

BREAKOUT

*The Newsletter of the Hastings and
Napier Amateur Radio Clubs*

Hastings Branch 13 NZART – Napier Branch 25 NZART

Volume 12, Issue 1, November 2014



Hastings Br
13
Club Calls
ZL2AS
ZL2QS

Napier Br 25
Club Calls
ZL2GT
ZL2G

IRLP
Node
6793
147.250

Branch
Nets
9.00 AM
Sunday
Morning
3615 Hz
439.175
mhz

Editor
John Newson
ZL2VAF



<http://www.zl2gt.com/blog/>



*Join the KIWI DX Group
Talk to ZL2AL for Details*



*Pictures of the Te Ahioteatua APRS
equipment and dipole pair*

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/zl2as/>

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Club Nights: Fourth Wednesday each month at 7.30 pm Pakowhai Hall, Pakowhai Road, Pakowhai

FROM CAPTAIN ROB

The New Year is upon us and I wish you all some great DX.

In Feb. we may (to be decided) shift our normal evening meeting to Sat. afternoon, 1 March. We have been lucky enough to have Debby ZL2DL, NZART Business Manager, accept our invitation to address us that afternoon. We will combine her address with a BBQ, all for a Gold Coin donation. This is a chance for members and non members to listen to Debby and to ask her a few questions. Do come along and bring your OM, XYL or partner and enjoy a great afternoon.

After our next Br 13 meeting (Pakowhai Hall 7-30pm Wed. 22 Jan.) we will be given a talk by Mike ZL1TV. Mike, each year, spends some time in NZ otherwise he is in his home country, USA. Mike has spent much of his life involved with the aviation industry so I'm sure he can regale us with a good story or two. After Mike's presentation we'll have a QUICK AUCTION of a few test equipment items the club has been given.

I can tell you that sub's are coming in nicely and Peter (ZL2PW) will be on hand on 22 Jan. if you wish to pay him that night.

I don't know about you but I had a pretty good Xmas and New Year and squeezed in a few holiday days as well, it's a great time for enjoying one's family.

Looking forward to seeing you on 22 Jan. next.

73, Rob ZL2US
Pres. HBARC/Br 13, Hastings.

NAPIER BRANCH 25

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Committee Meetings: Third Monday of the month 7pm at Club Rooms

Club Calls: **ZL2GT, ZL2G**

Club Web Site: www.zl2gt.com/blog

Club Nights: First Wednesday each month (except January) 7.30pm at the Club Rooms:
123 Latham Street Napier

News from Napier Amateur Radio Club.....

First of all, the usual stuff about how everyone is all holidayed out and itching to get back to work and do it all again for another year. All with the best intentions of cleaning up the shack, finish all the unfinished projects, get rid of all the junk, and try to make more club meetings. Well, we can try. Unfortunately for the HF and VHF dx'ers, there was very little in Santa's sack for the new year, a large solar flare in early January killed 12, 10 and 6 metres stone dead. Well, it was too hot in the shack anyway.

Two projects to be done at the clubrooms before the winter are to paint the outside of the building, and to erect a tilt-over mast for our HF tri-bander, kindly donated by Stan ZL2ST.

We have what we hope will be some informative and entertaining club nights for the year, the programme is on the ZL2GT web site. This will be my last year as President of the club, I've been in the hot seat for long enough and it's time for a new face and fresh impetus, so nominations will be welcome at the November AGM

Finally we have two new hams to welcome, Peter Breen, who was a club member some years ago, has returned to ham radio and is now ZL2CD, and Troy Reville who passed the AOC exam on Saturday but has yet to be issued with a call. February meeting 7:30 pm at Latham St clubrooms, all welcome, in the meantime, happy hamming.

ZL2TC

HOLIDAYS AND HF

(ZL2DW portable)

At New Year 2013/14 we were lucky enough to be house sitting for our daughter and her husband at their country house West of Hastings City.

It was a great opportunity to set up an 80m dipole (with a 50m feeder of RG213 coax) across a shallow valley about 200m from 11kv mains lines.

At first turn on of the HF rig I thought I had an aerial problem as things were so quiet....I took the aerial on and off a few times to be sure and yes there was an ambient noise increase with the aerial connected.....wow.

The quietness was apparent from 80 to 10m but below 2mhz a substantial noise was heard, probably something in the house maybe but I never bothered to track it (on this occasion).

During our time on site I spent much time on 40m during the day and some observations I made were

- between 9am and 12 noon there are many nets/sched's from around NZ.
- I noted that many 40m op's were commenting about QSB or not hearing some stations amongst their groups, however I continually noticed that I never had those problems, for reasons I never determined.....other than the fact that there was no local noise to compete with the sig's.
- frequently I heard VK stations working amongst themselves.
- I found that electric fences were quite apparent but nothing the NB couldn't easily handle.

The best 20m contact I had was to Germany but again "country ears" were working a treat on this band.

Historically my "country experience" usually relates to 160m, a band that can suffer markedly from QRN.

It's hard to appreciate "no noise" unless you've experienced it for yourself. What it means is that there is simply nothing bashing or competing with the incoming signal.

It was a sad time to return to my City home, although I'm luckier than many with the lack of noise I do have there.



NAPIER - TAUPO 2m LINK

please be advised that as from 19 Jan the interconnect between Taupo 675 and Tarapounui (Napier) 725 repeaters is operative, this means that correct and complete call signs are required. It's nice to have our neighbours back on line again.



CLIFTON 9175 USE

due to a power supply failure (probably due to lighting) please use "Clifton 9175" sparingly. While the battery capacity is large and in good health reduced usage at this time is prudent. Thank you, 9175 trustees

Visitors to Branch 25



Otto (AG6KQ) and Hannah (AG6KR) with Branch members, on 4 Dec 2013



Pictures from the Branch 13 AGM



From the Nov 2013 Br 13 AGM, Officers Peter ZL2PW (Treas.), Rob ZL2US (Pres.), David ZL2DW (Sec.)

Br 13 Homebrew Competition entrants David ZL2DW (junk box PS), Rob ZL2AN (Field Strength meter), Ric ZL2RIC (trophy winner) (2 x baluns), David ZL2MQ (2m 1kw linear for EME work).



Combined Br 13 and 25 Xmas tea on 29th Nov 2013



BR 13 QUICK AUCTION

Br 13 has been given several items of test equipment etc (as below), these will be auctioned off after our next Br meeting, on Wed. 22 Jan. Proceeds to Br 13.

Yaesu FRG-7700 HF receiver

FM Radio Trainer

AM Radio Trainer

Aron Oscilloscope BS-601

Homemade HF receiver

Dick Smith 2m transceiver (K-6400)

Home made converter for Weather Sat. use.

Hako SMD Rework Station

Tabor Freq Counter

Thurlby Digital Storage adaptor DSA524

Sayrosa 252 Automatic Modulation Meter



FOR SALE

Audio mixer, offers and will be brought along to the next Br 13 meeting on 22 Jan.

Will sell with manuals and some spares. In working order & reason for sale:- I bought a new one!

Cheers, PeterZL2LF (ph8432 664)



The ZL2ST Tower – End Of An Era



Stan ZL2ST in the Shack

Stan ZL2ST has been my neighbour across Auckland Road in Greenmeadows for the past 8 years. It's been fun but Stan is downsizing and moving to another part of Napier after 14 years. His tower originally had a fine Tri-Band yagi on top but a snarky neighbour two houses away decided he didn't like the look of it and the NCC was unforgiving of course and the yagi came down. The tower didn't so Stan made the best of a bad situation and worked DX the hard way with wire antennas over the past many years. There wasn't a lot of DX that got by him.

It was interesting at times with the two of us after the same rare station on the same band at the same time. Both of us ran high power but somehow we ended up taking turns calling and we both usually worked the DX. When I heard something interesting on, a quick phone call and Stan would be in the hunt. I called AFTER I worked the DX of course!



Not Happy not Having a Tower



A crane makes short work of the tower removal



Nearly there

Unfortunately, the tower is not making the trip to the new abode and has been donated to another local ham. It only took an hour to be removed. A crane made short work of the job and was soon seen driving away.

I could see Stan's tower each time I walked out my front door.



Off to a New Home

It just doesn't seem the same any more with that big gap in the sky.

Good luck with your move Stan. I will miss your extreme DX signals from across the road.

73, Lee ZL2AL

VHF Field Day With The ZL2AS Team

This year we decided to venture up an ex-TV1 broadcast site, now that the broadcast transmitter has been shut down. Whakapunake services Wairoa, Gisborne, and rural areas, for Television, land mobile, and Concert FM. It is 948 metres above sea level, and is located 27km North East of Wairoa. We have been eyeing this site for years due to its distance from Hastings and Napier, however it has been a no go due to the TV transmitters until now.

The hill summit is managed by Kordia, so months of planning and negotiations have gone on to ensure we could have access to the site. Fortunately one of our team members is a Kordia approved contractor so we were able to gain access to the building for sleeping and amenities. A huge thank you to the staff at Kordia who could not do enough to help us achieve this. We hope this relationship will continue in future years, and will strengthen the bonds between NZART and Kordia further.

The summit has a good flat area near the tower to set up. We were a little late arriving, having to go through Gisborne to collect the gate key. Once on site we set up our stations. Steve ZL2KG operated 70 and 23cm from my vehicle. David ZL2OK operated 6m from his vehicle. I operated from my trailer on 2m. We made a good score this year. A 6m opening into VK on Saturday evening was a pleasant surprise. We would have worked more but for QRM from we think a near by radio site to our west (right were we wanted to beam for VK). The QRM was noticeable on 2m as well, same bearing, but I was able to beam either side for contacts.

Statistics for the weekend. Best 6m contact 3611km to VK5BC. Best 2m contact was 528km to ZL1RS. Best 70cm contact was 402km to Stuart ZL2TW. It's a pity the weather blew you off.

We could reliably hear ZL2WA but were unable to make contact unfortunately. Good to hear the callsign active again. It was good to hear other new callsigns over the weekend as well. We did manage to hear ZL3LF but not enough to make a contact. Other than ZL2TW we made no other south island contacts, despite trying. Maybe conditions were not favourable. Weather on the other hand was ideal. Mild wind and warm temperatures.

If we can invent a solution to the 50MHz QRM we will look favourably at reusing this site in the future. Thanks to all the stations that contacted us this year. It was a pleasure to work you all :)

ZL2AS Field Day Team

ZL2KG Steve Jepson
ZL2OK David Sullivan
ZL2AJ Warren Harris



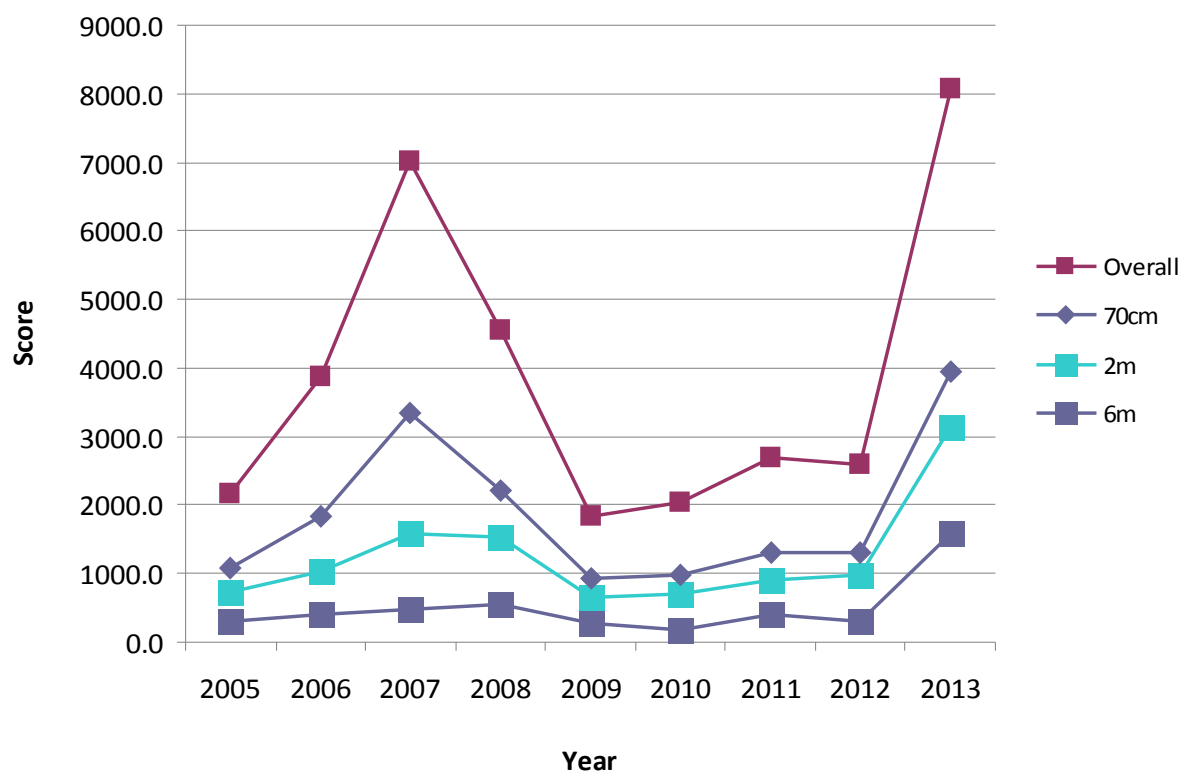


Historical Stats on VHF Field Day

ZL2AJ

Year	6m	2m	70cm	23cm	Overall	Site
2005	301.0	440.0	336.0	0.0	1077.0	Taraponui
2006	398.4	636.4	804.0	198.0	2036.8	Taraponui
2007	469.5	1116.8	1766.5	318.0	3670.8	Taraponui
2008	559.0	983.2	667.8	135.0	2345.0	Taraponui
2009	273.2	376.6	270.7	0.0	920.5	Panekiri
2010	173.0	524.6	289.4	72.0	1059.0	Te Awaputahi
2011	392.0	510.0	398.4	85.0	1385.4	Oporae
2012	305.8	681.2	310.0	0.0	1297.0	Ahiweka
2013	1586.0	1568.0	800.0	166.0	4120.0	Whakapunake

Field Day Trend



MY HAM LIFE

ZL2AJ

Hi all.

I'm not very good at writing about myself without starting every sentence with an I. So apologies if the following sounds self righteous. However below covers my life in amateur radio.

I entered amateur radio at highschool in 1993 after playing with CB radio for a few years and getting enticed to step up a level. I gained the callsign ZL2WKH as a limited licence. I was fairly quiet for the most part, focusing more on social life at that age as one does. After returning from a years work in Wellington, I began playing with PRS and constructed a PRS repeater at Clifton (where 9175 now is). In October of 2002 and with help, we ran power to the summit. I then decided to splash out and buy an FT847, which I still own today. I re entered amateur radio when I heard ZL2DW working ZL2GAZ (although that wasn't his call at the time) working each other on 8425 repeater. A long conversation followed and I was hooked again. About a year later and sick of waiting for the morse requirement to disappear (which was inevitable at this time) I figured 5wpm morse was doable. So I practiced and turned my brain to swiss cheese. I was very close when the announcement was made that morse code would be dropped in the coming months. However I had started – I was going to finish. I sat and passed the morse test only 2 weeks before the requirement was removed. ZL2AJ callsign was selected and I am very happy with it.

From there I have been involved with organising numerous car rallies and other training activities. I was elected President of Branch 13, and have enjoyed various aspects of the hobby. I am also currently a member of NZART council, despite never being elected! (Both elections only had enough nominations to fill the vacancies thus not requiring an election). My most enjoyable parts are repeater construction and maintenance, DXing, contesting, and training.

For repeater construction, I have assisted with the replacement feedlines for the repeaters at Kahuranaki and Taraponui. I assisted with the construction of 9175 at the old PRS site at Clifton, and redesigned the power system to run a thirstier equipment setup. I rebuilt what is now 405 repeater at Taraponui, 7125 and 665 repeaters, and numerous APRS digipeaters. I posed the idea of establishing an IRLP node locally and it is currently operating as node 6793 on our 725 repeater, however it can be switched to other repeaters if required, as it was for the silver fern rally. I have rebuilt 6925 portable repeater with a UHF link attached, and have built 3 UHF portable repeaters for various events. I have just completed the construction of the 675/725 link for Taupo and I expect it to be in operation before this goes to print. I have 870 on my bench for rebuild and have a PRS repeater to build for Branch 20. I also plan on building a UHF repeater for a hill top locally in the near future. Stay tuned.

DXing I have enjoyed immensely. The challenge of building a decent station to work the hard to get stuff has been great. The FT847 and a trapped vertical did me well for many years, however I have now upgraded. I am currently operating with an FT2000 and a Quadra amp. The antennas are all sloping dipoles because I don't have the facilities here to rotate a beam – yet ;) I also have a BBA-100e antenna for everything the dipoles wont cover. All my QSLing is done via Log of the world. My current stats are 118 confirmed (from 172 worked) on all bands. I almost have a pure 20m DXCC with 98 from 141. The other bands aren't as good yet but I am working on it.

Contesting. Well the name says it all really. A contest is always a challenge. I participate in the VHF field day contest – mostly because I love hilltops. Elsewhere in this magazine you will see our latest achievement from Whakapunake. We are all mighty happy with our result. CQWW is always fun and I have entered 2004, 2007, 2010 and 2013. Its a good way to add DX entities to the log too. Since the Kaweka Challenge wrapped up I have

started participating in the Jock White Memorial Field Day. I have entered as a home station, and won, and as a single op field station, and won. I have yet to decide how I will enter this year's competition but I do plan on entering!

Training new amateur operators into the hobby has been something I can give back to the hobby. It is extremely rewarding, and I know a number of hams I have helped. I have since become the National Training Officer for NZART, as well as NZART's deputy ARX, allowing me to issue callsigns. I hope to train some hams to take classes themselves so the hobby can grow further. Branches that have run training classes such as ours are flourishing with new blood, new enthusiasm, and an increase in membership. My wish is that more branches would do likewise and I am happy to help any branch that wants to give it a try. Right now I am still playing ham radio. I am also studying a degree in engineering, and working a full time job as the Network Operations Controller for Scanpower. You can see in my radio shack pinned up on the wall is Scanpower's system diagram. My work follows me home at times because people like having electricity 24 hours of the day. The laptop on the workbench can remotely control the power network's SCADA system, a radio system (yes my amateur radio skills do get used professionally at times) that allows the control and reporting from various switch gear and devices around our power network. I am a qualified Electrical Inspector and Electrical Network Controller, and am also training to be a qualified field switcher. Moving to Dannevirke was a hard decision all those years ago – leaving the area I knew so well. But it was the best decision I made and I am still learning and growing in this industry. And I still get to play radio even at work, with a dual bander and APRS tracker in the work truck.

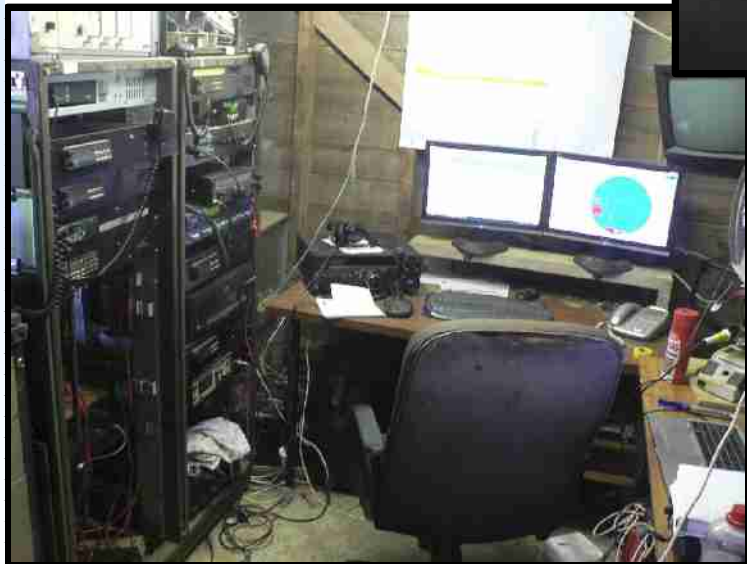
Amateur Radio is what you make it. I thank all the hams that have helped me out along the way. Most things we do can now be done with a smart phone. So our hobby is no longer about the what, it is more about the why. We do it because it excites us, it challenges us, and it rewards us.

Enjoy the hobby everyone.

Warren Harris ZL2AJ



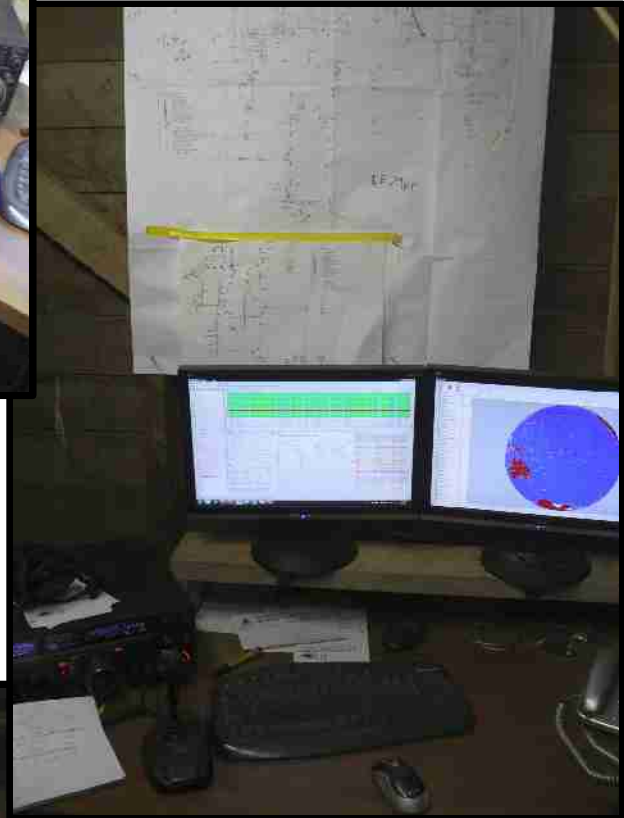
The work bench



The HF stuff



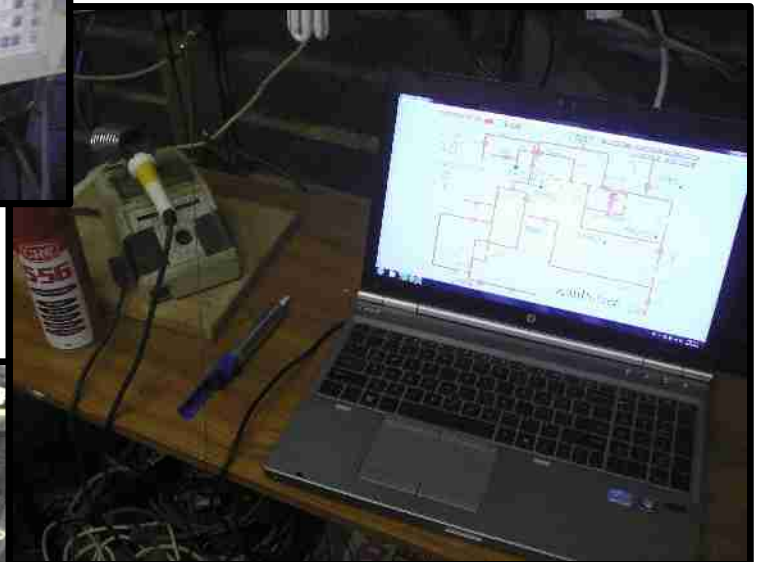
HF stuff (closer) the FT200 and Quadra



The computer running Logger 32 and DX atlas, and the system diagram in behind



My test equipment



The work laptop



Various VHF / UHF radios I use