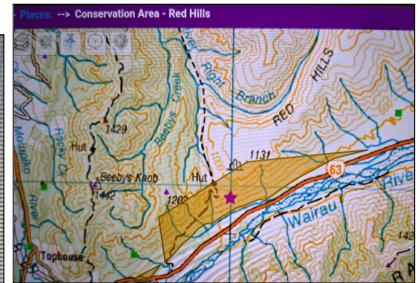
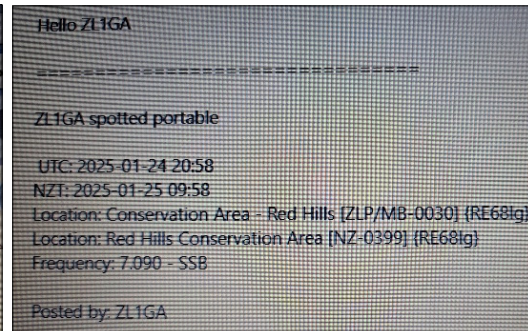
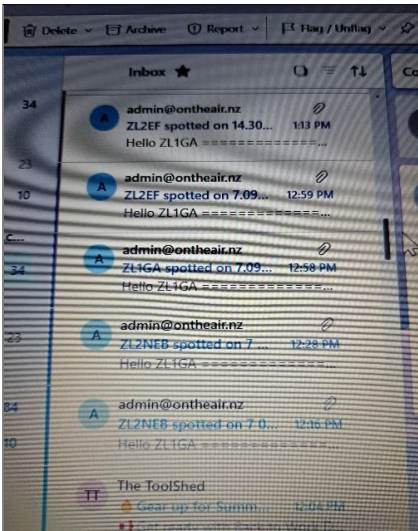


Most weekends you will find Nick Batt ZL2NEB, Graham McKay ZL1BDS and myself out somewhere activating a park or reserve either on our bikes, in our cars, or walking. If we're not out there we are probably at our home station "chasing". Forget about lawns, shopping and chores. POTA is where it's at.

To refresh your memories, an activation is transmitting from a site, such as a reserve or lake, that is recognised on the POTA website with its own unique code. Not everyone is able to be an activator but everyone can be a chaser, as Tina in the Turners ad on TV says, "You can do it from home". Chasers are the most important thing to a person out there doing an activation, they need you to be ready, hand on mic to respond to that call "CQ, CQ, POTA parks on the air".



An activator selects a site be it a park, lake, lighthouse etc. to operate from on the POTA website. An enlarged map, as shown below, highlights the area covered by the activation which the operator must be in. As a chaser who has registered on the POTA website, you will receive a spot or alert from activators telling you where and when they will be or you can check for yourself on the website. For links to the POTA website first go to ontheair.nz



Red hills map

An alert or spot as they will appear on your device

Personally, 2025 started off well on New Year's Day with activations made from the Double Eagle Mountain Bike part way up Mt. Robertson where two conservation areas converge. It may have been a cold wet day but there were lots of enthusiastic operators and chasers out there. Activating White's Bay Recreational Reserve ZLP/MB0036 and Robertson Range Scenic Reserve

ZLP/MB-0012 twice, once on NZ time 01.01.2025 and later on UTC time 31.01.2025 resulted in 35 contacts. All New Zealand contacts made using 5 watts of power.

A few days later, based up the Lees Valley in Brightwater, Stuart Robinson ZL2STR and myself activated Spooner Ridge ZLP/TM0060 Recreational Reserve. Being late in the day, we only managed to make 5 contacts. As we had plenty of space to play in and lots of wire we took the opportunity, whilst camped, to put up a 160 metre band di pole. Just for fun, and it worked.

19.01.25

Cape Campbell Lighthouse ZLB/009 was activated from Marfells Beach, resulting in 14 contacts. Some places are trickier to get to than others, bearing in mind that you have to be within the activation area and there are frequently rivers, roads, cliffs and trees in the way!

25.01.25

A gentle walk thru' beech forest led to a fairly open space close to a derelict cobb cottage. From here I was able to activate Red Hills Conservation Area ZLP/MB-0050 and, from a bit further up the track, 6 Mile Scenic Reserve ZLP/MB-0055. In all, 27 contacts over two half hour activation periods.



Brightwater 06.01.25

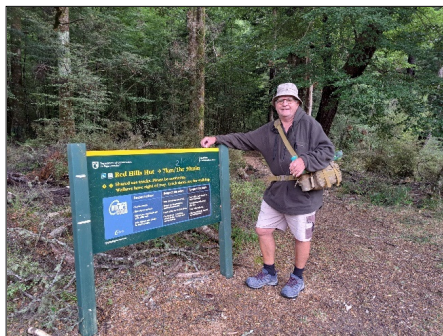


Marfells Beach 19.01.25

POTA is a great way to get about, if you're chasing it is an equally good way to make contacts, not just around New Zealand but around the world. Over the past month I have made 59 POTA contacts

into Australia - mostly in the evenings.

One of the more interesting contacts was Sandeep VK6GWX operating from the Giles Weather Station in Western Australia. FYI. There are 3 operators based there on a 4 month rota. This weather station is situated 750 km WSW of Alice Springs and 210 km W of Uluru and is the only manned weather station in an area of 2,500,000 square km. The area is the Ngaanyjarra Indigenous Protected Area. No wonder the guy was keen to talk!

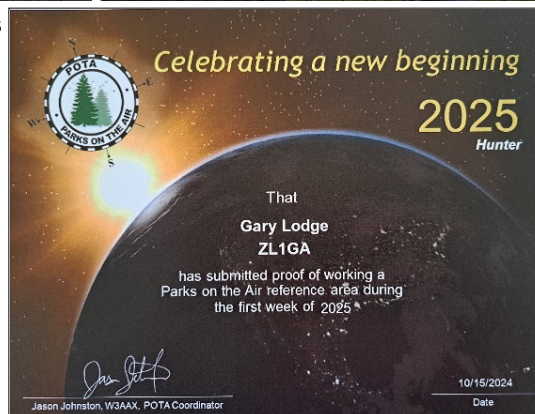


World Wide Flora and Flora Reference: WWFF VKFF-6313

Note, logging is done by activators so if you have registered on the POTA website you don't have to do anything. The points you earn for chasing will allow you to claim certificates. Those people already doing POTA will tell you it's not competitive. Do not believe them, just do it...

Gary Lodge ZL1GA
Mob.027 4765791

All photos in this article provided by Gary



It has been suggested we ask the club president to send out an order demanding members stop dying in such large numbers! With an average age probably somewhere in the 70's, it is inevitable we lose members but we have had 5 deaths of longtime members in the last 3 months - Ash Corbett, Grant Simpson, Gerard Van Antwerpen, Colleen Lawson, Ken Hynds plus Philip Middlemiss who moved to Christchurch two years ago. STOP IT! I seem to spend a lot of time searching for information to put in the obituaries and it is hard when you find so many others mentioned who are now Silent Keys.

SILENT KEY: Philip Middlemiss ZL3GP.



Philip was only involved with the club for 3 years, first appearing as a visitor in August 2019 but by November of that year he had paid his subs. In 2020, I had asked everyone what they were doing during lockdown and Philip replied he had been building a weather station based on the Arduino. He had the most fun getting all the components from China. The weather station was later entered in the Constructors Award that year, as shown in the pic of Philip here. In January of 2021, he was one of the tutors for the club's first HamCram and his daughter, Helen McKenzie, passed her licence along with Nick Batt, Matt Kerr, Greg Barton and Shaun Crabbe. The weather station was mentioned again when he did a club talk on it in February 2021. By 2022 he asked to be removed from the membership list as he had moved to Christchurch where daughter Helen, and other family members, lived. Our thoughts go to Philip's wife, Alison and the rest of the family.



SILENT KEY: Ken Hynds ZL2KHZ.



Ken served in the airforce and then at the Waihopai Spy Base. He had been a club member since the mid 80's and was treasurer for 12 years, taking over from Helen Harris in 2009 until Greg Barton took on the role in 2021. Ken was also very active in AREC, being awarded a 20+ year certificate last year.



When it came to repeater installations, Ken helped when he could and was hands-on at both the Mt Freeth and Weld Cone as these photos show.

His health deteriorated in the last few years, so he was less active within the club, and was often away helping with grandchildren but he and his wife Robyn liked to attend the mid winter lunches and the photo of them above was taken at the club's 90th celebrations.

Our condolences to Robyn, Terry and Vivienne, Christopher, Jonathan and Hana and the rest of the family.



MARLBOROUGH / NELSON AMATEUR RADIO CLUBS' COMBINED BBQ AND FOX HUNT

WHEN: Saturday 8th March, 2025 **TIME:** 11am onwards **WHERE:** Carluke Hall, Rai Valley

Bring: Salad and/or dessert to share, drink, plates & eating utensils, chair, sun hat, sun screen, handheld for Fox Hunt (and a spare if you have one to lend to someone who hasn't), Mystery Object (if you have one), something for the sales table (if you have some radio gear you wish to sell).

Both clubs will be providing meats, bread, onions, sauce.
Hall kitchen has an oven, hot water, plus cups, plates and cutlery if you forget yours.

If the weather is inclement we can use the hall, it is huge with plenty of space.

You might need an umbrella or raincoat if it's raining for the Fox Hunt or Toss the Tait.

Directions: From SH6, go through Rai Valley township then take the first turn on your right into Opouri Rd - the way to French Pass etc. Turn first right where the road splits, drive over the bridge and the hall is on your right just past the bridge. Access to grounds is through a gate at the far end of the hall. Look for Ham vehicles.

Nelson won the trophy last year so we need plenty of members (especially fit and strong ones who can toss a Tait a long way!) to attend to win it back!

You may take the opportunity to arrive there the night before and/or night after if you wish. The toilets will be open on the Friday night for those who wish to stay overnight. There is plenty of space for campervans and tents also. It costs \$15 for a powered site or free if you don't require power. Mention you are with the radio club, if asked, so they don't think you are a freedom camper and kick you out! Freedom campers have to park out on the roadside.

We will be having the usual variety of fun challenges at which to beat Nelson, the Fox Hunt being the only specifically radio related competition, so the whole family can participate.

Toss the Tait has people throw an old Tait radio case as far as they can. An equal number of people from each club takes turns and measurements of each distance thrown is noted. Total is added up and most distance wins.

Come along for the day or stay overnight, it is a fun day out with lots of laughs.

If there is anyone who would like to attend but needs transport, let me know and I am sure something can be arranged.

RSVP to caryl@simtronics.co.nz by 4 March
for catering purposes please!

GUESS THIS MESS: Members are being asked to bring items, not necessarily radio related, for members to guess what it is. Remember not everyone is a radio Ham so will not recognise radio parts, be they obscure or more common!

SALES/FREE TABLE: Bring items you think might interest others and gain space in your shack/garage/house! All remaining items, not sold or given away, must be taken back home by the person who brought them.

CORN HOLE GAME: The aim is to throw beanbags through a hole in a board.

WHAT DO STICKERS ON FRUIT MEAN?

Some of these unassuming stickers are more informative than you'd think. While the PLU is the price advice and identifies your fruit or vegetable, it also helps to identify something else: how the particular product was grown. By reading this code you may be able to tell if the fruit has been genetically modified, grown organically or produced using chemical fertilizers, herbicides or fungicides. The story of the particular fruit is often contained within the sticker.

The following may help to provide the information.

1. If the PLU only consist four numbers, this means that the product has been grown traditionally with the use of pesticides. The four letters simply indicate what type of food you are buying eg. all bananas have the code 4011.
2. If the PLU consists of five numbers, and the first number is 8, this indicates that the product has been genetically modified. A genetically engineered banana would be 84011.
3. If the PLU consists of five numbers, and the first number is 9, this tells you that the product has been grown organically and has not been genetically modified. The number would be 94011.



It is worth noting that the glue used to attach the stickers is considered food-grade but the stickers themselves are not safe to consume.

It never does any harm to question retailers about the origin of the fruit and vegetables that they are selling. Slight marks on the skin of fruit especially bananas, do not indicate that the item is not good value.