

QST X T Y H R E E

NEWSLETTER of *The New Zealand Association
of Radio Transmitters UPPER HUTT Branch 63 Inc.*

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President's Report

After my recent trip to North America it was a welcome return to New Zealand I must say. Both my father and I had a great time, and probably best summed with the words, "after the first week it felt like we had been there a month."

Although I was away from home for some three and a half weeks, I was in fact away from Wellington for almost five weeks, as I also attended the NZART Conference held in Christchurch over Queens Birthday weekend. It was good to return to Wellington, and to see the club in fine spirits after my extended break.

Over the coming months there are various contests, events, and working bees to become involved with. More information will come in due course, but to set the scene we have the Lighthouse/Lightship weekend (19/20 August 2006), a possible movie night with Wellington VHF Group in July (more details to come), a mid-winter meal, plus some work at Climie. So plenty there for everyone to enjoy, both indoors and outdoors (when the weather improves).

Well that's all from the top - see you all at a Friday meeting, and good DX.
73's
Mark
ZL2UFI

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The Perfect Boys Day Out

On Sunday 11 June, Sean ZL2SC and Pete ZL2PDJ rode along as passengers on a 4WD club trip with Tom ZL2HGR. It was an opportunity to go 4WD-ing and talk radios all day, so we took a few of our radio toys with us. This included 3 x Yaesu VX-7 or VX-5 handhelds and a Yaesu FT-817 QRP rig with a dipole aerial on a fishing reel.
(Continued on page 2...)

Treasurer's Report

Subscriptions

Yes, it's that time of year again. Branch 63 had a reasonable year last year, but subscriptions are the only income that we can be certain of. Subs are still \$25, feel free to pay me any time you like. For those of you with internet banking facilities, the account name and number is NZART Upper Hutt Branch 63, Westpac Trust Upper Hutt 030 774 0897536 00. If you do use internet banking could you leave some clue as to your identity, and the purpose for the payment.
(Continued on page 2...)

**Club HF Net 3.630 MHz every Tuesday at 2100 NZST
listen for ZL2VH and join in.**

A listening watch is also held on the first Friday of each month on the **439.625MHz** Repeater between 5pm and 7pm. Short QSO's are welcome. Branch 63 announcements may be made at these times.

Dayton 2006: A Report.

After returning from my trip to Dayton I thought perhaps many of you may be interested as how it was planned, what happened, and my thoughts on the whole event. So here are some words on that.

In January 2005 I decided that one of the "must-do's" in ham radio is to do the Hamvention at Dayton. I planned to attend the 2006 event, which as luck would have it was to be the 55th Hamvention to be held at Dayton. So I put out the word that I was willing to plan the travel for the event, and asked for anyone who was interested to contact me. Many people of course showed interest in the early stages, but most for various reasons fell by the way side on the way. In the end Jim ZL2BHF, my father Peter (a non-ham), and myself made up the final "crew".

One of the first things to do after deciding to go for the 2006 year was to get in early, and book accommodation. As I knew no one in or near Dayton, and wishing to do all bookings myself to keep the cost down, I had to wait. All my bookings were done over the Internet, perhaps I could have called around but in my experience you can achieve what you want, in less time, over the Internet. Due to normal booking procedures, you can normally only book about 350 days ahead of your intended stay. This issue concerned me a lot as many attendees to events such as this also book at the time they are there for the following year, making on line booking a real problem. However, after the 2005 event I waited the couple of weeks, and managed to get my accommodation.

These days, most motel/hotel booking is done by a room rate, meaning that you can get many people, within reason into the one room. Of course this wasn't the case with us, but we had at least three travellers so I booked two rooms for up to four people. Another good thing was no deposit was required at booking time, and all payment to be made at time of checking in.

For the record, we booked into a Motel 6 in Miamisburg (about 20 miles south of downtown Dayton). Although this wasn't the closest motel to the event it had several advantages. One was it close to the freeways, second it was across the road from Dayton Mall - a huge shopping mall, and also various shops around the exterior of the mall as well. The accommodation was standard motel styled, with a small kitchenette which meant we could do some self catering if required. (Continued on page 3...)

Treasurer's Report...cont.

Big Coast 2006

The Branch has received a generous donation from the organiser of the Big Coast 2006. Other Branches that contributed operators for the event have now received their share of money, leaving Branch 63 with a worthwhile sum. Many thanks to those who donated their time and equipment to assist with this event. Gavin ZL2ACT

The Perfect Boys Day Out...cont.

During an otherwise uneventful drive along Odilins Road in the Akatarawas, tail end charlie reported on the radio that the convoy was being followed by a Police 4WD.

At the Renata "car park", the police told us that there was a missing hunter in the area near the Waiotauru Hut (NZMG 2693981 6027436) that we were heading towards.

Using our ham radios on a SAR frequency (at the request of the police), we established communications with another group at the hut, and relayed to the police that the missing hunter had turned up after spending the night out when he became disorientated. This wasn't an AREC call-out, but demonstrates how amateurs can play their part during any incident or disaster.

We continued the 4WD trip for the rest of the day, reassured that Clime 730 was accessible from Tom's vehicle in most locations. So we had two potential means of communication with the rest of the world in the event of problems (we also had HF using the FT-817 and dipole).

Part way down a rough track, one of the other vehicles suffered a broken rear suspension spring. Repairs were made using straps and chains to hold the axle in place. The vehicle was then able to be driven out, with the assistance of a winch through some of the more difficult obstacles.

Overall it was a great day in the outdoors playing radios, SAR, 4WD-ing, and assisting with makeshift vehicle repairs. Pretty much your ideal boy's day out. Peter ZL2PDJ



Dayton 2006...cont.

Jim organised the Hamvention entry tickets at US\$20.00 each and also bus passes at US\$8.00 each. As parking at the actual venue is very limited we used the approach of parking at Salem Mall, and catching the buses to the venue. Salem Mall is a dis-used mall with a huge car park. The ride is some ten minutes. The bus pass allows you unlimited rides - so you can return to your car to drop off the purchases, and return to buy more throughout the day!

As Jim was travelling independently of my father and me we agreed to meet up in Chicago and drive to Dayton, on the day before the event. I had booked a car from Chicago O'Hare Airport. This distance is some 300 odd miles or about five hours driving time. Again this was an Internet booking, and I used the best rate on the day of the booking, in this case Dollar Rental.

As my father and I needed a car for post-Dayton it was a good time to get it. We took the opportunity to do ground travel at this point, although Dayton does have an airport of its own. This allowed us time to catch up with each other, and to see the countryside, which is difficult from 30,000 feet! We travelled down to Dayton without incident. In fact one of the sights on the way was the number, and I mean number, of fellow hams doing the same thing. The number of cars with antennas, ham number plates, and obvious attendees on the roads was amazing, something you don't see from 30,000 feet. (Continued on page 4...)



Repeater Report

It's been some time since the last repeater report and even after so much time there is very little to report. Firstly I would like to welcome Peter ZL2PDJ to the position of Repeater Trustee and at the same time thank Chris ZL2DX for his help over the several years he has been a Repeater Trustee. Chris has offered to help out with any technical advice. (Rest assured Chris we will be calling on you from time to time).

Climie 730 continues to be the busy repeater around the Wellington area and the IRLP, although not as busy as it was when first installed, is still being activated by several regular overseas amateurs. I have managed to procure an hour meter, which I hope to get coupled into a monitoring receiver to keep a run time watch on the repeater.

Climie 5425 continues to give good service to the packet users and is available for voice - you just have to put up with the melodic packet chirp. (music to hams' ears just like the sound of Morse code is music to others). (Continued on page 4...)

Vice President's Report

Well, I was voted in as Vice President again - probably as a result of the outstanding success of my time in the position last year. I have to say though, that I feel a tad redundant, as the position of Vice President does not appear to carry any responsibilities with it, so there has not been much to do!

I guess I have to just sit here and keep my fingers crossed that nothing happens to President Mark!

In the meantime if there is anything Vice Presidential that you would like me to do, please don't hesitate to ask! I can't promise that I will be able to help, but you should at least try me.

I note that US Vice President Cheney gets to travel around the world in a Vice Presidential jet, opening hospitals, cutting ribbons, etc. He even has his own page on The White House website... Hmm... there could be something in that!!

Helen ZL2AMP

Dayton 2006...cont.

The actual event is held at the Hara Arena - a huge location with a number of interconnecting buildings, and of course the associated car park. This car park houses the flea market, and I suppose upwards of several thousand cars.

This year the event was run from 19-21 May 2006, some two and a half days. We attended the first two days, deciding to leave Dayton on the Sunday to get a head of the people leaving.

On Friday the 19th we arrived early, parking the car at Salem Mall, catching the bus to the event. The main doors opened at 8.00 am to the Flea Market, and the Commercial vendors an hour after this. So the first hour was spent having an initial look at part of the flea market, before moving inside to the main commercial and other vendors sites and tables. The inside venue again is best summed up with the words "if it is in a catalogue it's here!" The size and amount of stock on show was huge. It was all there and some.

For the non-hams reading this, my father who is not a ham nor has any interest in radio at all was able to fill in this day at the event. He found several vendors of interest to him, and he easily spent several hours wandering around the site. On day two he spent the day at the Dayton Mall across from our accommodation while Jim and I spent another full day at the event. Again he was able to fill in a day at the mall doing some serious retail therapy.

I had a great time at the event talking to vendors and other hams. The flea market took several hours to get around on the Saturday - about five hours of solid walking and talking. The rest of the time was spent inside at the various booths looking at all the offerings. Total attendance this year was 20,324!!!

I have included several photos of the place for interest.

Will I be back, the answer is yes... I am thinking maybe 2010.

Is there are interest?

73's

Mark ZL2UFI

Repeater Report...cont.

Both of the beacons are operational and it would be interesting to get a few reports back from branch members as to readability and strength. (Yes you will get a QSL card if all is correct).

Our Climie 860 repeater is back on the bench, nothing wrong with the repeater itself but it seems we have a problem with transmission beyond this point, either the duplexers or the feed line or possibly the antennas have gone out of spec. It may take a little time to have it back on line as winter rather hinders accessibility to do any work with the stacked dipole antennas.

The repeater controller unit is coming along slowly, all the components have been fitted to the board, the PIC will need to be programmed and that requires decisions to be made on what codes and controls we want.

Neil ZL2TNG and Peter ZL2PDJ Trustees.

Fox Hunt

Now is the time to clean up your portable 2m gear for **The Great Upper Hutt Fox Hunt** which is scheduled for **Saturday 15 July** commencing at 10.30am from the Clubrooms. Everybody welcome to join in. Some search gear is available.



