



Ragchew

“The Voice of Branch 68”

April 2016

The North Canterbury Amateur Radio Club Inc.
PO Box 14, Woodend 7641



www.ncarcinc.weebly.com

Meetings are held at the Woodend Youth Centre, unless otherwise advised.



QTH

CLUB CALENDAR

Meetings start at 1930hrs, unless otherwise stated.

Host for April- ZL3OV

April 14 General Meeting - “FT5ZM Amsterdam Island DXpedition 2014” DVD

Branch 01 Ashburton

April 11 General Meeting - Brian ZL3TJW is host

Branch 05 Christchurch

April 6 General Meeting - “Enable Networks UFB - site visit 106 Wrights Road”
21 Day meeting (1300hrs)

Branch 56 Christchurch West

April 13 Free & Easy (1330hrs)
26 General Meeting

CARDS

April 20 General Meeting

Nets and Frequencies

Canterbury 2M SSB Net 144.200MHz every Tuesday from 2000hrs (vertical polarisation)

Canterbury 6M Net 3850 6M Repeater Thursdays from 2000hrs (vertical polarisation)

Canterbury Area Net 5625 Repeater, 2000hrs on Sundays

National Broadcast last Sunday of the month at 2000hrs on 3.900MHz, National System, 6975 and 705 Repeaters

*Secretary: Colin Rowe ZL3COL Phone 03 313 2303 Email: colingr@xtra.co.nz
Editor: Tony Buckland ZL3HAM Phone 03 312 5352 Email: zl3ham@scorch.co.nz*

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President's Report

Well I've had a busy hot month in March. We started with the Jock White Field day, which I thoroughly enjoyed, look for Ron ZL3RCK's write up further in this issue.

We will be finishing up the month with assisting Br 05 with the National Equestrian endurance event being held at Easter. If anyone is available to man a checkpoint either Saturday 26th or Sunday 27th please get in contact with me as we are short of operators.

In between these events I have been to a Police/LandSAR Sarex at Mount White, another great weekend.

It has been hearting to see some of our new members getting involved in activities and we must encourage this were possible, and keep the vibrancy of the club going.

Remember that the NZART conference is being hosted this year in Christchurch on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of June. If you haven't been to a conference this would be a good opportunity to have a look as there is no travelling involved. For further information www.hamradio.co.nz.

Branch 05 has a Ham Cram weekend coming up 23rd/24th April, which I am assisting with.

Due to some cancellations there are a couple of places available. Let me know if you know of anyone that may be interested.

73 Don ZL3DMC

AREC Report

Members assisted with the Police LandSAR Sarex held at Mount White 12th/13th March it was a recreating of the search for Peter Crowther who went missing in the area a couple of years ago. A good turnout with over 100 personnel from Police, LandSAR and AREC.

Coming up 26/27th March National Equestrian Endurance event being held at Brookside Station near Springfield.

Forest Rural Fire: (AREC supplied Comms./Logistics to Forestry Fire Teams)

Fri 26/2/16 Reported rubbish fire within Fire Boundary of Eyrewell Forest. First responder noted only a small fire and Forestry unit stood down whilst on route.

Mon 7/3/16 Assistance call (Tamkars 5) to fire in pine trees at Waikuku Beach and was later relieved by arrival of further tankers.

Don ZK9EG/ZL3DMC
Section Leader
Geoff ZL3QR
D/Section Leader

Repeater Reports

Mt. Noble 6975



As usual the repeater is an example of one of the things that continues on unabated. It has no knowledge of earthquakes, inflation rates, the national flag or reality TV. Who was it that said "ignorance is bliss"?

Mike ZL3AKZ

Mt. Grey 675

The repeater is working well with no known issues.

Geoff ZL3QR



Branch 68 - Jock White Field Day 2016



I had the privilege of being able to host this year's Jock White Memorial Field Days at my place in rural White Rock. In past years, as most will know and to great satisfaction Branch 68 was able to hold this event at Rob's ZL3RO former QTH in Loburn. With Rob and Mandy moving up to the Marlborough region this venue was no longer an option for the club, so the obvious thing was to have it at my place as it turned out.

I have to say that it has in many aspects been a steep enjoyable learning curve setting up such field stations, there is a huge amount of preparation and planning involved one shouldn't take for granted and you find out that when there are set-backs when things don't happen as per plan then one quickly runs out of time. Don ZL3DMC, Geoff ZL3QR and Geoff ZL3AL whom are seasoned and came with a great wealth of knowledge were instrumental with the setup on the Saturday well done.

Don and I had already worked out antenna direction and location for the 40 and 80 meter dipoles a couple of weeks prior and these were erected using 6.5 meter heavy steel end poles with 12 meter poles in the middle. Unfortunately we had high SWR issues with the 80 meter antenna eventually discovered that a wire had come loose from the balun. After resoldering with a 12v iron the SWR did not improve, interestingly. We proceeded to check the coax with a dummy load and got 1:1 off the bat so good there. Anyway Don had a spare dipole which we erected instead and that worked fine.

The tent and Gazebo was erected and all the equipment setup. Both the 40 and 80 stations are operating sideband and CW this year and were fed off a Generator which basically ran battery chargers to keep the batteries topped up. The 80 meter station also had a UPS which bridged downtime during fuel ups.



N1MM logger was used for logging of the contacts and this worked really well once gotten used to the operating procedures. CW on the 40 meter station was setup also with a help of a laptop which also could decode. Unfortunately I wasn't able to get it working the same way due to hardware/software issues on the 80 meter station. I could not get decoding and audio monitoring to work together, only one or the other, so in the end had to give that away, after spending most of the Friday prior trying to get it to work.

cont'd on page 4

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For further details contact Geoff ZL3QR (03) 313 7317 or zl3qr@kinect.co.nz

April Meeting

The last meeting was Simon giving us an update on the evolution of SDR radio in particular the Flex 6000 series. Following the presentation Simon gave us an informative demo. Excellent piece of kit Simon many thanks for the talk and demo.

This month's program is a DVD of "Amsterdam Island DXpedition 2014".



****April Happy Birthday's****

Dennis ZL3WDB



cont'd from page 3

However the station did have the ability to transmit direct to the key port on my TS-50 via a USB to serial convertor I built earlier in the week for \$7.50. Funny thing is for reasons above we never got to using it over the weekend. These were all things to get sorted properly for next year.

Once the contest was underway starting Saturday 1500 ZL3RR took to the air waves from a sunny White Rock, North Canterbury. The idea is sideband in the first half of the hour and CW in the second. In my mind the emphasis was on CW and I had been working to become proficient over the past year and realizing on the day that conditions weren't quite right for me personally, struggling with a heart rhythm problem that at times of pressure effected pretty much anything and everything I did, copying CW focusing and tiredness. However I was determined to give it all the best crack at it I possibly could and did manage to make 2 CW contacts.

A special thanks to Michael ZL3AX, Geoff ZL3AL and Richard ZL4FZ for their CW efforts boosting up the points big time and to Richard for his guidance and encouragement with CW but also assisting in troubleshooting a not insignificant QRM problem on 80 as it turns out was being caused mainly due to the laptop power supply that was causing hash on various parts of the band. It's funny how one can get used to noise and realize the profoundness of it after it has disappeared. Another 'to fix for next time' job.

Again thanks to Richard for pointing out the effectiveness of AIP on the transceiver, this worked really well on 80 by helping to eliminate interference and reduce audio distortion caused by intermodulation from strong signals. I have since played with this and it actually makes a big difference.

With the contest well underway it was all pretty full on as contacts repeat every hour. We needed more operators to help reduce work load, but then just being busy you do not notice it so much. Hopefully next year we could improve a bit on this and gear up CW as well. Don ZL3DMC and Geoff ZL3QR where in the tent running 40 and one of them managed to break a chair that belonged to Geoff ZL3AL which has since been returned.

We enjoyed a barbeque and catering with assistance from my wife Liz and also a mention to my kids Jenny and Aaron for all their help. It really added to the experience and was really good.

Midnight Saturday rolled in at it was bedtime and going to be a short night with the 0600 start the next morning. Both Geoff's slept on the property and Don went home, it was a pretty dark night the weather was great all weekend and I don't think the dog barked too much although I did hear her once or twice.

0600 Sunday morning, still dark, a little chilly and all set for a beautiful sunrise, I walked out into the paddock and could hear the generator already going and all ready to get into it. I recall it was a little damp with the morning dew. Don turned up and so the Sunday started.

The radio was reconnected and the sound of sideband and CW rung through the early morning air. We were all making contacts again on the hour, mainly me on sideband and Geoff ZL3AL on CW hour after hour racking up the QSO's Although the expected band conditions were not that flash surprisingly there was still plenty of activity even into the last hour of the contest that ended at 1500 Sunday afternoon.



The results are, over the two days a total of 795 contacts made, 581 (SSB) & 214 (CW). On each band, 80M 253 (SSB) 97 (CW) and 40M 328 (SSB) 117(CW). I quickly took a backup of the logger data just in case and then dismantling of the field stations could commence. It took about 6 hours to setup on Saturday and 2 hours to takedown.

The lawn was left exactly as found like nothing had happened. The much anticipated weekend had come and gone and everyone had left and I could look forward to a shower and a relaxed Sunday evening reflecting on events over the past few days. A big thanks to all those that helped, supported and came and had a look over the weekend.

I hope everyone went away with a great experience like mine. I for one found it educational challenging, stimulating and a great social event and really look forward to participating again next time and then playing a much bigger part with CW as well. It's great that likeminded people can

get together with a plan and work as a team and achieve a goal and have a good time doing it.

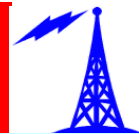
Thank you all for the opportunity, I encourage you all to consider participating, helping and experiencing Jock White Field Days next year, see you there.

73 Ron ZL3RCK.



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CALENDAR for 2016**General Meeting - Second Thursday at 1930 (7.30pm)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-			14	12	9	14	11	8	13	11	8

Committee Meeting - Fourth Thursday at 1930 (7.30pm)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
			28	26	23	28	25	22	27	25	-

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