

November 2025

# UNTERFACE

MONTHLY BULLETIN

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

## CLUB CALENDAR

General Meeting;..... 13 Nov, 7.30pm, Landsdowne Park  
Social Group;..... 20 Nov, Dodson St Beer Garden  
Committee Meeting; 27 Nov, 7.30pm, via Zoom

## BRANCH 22 NOTICES

1. Fox Hunt (NO MEETING AT EOC) **UHF freq. 432.850Mhz** 13 Nov
2. AREC Presentation & Xmas catch-up..... 11 Dec
3. Onamalutu BBQ..... 11 Jan
4. 10 Pin Bowling ..... 21 Jan

Editor: Caryl Simpson [caryl.grant@gmail.com](mailto:caryl.grant@gmail.com)



**VHF** Mondays 1930 hrs  
146.950MHz,  
145.600MHz, 147.225MHz  
**Net Controller;**  
Rob Carter, ZL2IW

**HF Net** Tuesdays  
2030 hrs 3876kHz

**Website**  
[www.zl2ks.org.nz](http://www.zl2ks.org.nz)

MARC Contact: [marcbranch22@gmail.com](mailto:marcbranch22@gmail.com)



Some happy club members who attended the recent Eastfest.  
Read their report and see the photos P.2

L-R: Nick Batt ZL2NEB, Greg Barton ZL2GBX, John Elvy ZL2BH,  
Herrie Ten Oever ZL2HTO

Thursday Fox Hunt 13th Nov. 7.30pm  
Landsdowne Park.

Briefing near Dodson St Restaurant & Beer Garden  
Replaces meeting as EOC room unavailable.

UHF frequency 432.850Mhz

Q: How do you greet a ham radio operator?

A: With a short wave

Q: What do you call an apology written in dots and dashes?

A: Remorse code



WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL  
14th Feb 2026

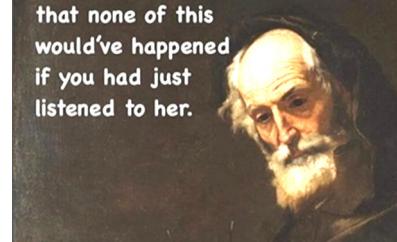
Volunteers required

Contact Stuart; 027 687 7764  
[clareandstuart@xtra.co.nz](mailto:clareandstuart@xtra.co.nz)

A good woman is by  
your side to tell you  
that none of this  
would've happened  
if you had just  
listened to her.

FAMOUS  
LAST  
WORDS

"My wife  
said she  
would leave  
me if I didn't  
give up ham  
radio - over."



## EASTFEST REPORT - combined information & photos from John ZL2BH & Greg ZL2GBX

Eastfest was held Oct 18th and 19th hosted by Danny and his team at Branch 01 Ashburton. Attending from Blenheim were Nick, Greg, Herrie and John. The program was pretty-much as published, the "Microwave and VHF" session on Saturday afternoon was replaced with a session by Nick on SOTAmāt (pronounced "sota mate", like "automate").

Nick ran two Pota/Sota related sessions which were excellent. He kept everyone's attention with his wit and body language. Some people are born presenters, Nick is one of them.

Approx 50 people attended the weekend with activities spread over two sites, The Sinclair Centre in Ashburton and at the club rooms at the Ashburton Aerodrome.

There was a range of topics presented, Pota by Rick, ZL3RIK & Nick ZL2NEB and a very interesting session presented by Roger ZL3RC on how to easily program Arduinos. Everyone was quite surprised to learn the answer was AI technology. Simply use Chatgpt and tell the program to build the code for you for a given task. Roger pointed out this approach was not 100% foolproof but it took all the legwork out of programming.

Danny gave an excellent presentation on the "Allstar System" with Hams able to link repeaters together using simple software and the Internet. This system certainly gave us something to think about.

There was a small "pre-loved treasures" sale on Saturday morning and Craig ZL3TOO, from Techoman, and Greg ZL1GUD, from The Ham Shack, had extensive displays of new equipment over the weekend which attracted lots of interest and some folk took advantage of the deals on offer.

On Sunday morning many of the attendees met at the Ashburton clubrooms at the airport near town for a more hands-on session, BBQ lunch and fox-hunt.

John said that for him it was certainly worth attending Eastfest as he got to network with Hams out of town he knows well and speaks to regularly. It was also an opportunity to put a face to the unknown voice coming out of his radios. He also got to chat with an ex Blenheim Ham, Roger ZL2BTG, who he hadn't seen for about 40 years.

John says he is looking forward to attending Westfest in 2026, as are the rest I'm sure.



Nick ZL2NEB



Sunday was hands-on at the airport base



Organisers Danny & Luke man the BBQ



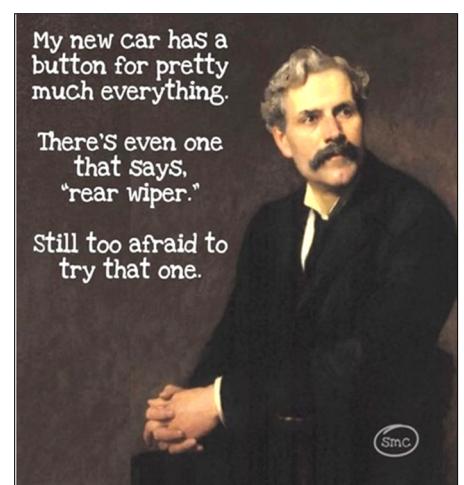
Danny ZL4FW presents AllstarLink



Nick ZL2NEB POTA planning



Rik ZL3RIK getting into POTA



My new car has a button for pretty much everything.

There's even one that says, "rear wiper."

Still too afraid to try that one.

**Thursday Fox Hunt 13th Nov**  
**Replaces meeting as EOC room unavailable.**  
**Meet 7.30pm outside EOC.**  
**UHF frequency 432.850Mhz**



Roger ZL2RC using AI to programme arduinos etc

## EMERGENCY COMMS EXERCISE

On Sunday 23 November a group of club members will be taking part in a nationwide emergency communications exercise run by AREC.

The exercise will test the group's capability to provide communications in a civil emergency when "business as usual" systems like mobile and fixed phones, and even internet are not available.

The Southland group have had some real practice over the past few days as their communications infrastructure was damaged by the recent storm.

We will be activating with a group at the Marlborough EOC (Emergency Operations Centre) and 5 or 6 other members will act as ICPs (Incident Control Points) around the region.

The exercise will consist of message passing from the ICPs to EOC and onward to other EOCs and the national coordination centre, and back the other way.

A wide variety of message types is expected and we will use radio to pass them on, using voice and data modes like Winlink and VarAC. We expect to use HF, VHF, and UHF, including DMR.

It will also be a good test of our Winlink RMS gateway as a lot of message traffic between the various EOCs is expected to be in text form and possibly images.

The exercise runs from 9am to 1pm and all members are welcome to drop in and observe at the EOC, or to join one of the members operating as an ICP.



For more details contact group leader Paul Rennie or any committee member.

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This opinion piece, from the Hastings Branch 13 President Keith ZL2TAB, was taken from the Hastings & Napier Amateur Radio Clubs' newsletter Breakout Oct 2025.

'Ham' Radio is ...

From 50+ years of holding a 'Ham' licence, I have seen a lot of changes in the hobby. From both a technical perspective and from the regulatory standpoint. Where we are today would have been unimaginable when I sat my 'ticket'. What needs to be remembered is what exists today may not be what some want, however it is what we have.

We have, as a hobby, gone from being micro-regulated by a succession of Government agencies to being 'self regulating' and expected to exercise self-discipline and operate within the limits of our licence.

What hasn't changed is our transmissions are publicly accessible. Encryption and the likes is prohibited in the terms of our GURL. Equally, what we say (or send one way or another) can be miss-heard, misinterpreted and misconstrued.

The 'Age Divide' is an issue we need to be aware of, what was commonly accepted and even seen as jocular by those of us growing up in the '40's and '50's may not sit well with later generations of 'Hams'.

Sometimes we may need to take a deep breath and think "How will a younger 'Ham' or someone from a different background interpret what I might say".

The technical changes are greatest in the realm of digital transmission modes. The growth reflects the innovation that the hobby is known for, and whilst not to everyone's 'taste', they have their place, just as CW - technically a triternary mode - and AM is all some operators peruse. Every mode has its place and none are wrong, although to avoid seriously annoying other operators it pays to stick with the published band-plans as far as spectrum use is concerned.

In the regulatory arena, the examination system has changed over the years, no need to analyse a circuit diagram, draw a circuit or do involved maths. The once separate 'Regs' exam meant you had to have studied the 'Regs' end-to-end since you had no idea what they were going to ask, and the Regs exam was easier of the two to fail!

It is imperative to know and abide by the limitations of the licence issue, whether we agree with them or not. Taking liberties with restrictions might seem clever, however it has the potential to jeopardise the licences of all 'Hams' in the country. Trust me on that one, my sport has been severely impacted by the actions on one individual, and it could just as easily happen with Amateur Radio. Self discipline is the watch-word.

Keep in mind we have the privilege to communicate easily with like-minded individuals world-wide so let's use and enjoy the hobby.

Keep 'wire in the sky' and stay safe. 73 for now, Keith, ZL2TAB

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Have you seen the New Zealand & Australian Amateur Radio magazine? This is produced by ZL1GUD from The Ham Shack. **Why a FREE Amateur Radio Magazine?** Greg says "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.

The 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 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." [ZL1GUD@proton.me](mailto:ZL1GUD@proton.me)

Vol.4 October 2025 features a beautiful cover photo taken by Carol Lodge and an article Radio By Remote Control, by Nick ZL2NEB. Go to [www.thehamshack.co.nz](http://www.thehamshack.co.nz) for more info and links to these magazines.

This looks like a fun weekend - meet other Hams, get competitive, win prizes and enjoy FREE lunches! What more could you ask for?? This has been organised by Greg ZL1GUD, owner of The Ham Shack. The idea;

1. *Getting to meet the voices*

2. *Exposing new hams to POTA/SOTA* as Greg believes this is what is going to grow amateur radio

3. *Having some fun and playing with radio*

The first events were in Christchurch and Rakaia, **HOWEVER** for November Greg thought of a social that would get the Canterbury amateurs and the Nelson & Marlborough together at the half way point of Kaikoura.



**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)**

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**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.....**



## ZL2TW KENEPELU LABOUR WEEKEND POTA ACTIVATION

I did my first POTA activation back in early August when Jody and I went for a drive trying out our new (but second hand) Hilux. That was the Camp Bay Scenic Reserve above Punga Cove, on the Queen Charlotte track. Gary ZL1GA had schooled me up on using the ZL on the air POTA web site and how to log contacts. After that I felt I needed to do a bit more of this.

I had a good look at the map on the ZL POTA site to see what other unactivated Parks I could activate in the Keneperu area. I could see 8 that I could do over 2 days and stay the night in the area. On the Sunday of Labour weekend I headed out early to the most distant park: Crail Bay Historic Reserve. I had Jim ZL2BHF warned in advance to listen out for me so he could put a spot up on the POTA site. There was a fair bit of wind at this site up on a point, my pole was on a bit of a lean but worked fine.



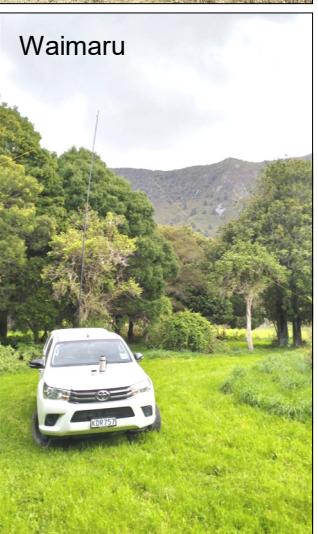
The next park was Bobs Peak Recreation Reserve (who was Bob?) only about 1 km back down the road and the next one was at St Omer Bay: the Ferndale Scenic Reserve. The last activation for the day was by the Waitaria Bay School, the Waitaria Bay Scenic Reserve. There was plenty of room to set up here well within the park with shelter from the wind.



After a quiet night at the Portage I headed back to Clova Bay to activate the Waimaru Recreation and Scenic Reserve. There was a really nice camp ground there to operate from which was sheltered from the wind that was starting to pick up. Again Jim ZL2BHF was there to spot me for the activations that day. Heading back, the next activation was the smallest park of the weekend, the tiny conservation area Accretion Clova Bay. This was about the size of a couple of rugby fields and quite hard to get to. I had to traverse some private land (no one home) to get onto the public reserve.



An interesting observation about these parks is that many of them are scenic reserves, but there is no scenery at a lot of them. The POTA rules state clearly: "the activator and all equipment must be within the park's boundary and on public property". The next activation: Scenic Reserve Keneperu was an example where the rule is problematic. The reserve is a small area of bush on the inland side of the road where it finishes at a steep bank and then very little space between that and the road. At one end there is about a 100 m long strip that crosses the road and a bit more, which is the only place to operate from in the park area. The bush is far too dense and up a bank for me to be bothered operating portable. So after a bit of back and forward I found a spot in the park where I could safely park and operate.



Then off to the last activation of the day, the Big Bay Scenic Reserve accessible from the Titirangi Road, which also counted toward a couple of lights and the Brothers Island. The weather was kicking up with wind, rain and clouds blowing past and I finally found a spot on the side of the road (steep) I could operate from. The annoying thing was after tear down and driving on to find a turn around spot, another few hundred meters on there a large flat off road area by a DOC sign. You never know what is just around the corner.

I used an Icom IC-7100 with a 40 metre dipole and a 20 AH lead acid battery with an MFJ voltage booster. I attached my pole to a tow bar mounted bike holder. I managed to activate 8 new ones and made about 150 contacts on SSB. Thanks to everyone that came on and Jim for being my trusty spotter

- Stuart ZL2TW



## SOTA BINGO

Here is a pastime that could add a little bit of extra interest for those who chase contacts from ZL activities.

It runs from 1st Nov 2025 - 31st May 2026 and the rules seem to explain it all.

A SOTA Bingo sheet, plus the rules, are on one of the attached PDFs with this newsletter.

Run more than one sheet if you wish and if you have any difficulties, please contact Stewart ZL2STR  
[strobnz@gmail.com](mailto:strobnz@gmail.com)

### VARIOUS MANUALS AVAILABLE - MAKE AN OFFER (a gold coin would do for most)

I have 240+ Instruction books, Operations & Programming, User & Owner's manuals, Assembly & Service manuals for all sorts of transceivers, receivers and various test equipment (duplexers, repeaters, meters, wave analysers etc) from an Alinco DR-605T DR-605E VHF/UHF twin band FM receiver instruction manual to a Yaesu FT-DX100/150 instruction manual with everything in between. Lots of HP, Kenwood, Tait & Yaesu stuff.

Hopefully all can still be found as I have most in alphabetical order, or a separate list telling me which filing cabinet drawer, or pile, they are in.

I also have enough circuit diagrams to paper the house several times over but many don't say what they are for! I guess Hams would know just from looking at them.

You will find a PDF of the list attached to the email with the Interface. If there is something listed, let me know. It will be first in, first served. [Caryl.grant@gmail.com](mailto:Caryl.grant@gmail.com)

Most of you are aware Stuart has been selling off Grant's gear on my behalf and we think most of the expensive items have gone but we keep finding hidden 'treasures'. Eventually we will be ready to have a garage sale for club members where you will be invited to rummage about in what's left and make an offer. There will be radio, electronic, vintage and computer items up for grabs plus lots of stuff that defies description! We have just noticed a large number of antennas up in the rafters, including several yagis, which need to be taken down and checked. Keep an eye on TradeMe or for notice of the garage sale. We had hoped to have it before Christmas but I don't think that's going to happen.



Gary's antenna farm

Branch 26 held a Rally at the Girl Guide Lodge in the Lee Valley Nov 1st - 3rd. The weather was perfect, and the spring colours more so.

The days were spent relaxing, meeting up with new and old friends, eating, talking about Antenna systems, and working portable field stations.

The evenings were spent around the Camp Fire.

Marlborough attendees were Gary & Carol, John & Marion.

A great spot to chill out, thanks Branch 26 for the invitation.

- John Elvy ZL2BH

