

WANSARC NEWS

Incorporated in Victoria, 1985 Registration Number: A0007611S

Closing Date for Articles for next issue - March 31st

The monthly magazine of the

Western & Northern Suburbs Amateur Radio Club



Melbourne, Australia



 www.wansarc.org.au

146.450 MHz FM

VK3AWS

28.470 MHz USB



Volume No: 37

Issue 3

March

2006

BBQ DAY FINALLY GOES AHEAD, Mark VK3PI "Arresting a snag" Full Report Pages 3, 4 & 5



**NEXT CLUB MEETING --- Friday 3rd March @ 7.30 pm, at the TAFE
WANSARC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Turn up and Offer Your Services or Nominate Someone for Club Positions,
Or stay at home and find out we have all Elected YOU for the lot!!!**

Around the Shack, News & Stuff, WANSARC Club & Members Activities	2
WANSARC BBQ Day – Report	3
Amusements	5
Reclaiming the 2 meter band in Melbourne “dealing with those #*&! Pagets”	6
NOMINATION FORM – WANSARC ANNUAL GENERAL ELECTION 2006	7
WANSARC Club Profile	8

Around the Shack, News & Stuff, WANSARC Club & Members Activities

WANSARC CLUB AGM NEXT MONTH

Another year already! Time to think about putting your hand up for one of the positions to help the running of the club. See the nomination form on page 7, complete and bring or post to next meeting at the TAFE. Copies of the last years (2005) minutes will be distributed at the meeting.

THE NEW VIRUS

There is a new virus. The code name is WORK.

If you receive WORK from your colleagues, your boss, via e-mail or from anyone else, do not touch it under any circumstances.

This virus wipes out your private life completely.

If you should happen to come in contact with this virus, take two friends and go straight to the nearest bar. Order drinks immediately and after three rounds, you will find that WORK has been completely deleted from your system.

Forward this virus warning immediately to at least five friends. Should you realize that you do not have five friends, this means you are already infected by this virus and WORK already controls your life.

If this is the case, go to the bar and stay there until you make at least five friends. Then try to resend this on. I think I have five friends, but I'm not entirely positive, so I'm headed for the pub, it never hurts to be safe!

GREETINGS TO NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to new WANSARC members joining up on the BBQ day;

Peter

VK3 YXF

Ian

VK3 JQ

John - Awaiting Foundation license in the mail.

MORE POWER FOR FOUNDATION OPERATORS

Foundation licenses to be allowed transmitter power of 10 watts for all permitted modes (soon!). As the new amateur license structure, including the Foundation license, came into effect on 19 October 2005, WIA President Michael Owen, VK3KI, said that "Our only regret is that we believe that the power limit of 3 watts for AM, FM and CW for the Foundation license, while perfectly logical, is unrealistic given the output power of commercially available equipment, particularly older equipment, and that the power limit should be 10 watts."

Michael had already advised ACMA that the WIA believed that a power output limit of 10 watts would not result in any difficulties but would enable the use of many older transmitters, particularly VHF sets, which would be attractive to the Foundation licensees.

The WIA was advised by ACMA today that "Following reconsideration of the issues involved, it is agreed, under the Foundation license, to permit a transmitter output power of 10 Watts pX on all permitted emission modes instead of the present 10 Watts pX for J3E emissions and 3 Watts pY for all other permitted emissions."

The change will formally come into effect, with other amendments to the Amateur LCD, in some month's time. The WIA President said that the WIA welcomed ACMA's decision, which should assist many Foundation licensees, and was grateful that the regulator was prepared to make an early announcement.

From Wireless Institute of Australia - <http://www.wia.org.au>

GENERATOR WARNING

One Amateur recently damaged his new Power Supply (the 40Amp Switch Mode Supplies that many of us have) when plugging it into a cheap petrol Generator even though the power supply was turned off.

The problem arises were the Input Mains Filter Network and a MOV are located before the Mains Switch. The MOV (Metal Oxide Varistor) is supposed to protect the power supply from brief voltage spikes that appear on the mains input. This one starts conducting at around 275V RMS AC. Unfortunately some cheap generators have rather poor regulation and may run at 300V at start-up with no load!! Please check your units if you have one. In this case the MOV blew and shorted out. Luckily the generator did not have enough grunt to do more damage!

A replacement MOV restored the Power Supply to its former glory but is not the kind of thing you find out in the field when most needed!

In future running a permanently connected load, like a 60 Watt light globe, should provide the generator with enough load to keep the output at a respectable voltage, regardless of whether the power supply is switched on or off.

A cautionary tail relayed via David, VK3THY - From NERG News

WICEN ACTIVATED FOR KING LAKE FIRES

Bushfires in the King Lake region began on 22 January. With extremely dangerous weather predicted for Australia Day and state-wide fire bans in place, WICEN was asked to set up a communications link between the King Lake area and the region's Police Headquarters in Rosanna. Their concern was that the fire might spread and disrupt key communications facilities in the area. Fortunately on this occasion WICEN able to remain on standby, keeping links open throughout the day, until rain and cooler weather finally gave the CFA and DSE fire fighters the upper hand. Even so, it took several more days before the fires were declared under control. Please consider volunteering for WICEN - not everyone need to be able to go portable - in this case at least one ham was able to conduct his end of the link in a fully air-conditioned police station well away from the main event. (That Ham happened to be your editor, Mick, along with the company of John Wier, VK3ZRV, my first ever WICEN "call-out")

- From NERG News

ACMA CONSIDERING MORE TRANSMITTER POWER

WIA is requesting that the ACMA change power limits for Standard and Advanced licensees, as recommended in the ACMA's review paper last year. The changes would see all modes of transmission limited to a common power level. For Standard licensees, that would be 100 Watts for all modes, and for Advanced licensees, 400 Watts. While not affecting SSB, continuous carrier modes such as CW, FM, and RTTY would receive a welcome boost.

The change would also bring Australia into line with the UK and New Zealand.

The ACMA is still considering any implications in human exposure to electromagnetic radiation. A decision is yet to be reached on this issue; Meanwhile it is more likely that the Foundation power limit will be raised relatively soon and will apply to all allowable modes.

- From NERG News & WIA & ACMA website

IS TOO LOW AN SWR DANGEROUS???

There was this SWR freak that kept climbing his tower, day after day, to prune the antenna matching system. He repeated this again and again, as if he was trying to bring the SWR below 1:1; that important it seemed to him. With all the climbing, one night he fell off his tower and killed himself. So you see, TOO LOW AN SWR CAN KILL.



YOUNG HAMS NET - Wednesday at 9.00pm local 3.59MHz LSB

Billed as a once off event in the beginning - the "Young Hams Net" hosted by Bill VK3DOU at Pakenham is now a weekly NET. This NET is not just for Foundation calls, but anyone who is new or recent to Amateur radio, but of course it's a chance

for new Foundation calls to get to talk to others new to the bands like them and also assist them in getting contacts towards the new "WAFFLE" Award. It also gives them an idea of operating on HF. Full calls and others are all welcome to join in and give their history or pointers on Ham Radio, or anything they wish to discuss. After the NET many Foundation stations chat on the frequency or QSY to talk and gain points for the WAFFLE Award. (See last issue about the WAFFLE Award or Amateur Radio Website) To find out more view the new website of the Scout Radio and Electronics Service Unit (SRESU) at <http://www.sresu.asn.au/> Check here in case the NET times ever change.

The SRESU is a service unit of the Scouts Australia, Victorian Branch. Established to provide radio and electronics related services for Scouts, the SRESU provides health and welfare communications for large Scouting activities, helps Scouts obtain amateur radio licenses by running theory classes and examinations and is responsible for co-ordination of the annual event Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) and Jamboree On The Internet (JOTI) in Victoria.

The SRESU has 2 portable amateur radio repeaters, VK3RSS and VK3RSS which are used for these activities.

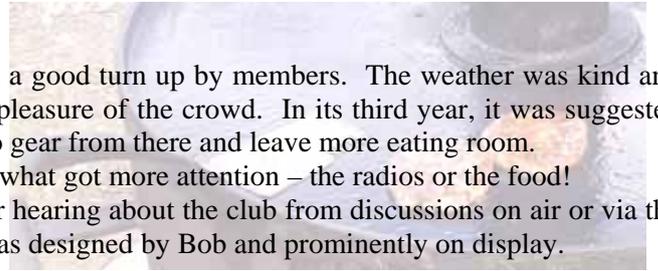
Membership of the SRESU is open to all members of Scouts Australia, Victorian Branch who have an interest in radio or electronic activities. An amateur radio license is NOT a prerequisite for membership.

The SRESU meets on the second Monday of each month (except January) in Box Hill and visitors are always welcome. For more information please email the Secretary, link at internet address above.

Benjamin Ball - Branch Activity Leader - Radio and Electronics

WANSARC BBQ Day – Report

After a few date changes the BBQ Day finally went ahead with a good turn up by members. The weather was kind and great tasting food was served by our able handed chef's to the pleasure of the crowd. In its third year, it was suggested next year to place a tent next to the rotunda and operate the radio gear from there and leave more eating room. Possibly a date change for next year as well! It's hard to decide what got more attention – the radios or the food! Three new members, Peter, Ian and John, joined on the day after hearing about the club from discussions on air or via the club website. A very professional banner advertising the club was designed by Bob and prominently on display.



The main “stage” with all the food and radios setup, with shade and WANSARC banner compliments of Bob VK3EL
Looking for food, slim chances with hungry members about Bobs portable antenna setup for the day, back in action at the John Moyle Field Day no doubt, later in the month



Some our Chef's, John 'KJW' & Mark 'PI' “On Duty”



WANSARC BBQ Day – Report continued – The day in pictures...



Plates ready watching BBQ with interest
Young hams chatting on air, with more on the way

Chris "FY" with Nikolaas, VK3FNIK and Norman
And plenty of discussions with each other

Taking it easy...



WANSARC BBQ Day – Report continued.... (Comments from Bob VK3EL)

Waking up on Sunday the 5th of February , I was happy to see the weather looked fairly much as had been forecast , and by a little after 8am I'd arrived at Mt. Cooper Park Bundoora (after a quick stop at 'Macca's' for a bacon & egg muffin.) I hung the 'homebrew' club banner on the shelter to identify the site for our visitors and also to help keep away possible interlopers. Derek VK3AOF and I had a bit of a yarn and not long after Chris VK3FY, his son Nick VK3FNIK and younger son Norman arrived and we proceeded to unload Chris's generator and radio gear he'd kindly bought along for the club's use.

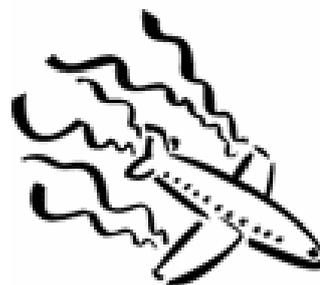
I'd already managed to set up my very basic portable antenna system and it wasn't too long before there were noises coming out of the radio gear. Club members and visitors began to arrive from then onwards and soon the time seemed right to get the trusty (rusty?) BBQ up and running. Chris's two boys were not too taken with the 'presents' some birds had left on the BBQ cooking surface, but after some discussion, were partially convinced those 'presents' were a necessary part of making the BBQ work well and the food taste good! Never the less I did clean the hot-plate and it wasn't too long before a good fire running ready to burn the snags and burgers to feed the hopefully hungry hordes! By then the day's weather was shaping up very well, although the breeze during the early part of the function was quite cool, but later the day became very sunny and warm and some of the visitors even got a little sunburn to take home with them. It was pleasing to see the attendance numbers were comparable to our previous events, as the committee had feared that the postponements we had to make may have discouraged some people from making a third attempt, but we're working on the elements to cooperate with us next year! Also good to hear that the club has picked up three new members during the function and to them, welcome to WANSARC! Thanks to all those who attended and we hope you DID enjoy the day? Thanks should also go to the Mt. Cooper Park Ranger who paid us an early visit on the day to make sure that there was a plentiful supply of firewood for the BBQ. Over all I felt that the day was a success as in the past and look forward to seeing Everyone next year for an even bigger and better WANSARC Family Fun Day!

73 from Bob VK3EL

Amusements

Think you travel too much? Check our "Top 10" warning signs and prepare for take off.

10. You forget where your car is parked at the airport.
You're not even sure which airport.
9. The airline frequently upgrades you to "co-pilot".
8. You dial 9 even when you're at home.
7. The staff at the Marriott think you work there.
6. Your love life has gone from phone sex to fax sex.
5. You know the best restaurants in cities most people can't even spell.
4. Your picture appears on milk cartons.
3. You have conjugal visits with your wife at the airport.
2. When you return home your children ask you how long you'll be visiting.
1. Your frequent flyer level enables you to take the plane wherever you like as long as you return with a full tank of gas.



Did you ever notice how when management tells you something they don't always tell you everything? Sometimes it seems like they have their own special language for everything. If you're in the know, it all makes sense, but if not, use this handy guide to translate management speak into what you really need to know.

The product is going to ship in Q4...	....we just don't know what year.
No serious bugs have been reported...	....since we don't have any actual users yet.
We're totally committed to training and education...	....you'll learn on the spot or we'll fire you.
We're big on open source software...	....and anything else you can download free.
I don't want to point fingers...	....but you definitely screwed up!
It's an aggressive schedule...	....that assumes infinite resources.
We only hire the best and the brightest...	....from the local high school.
There's a significant upside in revenues...	....we haven't sold anything yet!
We need to push the envelope on this one...	....who won't look too carefully at the books.
We want to hire a real risk taker....	....and if you get caught, I will deny all knowledge.
The CEO is a real up-and-comer...	....and he's never been convicted.
We're at least 24 months ahead of the competition....	....and at most six months from bankruptcy.
We've got a major deal we're about to announce...	....if we can ever get the software to work.



Reclaiming the 2 meter band in Melbourne

“dealing with those #*&! Pagers”

Many years ago I purchased a filter from a mob called Jenlex that really fixed up my problems. Its still on the main radio I use to run the NET today and quite frankly if it was not “in line” with the antenna – I would not be Net Controller – it just would not be practical. Of course I could always use the old IC-22A “Rock Box” that is totally pager proof, but 10 Watts can’t cover all over town. As I made mention last issue I have put gear up at “work” which has a much better elevation but is near more services with strong RF that kill 2 meters totally (even gives 70cm some break through splatter). It was time to see if Jenlex was still able to help. Yes, they are still trading and making great filters. The website says “*Jenlex Filters manufacture a wide range of Filters, Combiners, Splitters, Amplifiers, Down Converters and Outlets for M.A.T.V., C.A.T.V., TV and Communications applications. Our equipment range for M.A.T.V., C.A.T.V. and TV applications are 75 Ohm Impedance and are fitted with F type connectors and are manufactured in Aluminum housings for Out door / Indoor applications, although a range of other housings are available for special purpose applications. Filters manufactured for communications applications are of 50 Ohm impedance and are manufactured with BNC connectors as standard, but a range of other connectors are available to meet specific requirements. All filters are available in Aluminum, Stainless Steel or plated Copper enclosures, depending on requirements.*”

I recommend if pagers are a hassle for you to look at their website at <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~jenlex/> Phone 03 9548 2594 They have filters from DC to Microwave stuff – of every type of specification and application.

The unit I got was as they describe on their website... “*50 Ohm Band Reject Cavity Resonator: this 50 Ohm, low cost, tunable Band Reject cavity resonator is primarily used to assist with the reduction of Pager interference to Packet Radio on 147.600 MHz. For maximum suppression of Pager interference in a strong signal strength area, a -100 dB and a 400 KHz notch could be required which would need three (3) to four (4) cavities. Although this example is for Pager interference, we can custom manufacture cavities to your requirements and nominated centre frequency. Each cavity can be tuned between 250 KHz to 500 KHz either side of the nominated centre frequency and have a choice of BNC or N type connectors.*”

My order took about a month to make up and test and deliver – they are busy; Amateur Radio jobs are only one section of their business. Like the last unit I got years ago it’s a very professional high quality unit custom made for your specific requirements.



Inside the RX only unit, 148.5MHz Notch filter that Chris VK3FY purchased, this unit is receive only and needs to be bypassed while transmitting, but is much cheaper and also suited to those scanning the bands and requiring protection from pager interference. Not very large either fits in your hand.

In contrast the Red Tube you see is 100mm diameter and a 690mm high, 2kg. Connection made by a single PL-259 (UHF Connector) female plug.



The cavity filter (red tube) on the test bench. The top plate with tuning screw and coax. Typical tuning tube arrangement.

Inner & Outer tuning tubes

Inner photo of housing container with coax connections either side.



The red tube cavity filter is centered at 148.500MHz. Rated at 200 watts continuous or 400watts at a 33% duty cycle. It is connected to the transmitter by having a “T” piece coax joiner going from Transmitter and Antenna, with the cavity filter “hanging” off to one connection which nulls out the unwanted frequency of interference. As it only nulls out the frequency specified, you can operate anywhere on the 2 meter band without worrying about pass band settings as you may need to using a “band pass” filter.

I have found a 2 to 3 ‘S’ point reduction in pager interference at my QTH, depending on your QTH and services annoying you, benefits will vary. At the roof car park at Doncaster Shoppingtown, there was little difference on 144-148MHz, so it can’t help you from a ‘brute force’ RF signal.

POSITION _____

NAME _____ (Name) _____ (Call sign)

PROPOSER _____ (Name) _____ (Call sign)

_____ (Signature)

SECONDER _____ (Name) _____ (Call sign)

_____ (Signature)

I accept the nomination, _____ (Signature)

POSITION _____

NAME _____ (Name) _____ (Call sign)

PROPOSER _____ (Name) _____ (Call sign)

_____ (Signature)

SECONDER _____ (Name) _____ (Call sign)

_____ (Signature)

I accept the nomination, _____ (Signature)

WANSARC VK3AWS

PRESIDENT: Graeme McDiarmid VK3NE vk3ne@wia.org.au

SECRETARY: Mark Stephenson VK3PI Telephone: 0400 443 218 vk3pi@optusnet.com.au

All correspondence to be addressed to the SECRETARY: PO Box 336, RESERVOIR 3073

WANSARC CLUB PROFILE

History

The Western and Northern Suburbs Amateur Radio Club (WANSARC) was first formed in 1969 and since then has served the needs and interests of amateur radio operators, short wave listeners and those interested in hobby radio and electronics. The club is not gender specific, having both female and male members. Members come from all walks of life with a mix of experience, young and mature, novice and technical. The most important aspect of the club is the willingness of all members to share their knowledge for the benefit of others. Members mainly reside in the west and north of Melbourne; however membership is encouraged from all interested.

Meetings

Building K, Northern Metropolitan Institute of Technology (NMIT), St. Georges Road, Preston (Western side between Bell Street and Cramer Street) Melway 18 E12 *PARKING at NMIT- Members please note that parking adjacent to the club room building K is illegal and NMIT staff WILL book any cars which are parked in that area. ALL members must park cars in the main car park to the WEST of building K. Just look for vehicles with lots of aerials!* Meetings held on the 1st Friday of each month (excluding January) commencing at 7.30pm local time.

Talk in on 146.450MHz FM—call club station VK3AWS.

Benefits

Free technology and related presentations, sponsored construction activities, discounted (and sometimes free) equipment, network of like minded radio and electronics enthusiasts, excellent club facilities and environment.

Club Nets

146.450MHz FM each Tuesday evening commencing 7.30pm local time.

Sometimes the NET is linked to Echolink. This link is only brought up on the frequency of 146.450 MHz during the running of the WANSARC Net on Tuesday nights and *only when VK3FY is present at his QTH.*

More Information

Website: www.wansarc.org.au

Committee:

Chris VK3FY,
Dan VK3DWH,

Bob VK3EL,
Tony VK3BZT

Email: wansarc@wia.org.au

Postal: WANSARC PO Box 336 RESERVOIR 3073

A proud tradition of supporting hobby radio and electronics enthusiasts since 1969

All editors comments may not always represent the opinions of other club members of WANSARC.

In any case anything stated is to promote interest and active discussion on club activities and the promotion of Amateur Radio in general.

Contributions to WANSARC are always welcome from any part of the world. You can either post material to the Post Office Box address at the top of this page, or email your submission to the editor direct at vk3ch@wia.org.au

Email attachments not to exceed 1 Mb in file size. Attachments of (or thought to be) executable code will not be opened.

Other persons or radio clubs may edit or copy out such as they like from the magazine but a reference to WANSARC is appreciated.

Other articles that are credited to outside sources should be asked for their permission if they are used.

While we strive to be accurate, no responsibility will be taken for errors, omissions, or other perceived deficiencies, in respect of information contained in technical or other articles.

Any dates given for upcoming events should always be checked with a reliable source – coming up on the weekly WANSARC Tuesday evening NET on 146.450 MHz starting at 07:30 pm AEST is recommended to discuss and confirm information and any dates.

If not delivered within 7 days, please return to:
WANSARC P.O. Box 336 Reservoir 3073

“WANSARC NEWS”

Monthly journal of the

Western & Northern Suburbs Amateur Radio Club