



QST63

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Newsletter of The New Zealand Association of Radio Transmitters, Upper Hutt Branch 63, Inc.

Branch 63 Clubrooms
Park Street, Upper Hutt

204 Plateau Road
Te Mana
Upper Hutt 5018

ZL2VH Newsletter – March 2020

President's Report

Officially Autumn has arrived and we have achieved a couple of aims for the year already.

Some(most) of you should have noticed the improvement the 730's signals. Thanks the John ZL2TWS and Fraser ZL4VV the old antenna array was taken down and replaced with our new array. Performance noticeably improved straight away.

(See below for the report from John about our day up the hill.)

Jock White Field Day has been and gone, with probably our best results for quite a few years...over 150 contacts on 40 meters and a similar amount on 80 meters.

Justin ZL2UGL was our man on 80m and Fraser and Ben ZL4BDG worked 40m. We had some visitor show and stay for a few hours David ZL2YZ, Tom ZL2HGR, Wolfgang (potential new ham/ member), and an interested local from Kiwi Ranch. Site set up was a lot quicker than in previous years and took less than an hour. The solar system in the caravan meant that we did not need to use the generator this year. The STSP repeater was set up and worked well in the local area.

John's Report:

Saturday 15th February 2020 the new twin dipole array was installed at MCL on 730. Mike ZL2NSA, Fraser ZL4VV and John ZL2TWS in attendance.

730 antenna lightening arrestor connector:

Forward power = 32W Reverse power = 0.5W / SWR 1.29:1

We could not use the clamps supplied owing to bolt length being to short. SS longer replacements will be sourced if trustees think it necessary. Refurbished clamps from the club rooms were used and actually fitted.

Weak signal testing gave perfect results and signal in Lower Hutt is equal to the previous 4 dipole stack.

The position of the dipoles regarding spacing from the pole will influence SWR but owing to time constraints we simply took an educated guess. Then we made the dipole centre to centre spacing the same as the previous SkyMast array.

Thanks to Fraser for taking a lead on this job and doing the pole work. It was a pleasant change for me this visit not to be up the mast.

The refurbished 4 x dipole array were tested before removal. No fault was directly found by tapping the dipoles and connections. There was however intermittent crackle and noise that seems to be coax cable feeder-related. As some cables were moved the noise could be heard to change.

The old dipole array can be further tested at the club rooms using the spare repeater.

Mounting the dipoles as seen in the attached pictures allows for lightening to hit the top of the pipe in preference to the dipoles.

Time will tell if this is effective.

InTelCom told me when I picked up the dipoles that having an aluminium mast could be the root cause of our problems. Apparently lightning and static charges are attracted to aluminium more than steel pipe.

We all need to research this and find out if this is true.

We have now improved the earthing of the aluminium mast in an attempt to reduce this effect if indeed it exists.

It would seem to be about the same time as the new aluminium mast was installed for 730 that the antenna issues started.

Make up your own minds from who ever you can get this information verified by.

InTelCom said they had been told this from industry operators but did not have any physics or facts to share with me at that time.

73 and good DX on 730, John ZL2TWS





Thats all from me,

73

Mike ZL2NSA

Branch 63 Repeater Update

Status Updates

3cm Beacon On Air

1292 23cm

DSTAR 5425 On Air
860 Off Air pending antenna tests.

730 As Reported elsewhere 730's temporary antenna was replaced by a brand new pair of dipoles. Thanks go to Fraser ZL4VV Mike ZL2NSA and John ZL2TWS for the work. Reception reports appreceated.

395 6M On Air

Steve Mercer ZL2SFM / ZL2YD – S.K.

(From Mark ZL2UFI)

This week brings a little sad news for Upper Hutt Branch 63 with the passing on Monday (2 March 2020) evening of Steve Mercer, ZL2SFM/ZL2YD, after a short battle with acute Leukemia.

Steve assisted the club on many a trip to Mt Climie with his 4WD vehicles and was able to help when he could.

From SOTA Facebook Group:

Though Steve only had a handful of activations logged so far he wasn't one to go for particularly easy ones to knock off, his most recent one being Kapiti Island which can be a logistical nightmare. At present Steve holds the record for the highest activation in the WL region, 'Kapakapanui' ZL1/WL-016. I have accompanied him on a couple of activations myself and we had a few more tough remote ones planned for the future.

Steve had a long work career as a scientific diver for NIWA often under the ice in Antarctica and had a strong interest in all things outdoors, recently in retirement he was very active in LandSAR, AREC, 4x4 and Ham radio. He will be missed by many.

Wynne Morgan ZL2ATH



From Gavin ZL2ACT

From the AREC Deputy:

The Tararua Mountain Race is on again this year, proposed date is the March the 7th. One operator is required for the start, and I have volunteered myself to do this. If anybody wants to attend and give me a hand they would be most welcome.

At this event, radios are issued by AREC and New Zealand Police, there is no need to have personal equipment.

Regards
Gavin ZL2ACT

(Apologies if this has been published too late for events but I have been waiting for input. – Ed.).

From the Treasurer:

Treasurer's Report.

I'm getting in early to remind everyone that the financial year ends shortly, and I shall be required to produce my Annual Report. At present, I have a tentative report ready, but I cannot produce a final report 'til after March 31st.

There is no requirement for the books to be audited, but anyone with an interest in the business of the Branch may "check" the books, and have it recorded that the books have been checked. Please let me know if you would like to do this, best done after April 1st and the AGM.

Subscriptions

My book-keeping software will automatically produce a subscription invoice on April 1st. Having these things generated automatically saves me from a lot of tedious repetition. Please don't think the April 1st date

on them is a prank. Since I adopted the practice of invoicing members, the “Invoice Yield” has improved greatly.

How the Branch has Fared Historically

I carried out an exercise of extracting Branch information from the historical data. You may find it interesting. The spreadsheet and graphs are attached to the end of this newsletter.

Regards
Gavin Smith ZL2ACT
Branch 63 Treasurer

From Fraser ZL4VV

Yaesu FT857D/817/891 for hands free or hearing impaired hamster.

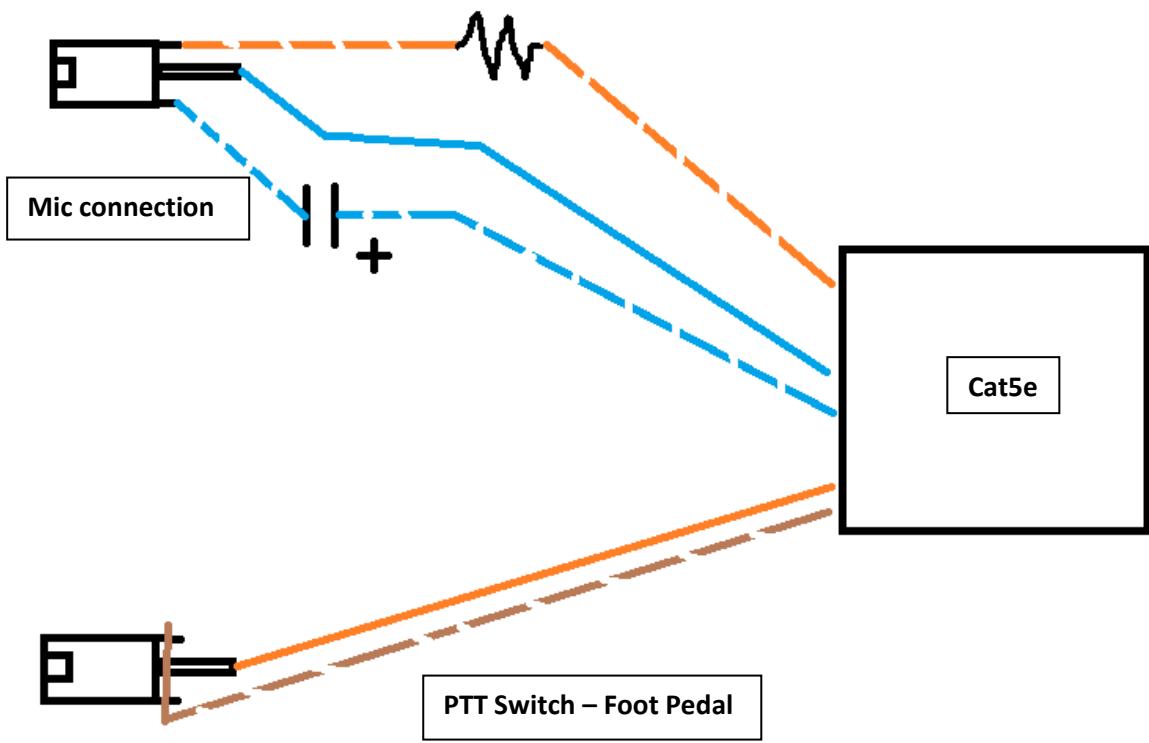
I own a FT857D and love it – once the menu system was understood hi hi.

The problem I have is that I have damaged hearing and the XYL detests having to put up with the sound of hash coming from the radio shack. So to kill two birds with one stone, I set out to create a way to interface a standard PC headset to the radio.

After a substantial amount of research, three failed prototypes and a kiss from a hot soldering iron. I created an interface cable that allowed me to use a PC Headset, Key the radio from a Homebrew foot pedal or hand switch and utilise the VOX option within the radio.

Required components:

Description	QTY
Cat5e 1m patch cable.	1
47uF Capacitor	1
2.2k Ohm Resistor	1
Female 3.5 Stereo jack	2



Mic input (mic connection from PC Headset)

Orange and White is our +5ve to provide DC to our electret Mic, which is soldered to the “Ring” with a 2.2k Ohm resister soldered in series on the line.

Blue is our Mic ground, which is soldered to the “shank”.

Blue and White is Mic+, which is soldered to the “Tip” with a 47uF capacitor soldered in series.

PTT Switch/Foot pedal

Brown and White is the ground, soldered in such a way to bridge both the “Ring” and “Tip”

Orange is the PPT+, soldered to the “Shank”

Use of the interface cable

The RJ45 connector at the opposite end of our two female 3.5mm stereo jacks is plugged into the radio itself. Depending on the type of PC headset, it will have either: two 3.5mm male plugs for audio and mic or one, if your headset is the type to have one 3.5mm plug you will need to purchase a “splitter” from either Jaycar or JB-HI-FI for a couple of dollars.

The Mic 3.5mm male is plugged into the homebrew cable (as above) and the 3.5mm male Audio is plugged into the radio itself, on the left side of the radio face (ensure you flick the small switch on the back side of the radio face plate to SP). In this current set up (without a foot/hand switch) you can only key the radio via VOX use.

Plug a simple hand/foot switch into the remaining 3.5mm female plug on our created interface cable to enable the use of a standard PTT operation.

Any questions let me know, or if you would like me to make one for you, im happy to oblige (provided you cover the cost of parts, my time is free)

Cheers

Fraser, ZL4VV

We are always looking for articles to fill the pages of newsletter. Please forward anything, no matter how large or small, to the editor - Eric

ZL2SET – ericwilby@gmail.com.

From Malcolm ZL2UDF

Branch 50 (Wellington) NZART

March 2020

Postal address: 51 Tilbury St, Fairfield, Lower Hutt 5011.

Bank: ANZ 06-0541-0859045-00

E-mail: secretary@zl2wb.com

Website: <http://zl2wb.com/wp/>

Social Group: George's QTH, 14 Vasanta Avenue, Ngaio.

(Contact: Mike Hoult ZL2VMH, 04-478-5437)

Club Net: Sunday 9.30am local time, 7055 kHz LSB.

Chair: Mike Woods ZL1AXG. Secretary-treasurer: Malcolm Wheeler ZL2UDF



Branch Meeting including AGM

Sunday 22 March 2020, 1:00pm Mike ZL1AXG QTH, 2 Derry Hill, Churton Park.

This Newsletter advises members there is to be the Branch 50 Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Sunday 22 March 2020 at 1:00pm.

This weekend's "relaxed" JW Field Day contest for ZL2WB Sunday 23 February

Time: (10 am till 3 pm) Address: (Ian Galloway Park North or South Field will be decided on the day). Kindly being arranged by Benjamin – ZL2BCI, phone: 027 304 7647. Contact Committee for more information.

Social Group Meeting

Tuesday 25 February 2020, 1:30 pm George ZL2AG QTH – 14 Vasanta Avenue, Ngaio.

Shed Workshop – Sunday 1 March 2020, 12:05pm Mike ZL1AXG QTH, 2 Derry Hill, Churton Park. Catered light lunch provided by Branch 50 at noon, discussion with Branch 74 members, then at 1:00pm presentation by Charlie Morris ZL2CTM on homebrew TXCVRs and RXCVRs.

Charlie's experimental work is followed by a worldwide audience of homebrew and QRP aficionados. It will be an interesting meeting which should appeal to most members of both branches.

Gavin's financial spreadsheet and graphs follow: (Ed.)

nzart branch 63 Incorporated
Council Depot
Park Street
Upper Hutt

President: Mike ZL2NSA
Secretary: Justin: ZL2UGL
Treasurer: Gavin: ZL2ACT

Date	Liquid Assets	Fixed Assets	Total
31 March 2002	\$6,688.36	\$8,255.00	\$14,943.36
31 March 2003	\$4,910.16	\$10,708.00	\$15,618.16
31 March 2004	\$5,922.81	\$10,260.00	\$16,182.81
31 March 2005	\$5,425.79	\$13,977.00	\$19,402.79
31 March 2006	\$7,322.50	\$13,124.00	\$20,446.50
31 March 2007	\$7,908.37	\$11,740.00	\$19,648.37
31 March 2008	\$8,645.27	\$12,221.00	\$20,866.27
31 March 2009	\$10,742.76	\$10,570.00	\$21,312.76
31 March 2010	\$11,676.51	\$9,510.00	\$21,186.51
31 March 2011	\$15,654.48	\$8,130.00	\$23,784.48
31 March 2012	\$20,287.34	\$9,901.00	\$30,188.34
31 March 2013	\$18,405.17	\$14,200.00	\$32,605.17
31 March 2014	\$17,483.28	\$18,500.00	\$35,983.28
31 March 2015	\$14,011.34	\$17,850.00	\$31,861.34
31 March 2016	\$13,245.81	\$14,000.00	\$27,245.81
31 March 2017	\$14,626.99	\$9,500.00	\$24,126.99
31 March 2018	\$18,151.48	\$5,000.00	\$23,151.48
31 March 2019	\$17,113.42	\$1,775.00	\$18,888.42

Asset Totals

