

# B.A.R.G. NEWS

Official Newsletter of the Ballarat Amateur Radio Group. Inc. #6953T

ABN 44 247 200 143

VOLUME 28 ISSUE 4 **APRIL 2005**

PRESIDENT: David Tilson VK3UR SECRETARY: John Kennedy VK3AIG TREASURER: Bob Terrill VK3BNC
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**NEXT MEETING - FRIDAY 29 April 2005**

At 7.30 pm

## EDITOR'S COMMENT

Where do we go as a Club.

As you read this month's news, members will see that the club has been active in various activities from Ben Nevis to construction in members homes. This is encouraging to the committee and shows that we seem to be having more activity by some members. After the visit to GRES in Geelong and reading of their activities in AR, we should be encouraged to do more in and for our hobby. We should be trying to get more members and encouraging entry into the hobby and with the new licence, now is our chance. We have good club rooms and we should be using them to encourage more use.

May be it is time to work with computer clubs or radio astronomy groups where can learn from them and they from us. If we don't expand we may fade away and our expertise lost.

## DATES

Club meetings the last Friday each month starting at 7.30 pm

COMMITTEE please note that meetings (3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in the month) will also start at 7.30.

**Construction Nights.** Construction nights are held on the second Monday each month at 7.30 .

**WICEN Net :** Tuesday nights at 9.00 pm on 3.60 MHz + QRM etc. (Some times below 3.60) and after the net closes, a short check in on 40M at an agreed freq.

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**MONTHLY DINING MEETING.** The next function is to be held at the Bunch of Grapes Hotel Pleasant Street South on Friday 20 May 05 starting at 1830. Usual bookings to Bob VK3BNC

## WELCOME to a NEW MEMBER

We welcome into the club a new member Gavin VK3VTX from Bannochburn who members may have heard on VK3RBA talking to our members.

## GEORGE FOWLER MEMORIAL AUCTION

The George Fowler Auction takes place this year on Sunday 29 May at the club rooms starting with a soup lunch from 12 midday with the auction due to start at 1300.

It is a fun day where you can dispose of your unwanted bits and pieces which are of value to other amateurs. So start putting together your "lots", mark the day in your diary and come and have a fun day. Remember that it is open to all comers to bring and buy or sell !!! Visitors are very welcome. George was one of our most respected life members and acted as auctioneer for many years.

### Propagation Report April 2005

Again Steve has provided a comprehensive range of information regarding activity on the HF Bands. Steve's report covers mainly the higher HF bands with some rare dx appearing as shown.

10 metres	VA4
12 metres	FT5XO Kerguelen Island – Africa. Apparently this station systematically worked through the various prefixes to give all a go and Steve reports attempting to get his oar in over a half hour period to no avail – Bad luck Steve!!!
15 metres	Stations worked include YB1, ZL1, TI4, and VK's
40 metres	VK's, JA's, ZL's and GI3

VHF/UHF

2 metres SSB and Digital

This band has shown a decline in long distant contacts over the past few weeks. Contacts within VK3 appear normal with spasmodic openings to VK5 and with Aircraft Enhancement to VK1 and VK2. Ian continues with digital contacts to VK7MO during weekdays and meteor scatter to VK2 and VK4 on the weekends.

If you are looking for something a bit different and have a 10 element 2mx yagi and 50watts or greater you will be pleasantly surprised what can be achieved. I can provide details of software etc.

2 metres FM

There are many dx contacts to be had on FM. Reports indicate there have been numerous openings into VK5 from Western Victoria and also reports that Leigh VK2KRR has been getting into VK5 as well.

Let's hear what you have been working/hearing on this popular band.

How about you providing this forum with details of what's been happening in your shack each month. This may encourage others to get on the bandwagon and reveal operating habits and achievements in our wonderful hobby.

73's Ian VK3AXH

## CONSTRUCTION NIGHTS

### **Construction Group:**

Our monthly Construction Group commenced work in April on its new project, being 160m verticals based on a design from Drew Diamond, **VK3XU**, that was recently published in Amateur Radio Magazine. During our first night of construction, members prepared the formers for the large loading coil and measured out the required wire to wind around the former.

### **From the President's Shack:**

Firstly, my apologies for not providing an update during the last 2 newsletters. Things have been a little chaotic around our house over the last couple of months with arrival of our daughter, Juliette, into Katie's and my life.

A number of our club members enjoyed an entertaining weekend recently for the John Moyle Memorial Field Day. The weekend was a great success and gave the opportunity for our members, both new and old, to practice their skills in establishing a portable radio station in the field and to exchange contacts with similar stations throughout Australia.

On Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> April, a number of our members headed down to Geelong to visit the Geelong Radio and Electronics Society (GRES). Our hosts were exceptionally welcoming, gave a talk on the history of GRES and then provided a tour of their very impressive club rooms. Thanks to Doug, **VK3VBA**, for organising and driving the bus to and from Geelong.

We have a number of guest speakers lined up over the next few months, including Drew Diamond, **VK3XU**, in April, who will talk about home brew construction techniques and Neil Blanchard, in May, who will be giving a presentation on the new Emergency Alerting System (EAS) that will be used by the CFA, SES and RAV. Both of these promise to be very interesting and relevant to our members.

Yours in amateur radio,

David Tilson, VK3UR  
BARG President

### **Committee News:**

The Club has received its membership certificate for the Wireless Institute of Australia. The certificate is to be framed and displayed in the club rooms.

Site works have been undertaken at Mt Ben Nevis in preparation for the replacement of the 2m voice repeater, VK3RWA. A group of our intrepid members ventured up to the site last week to replace the cabinet, with a much larger new cabinet generously donated by Amateur Radio Victoria, and to swap the antenna back to the tower mounted antenna from its temporary antenna. Bob, **VK3BNC**, has been busy constructing the new PIC controller and is awaiting the imminent arrival of the radios to be interfaced.

As members would be aware, we have been trying to gain access to a broadband internet connection out at the club rooms. Several of the benefits of this include the ability to house the IRLP node at the club rooms and make use of the internet for other possible projects. Discussions are taking place

### **BEN NEVIS**

**Or**

## **Dad's Army on Manoeuvres!**

Objective, Removal of the old Ben Nevis repeater cabinets and install a new all metal larger unit supplied by WIA Vic. Well the start wasn't too good due to a delay by twenty four hours due to weather conditions. Then there was some minor confusion on which day we had re-scheduled for the task with yours truly and Neil KQQ. This being resolved the advance party took off consisting of Dr John, CFH at the wheel and urged on by John AIG, Gordon FGC and yours truly BNC. Neil picked up Harry KGL and then proceeded to load up the cabinet at the clubrooms. I was never sure how they managed that but you can never keep good men down.

The plan was the advance party would set up camp, get the fire going and put on the billy. This John CFH handled being a seasoned camper whilst the old repeater was removed from its home for the last four years. A conference was then called to work out the best way to remove the cabinets and their concrete foundations so Doc called time out for a brew!

By this time Neil had arrived with the "heavy equipment" namely a large crow bar. After a bit of "pussy footing around" big John took control and within a short space of time they were out of the way.

Now came the "technical stuff" the foundations for the new cabinet and with sleeves rolled up Neil proceeded to lay them out. Harry took charge of the rock drill only to find there was no power. Well it was then that Gordon poked and pulled at the generator and being ably assisted by Bill, PAL and lots of advice from Doc who by this time had completed his duties in the camp kitchen. It looked like there was not going to be any holes in the bedrock when to a large cheer the generator sprang into life.

The bolts were dropped into the holes through the steel base plate with suitable glue and the concrete was poured. By the way guys what happened to my bucket, hope Bet doesn't read this!

Seems this was the ideal time for lunch and let the quick dry cement do its job.

If you are ever looking for a great spot for a family picnic well this would have to be it. Its got a bit of everything, lovely views out over the valleys, birds, a wallaby or two and just peace and quite. Great spot fellas for portable operation either HF or VHF.

I'm not going to relate the jokes that filled the silence around the bush table but it passed the time and then it was back to work again.

The plan now was to mount the new cabinet on the foundation bolts and level it all and then re-install the gear. Neil doing the "technical stuff" and Bill assisting with advice, well the results turned out fine. "Should all be straight forward now", no, the instructions? Where are they? Well chaps we are due out tonight and she who must be obeyed will be waiting, so some quick shelving was arranged, the equipment re-installed, connected to its old antenna and then time to test.

All looked good and tests with Bob, NBV confirmed all was well. Ok load up chaps and out of here. Chit chatting whilst driving down the Mount partly to calm our nerves, we were pleasantly surprised by a call from John, VK5PO near Adelaide. Well it sure was working.

So VK3RWA, Ben Nevis is in its new home and will shortly be replaced with a new Tx/Rx and controller which will give far more flexibility and enjoyment to you the end users.

Late as we were we still enjoyed the company of our wives and fellow BARG members at our monthly dinner this time at the renovated "Flying Horse". This capped off a great day, lots of fun, good company and a sense of achievement.

Bob, VK3BNC.

### **Towers: Here, There and Everywhere...**

During the last couple of months there has been a flourish of towers sprouting skywards in the backyards of our members.

John, **VK3AIG**, has erected the bottom half of a Nally Tower, which will shortly be populated with some VHF/UHF antennas. Although it is still bare, John sits in the back patio area every morning with a cuppa admiring his new tower.

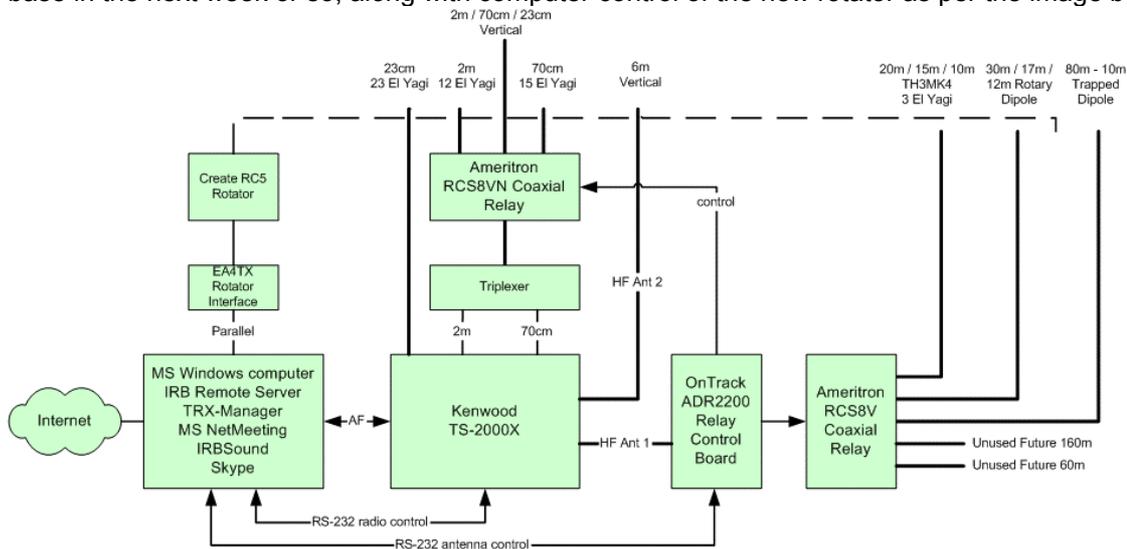
Ian, **VK3IDL**, has managed to install some new antennas on his Nally Tower. These include new heliaxes and yagis on 6m, 2m and 70cm. A 23cm yagi is currently undertaken construction.

David, **VK3UR**, despite some ribbing from our Editor in our last newsletter, now has a Nally Tower in his back yard. This project was first identified, last April (2004), as a need to relocate some speaker wires in the lounge room and ended up with the erection of a radio tower. This was based on the logic that if you are climbing inside the roof relocating speaker wires, then you might as well move a number of antennas and install some more coaxial cables at the same time... The tower is now adorned with antennas on every amateur band from 10MHz to 1.3GHz, with room to attach the 3.5MHz and 7MHz dipoles and a dipole, if and, when VK amateurs are allocated access to the 5MHz band.



Photo of the new VK3UR antenna farm, prior to installation of the cables (and speaker wires) in the roof and slight straightening of a few elements.

All 9 antennas are connected to a series of coaxial relays which will be remotely selectable via his internet remote base in the next week or so, along with computer control of the new rotator as per the image below.



*(Is it a case of “This goes with this at Susan’s or Dave’s” Ed.)*

Craig, **VK3CMC**, is also in the process of installing 2 Nally Towers at his property in Cape Clear. Craig liked the symmetry that twin towers would offer as you drive into his yard. As we go to press Craig has now got the 2 poles concreted into place and will be attaching the towers over the next few weeks. One can only wonder why Craig hadn’t installed antennas on the lighthouse, visible in his QSL card, but that’s another story.

In true amateur spirit, a number of members have assisted each other with different aspects of these projects, including welding, digging holes, concreting, transportation and the erection of the towers.

## NOW THE DREADED MOWING ROSTER –AT LAST

Thank you members who have “volunteered” for the grass mowing at the club rooms. Please try do it during your month and keep a copy of this roster to remind you

May VK3CMC & IDL      June VK3DMK & FGC      July VK3 AXH & TJW  
Aug VK3NBV & VBA      Sept VK3CMC & IDL      Oct VK3DMK & FGC  
Nov VK3AXH & TJW      Dec VK3NBV & VBA

Any other members willing to help – I am sure we can fit you in!

Thirty minutes of exercise three times a week and 15 minutes of hearty laughter each day should be part of a healthy life style. Thanks to New Scientist Magazine and you should now have had a small starter dose.

### VK3BML – Ballarat Amateur Radio Group Summary Sheet John Moyle 2005

Callsign VK3BML  
Name Ballarat Amateur Radio Group BARG  
Mailing Address PO Box 1261 Mail Centre, Ballarat, 3353  
Section Multi Operator – HF, VHF/UHF Phone

Number of Contacts	80m	Contacts 27	Points 54
40m	Contacts 148	Points 296	
	6m	Contacts 33	Points 444
	2m	Contacts 59	Points 1212
	70cm	Contacts 39	Points 646
	23cm	Contacts 15	Points 232
			<b><u>Total 2884</u></b>

Location Flagstaff Lookout near Linton Victoria QF12sh  
Equipment HF – Kenwood TS520, IC740 and - dipoles  
6m - FT847 – 4 el yagi  
2m – IC910 - 8 el yagi  
70cm FT847 – 12 el yagi  
23cm IC910 – 24 el yagi  
3 Petrol Generators

Names and Callsigns of Participants – Bob Terrill VK3BNC, John Kennedy VK3AIG, Ian McDonald VK3AXH, Bob Pitcher VK3NBV, John Hazeldine VK3CFH, Ian Lloyd VK3IDL, Harry Hekkema VK3KGL, Neil Davidson VK3KQQ, Gavin Barnes VK3VTX, Rodney Clarke VK3KRC, David Tilson VK3UR, Craig Cook V3CMC, John Watts VK3TJW and Sunday visitor Ernie Turner VK3DET.

## **Frequency of Operation**

HF was as per the log sheets and VHF/UHF between the limits 50.150 – 50.220MHz, 144.150 – 144.220MHz, 432.150 – 432.220MHz and 1296.150 – 1296.220MHz. Log sheets were as submitted in 2004 in which case VK3BML was placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Multi Operator section.

### Declaration:

I hereby declare that this station was operated in accordance with the rules and spirit of the contest and that the contest managers decision will be accepted as final.

Signed: Ian McDonald VK3AXH, Field Day Coordinator, BARG  
April 22, 2005

## **BARG MINUTES OF MARCH GENERAL MEETING**

### *Ballarat Amateur Radio Group Inc.*

*Minutes of General Meeting March 18 2005*

*Meeting opened by President David @ 1931 hrs.*

*Apologies V<sub>k</sub>3kqq. V<sub>k</sub>3det. V<sub>k</sub>3dcs, V<sub>k</sub>3pal, V<sub>k</sub>3fgc, V<sub>k</sub>3se. V<sub>k</sub>3hrz,*

*Special welcome to Roland from Ballarat City Council*

*Minutes of February meeting as circulated. Moved V<sub>k</sub>3vba/ash Carried.*

*Business arising from Minutes. I.R.L.P. No reply from Telstra yet.*

*Recent survey of B.A.R.G. members indicated a 75% membership of W.I.A.*

*Members covered for insurance John Moyle field day.*

*Roland City Council advised fence repairs in order. President David questioned the legal requirement of Club and insurance responsibility for people trespassing on Club Property. Response from Roland indicated no responsibility. Meeting decided that Tower Base to be protected with 2.80 meter non climb guard. Craig V<sub>k</sub>3cmc to attend.*

*Fox Hunt arrangements to be held over till next Committee Meeting.*

*Correspondence. Out Applications to W.I.A. for Insurance and Affiliation.*

*In Various accounts and A/R.*

*Financial statement and a/cs for payment. Moved V<sub>k</sub>3bnn/cmc.*

*Reports. Amenities. Doug V<sub>k</sub>3vba and Bob v<sub>k</sub>3nbv attended to cleaning.*

*Technical. Ian v<sub>k</sub>3axh reported on material for 160m Vertical and suggested that we allow for 13 antennas to be constructed. Wooden formers available,*

*Education. Craig V<sub>k</sub>3cmc Nil.*

*Library . Craig Vk3cmc shelves well on the way.*

*Club Net. Craig Vk3cmc reported 7 on. Good conditions.*

*Publicity. Doug Vk3vba. Nil.*

*Repeater. Bob Vk3bnc reported controller about finished. Ian Vk3axh chasing up parts. May only cost freight.*

*Education. Doug Vk3vba. One Application.*

*Dinner night 19 attended. Next Flying Horse. Bunch of Grapes as back up.*

*General Business. Bob Vk3nbv expressed disappointment re no I.R.L.P. available. President David assured meeting all is being done to overcome problem.*

*Guest Speaker List. April Drew Diamond. May Neil Blanchard. June Metro Mobile.*

*Mine Tour still in progress. Steve Vk3se to arrange date.*

*Geelong Radio Club. 12 members indicated they will attend. Doug Vk3vba to arrange mini-bus for April 8 and pick up Albert St City.*

*Family Day Cobden. Ian Vk3idl has arranged June 19 2005.*

*Doug Vk3vba questioned the reason for no Committee Meeting being held last month, President David outlined the members away and a quorum not available.*

*Eureka Event. Ian Vk3idl presented Q.S.L. cards and suggested a display to be mounted. Agreed.*

*John Moyle Field Day Ian Vk3axh highlighted the fact of proper information on log sheets. Very difficult to compile when info lacking.*

*Ian Vk3axh asked if Club Rooms available to other groups. President indicated yes, Ian to follow up.*

*Meeting closed @ 2035 hrs.*

*Laughter is the best medicine.*

*What do you call a cat that swallows a duck? A duck- filled fatty- puss*

*Two antennas met and fall in love. Their wedding was terrible, but the reception was brilliant.*

*A neutron orders a pint of beer. The barman hands it to him and says "for you, no charge"*

	<u>Construction Night</u>	<u>Committee Meeting</u>	<u>Dining Night</u>	<u>General Meeting</u>	<u>SPECIAL EVENTS</u>
<u>April</u>	Mon 11 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm	Wed 20 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm	Fri 15 <sup>th</sup> 6:30 pm (Ballarat Trots)	Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm (Drew VK3XU)	
<u>May</u>	Mon 9 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm	Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm	Fri 20 <sup>th</sup> 6:30 pm Bunch of Grapes	Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm (Neil EAS Project)	Sun 7 <sup>th</sup> May Moorabbin Hamfest  Sun 29 <sup>th</sup> May <b>BARG George Fowler Memorial Auction</b> <b>12:00 pm</b>
<u>June</u>	Mon 6 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm (13 <sup>th</sup> Queen's B'day)	Wed 15 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm	Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> 6:30 pm (Venue TBA)	Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm (Speaker – TBA)	Sat/Sun 11/12 June SERG Hamfest (Mt Gambier) New location.  Sun 19 <sup>th</sup> June <b>BARG Family Day at Cobden</b>

### CLUB INFORMATION

#### REPEATERS

VK3RBA	(Voice)	146.750	Mt Buninyong
VK3RWA	(Voice)	147.100	Mt Ben Nevis
VK3RPC	(Packet)	144.750	Mt Warrenheip
VK3RBU-1	(APRS)	144.900	Mt Hollowback
VK3RBU	(Voice)	438.475	Mt Hollowback

#### BEACON

VK3RMB	438.475	Mt Buninyong
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IRLP Node 6310 using VK3RWAS

CLUB e-mail [vk3bml@barg.org.au](mailto:vk3bml@barg.org.au).

CLUB NET VK3BML 3.610+/- QRM Thursday Nights at 8 pm E.S.T (Summer & Winter)

WIA Broadcast and Club Call Back. Sunday's 11.30 via VK3RWA (IRLP Node 6310)

**NEWS ITEMS** Send to **Gordon VK3FGC** (e-mail the club ) mail to Box 1261 Mail Centre BALLARAT 3354

Weekly BARG HF Net: Thursday's 8:00pm on 3.610MHz +/- QRM