

BARG News



Official Newsletter of the Ballarat Amateur Radio Group Inc. # 6953T
ABN 44 247 200 143

VOLUME 36 ISSUE 4 APRIL 2013



President: John Kennedy VK3AIG
Secretary: Doug Ellery VK3FDRE
Treasurer: Roger De Valle VK3ADE

NEXT MEETING - FRIDAY April 26, 2013
At 7.30 pm

Contacting us

You can write to the club at the address below, or e-mail the secretary.

The Secretary : B.A.R.G. Inc.
Box 1261
Mail Centre
Ballarat. Vic. 3354.

Or E-Mail: vk3bml@barg.org.au

We're on the web
www.barg.org.au

BARG INC. LIFE MEMBERS

Maurie Batt *	VK3FGC
Gordon Cornell	VK3LBA
Norm D'Angri	VK3KGL
Harry Hekkema	VK3WN
Kevin Hughes	VK3AXH
Ian McDonald	VK3AQM
Phil Seddon	VK3DCS
Charlie Stewart	VK3BNC
Bob Terrill	
Stan Widgery *	
Jim Wright *	

CLUB INFORMATION
REPEATERS and BEACON

VK3RWA*	(2 m Voice Repeater) (Uses CTCSS of 91.5 Hz to access)	147.100 MHz	Mt Ben Nevis
VK3RPC	(2 m Packet Repeater)	144.750 MHz	Mt Warrenheip
VK3RBU	(70 cm Voice Repeater)	438.475 MHz	Mt Hollowback
VK3RMB	(70 cm Beacon)	432.535 MHz	Green Hill
VK3RBU-1	(2 m APRS Repeater)	145.175 MHz	Mt Hollowback
VK3RBT	(2 m Voice Repeater) (Uses CTCSS of 91.5 Hz to access)	146.650 MHz	Green Hill

* **IRLP** Node 6310 using VK3RWA

CLUB e-mail vk3bml@barg.org.au.

CLUB NETS VK3BML 3.608+/- QRM Thursday Nights at 8 pm E.S.T (Summer & Winter)
146.650 MHz - Every Tuesday Night at 8 pm. (VK3RBT Repeater)

WIA Broadcast Sunday 11.00 am via VK3RWA (IRLP Node 6310)

NEWS ITEMS Send to Harry VK3KGL

Or mail to Box 1261 Mail Centre BALLARAT 3354 or e-mail member.vk3kgl@barg.org.au

Broadcast Times and Dates on VK3RWA Repeater

Every Sunday at 11.00 am, WIA National News.
Every Monday night at 9.30 pm, ARRL News
Every Tuesday night at 9.30 pm, WIA National News Repeat

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Ballarat VIC 3350

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Damien Hennessy

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COFFEE at the CLUB

(A Cuppa Tea is also available)



Join us for a Cuppa and a yarn on the
2nd and 4th Thursday of each month
(except January & December) at the Clubrooms.

We start at 10.30am and finish at about
11.30am, in time to get home for lunch.
**COME ALONG AND JOIN US IN A NIBBLE
AND A NATTER. (FRIENDS ARE WELCOME.)**



B.A.R.G Items for Loan.

Antenna Analyser MFJ269 HF-VHF-UHF

Antenna Analyser MFJ249 HF/VHF

UHF Antenna Analysyer

Antenna Analyser VHF. Autek.

Receiver Drake SSR-1.

Receiver FRG-7.

Transceiver TS-530.

Oscilloscope BWD 509.

Grid Dip Oscillator.

Safety Belt.

Antenna Gin Pole.



BARG 10 GHz Group ???

On Monday 1st April a 2.4G test day was arranged by Rob VK3MQ which has been an event held on the same day for the past 3 years. The day offers a chance to blow the cob webs out of microwave gear. In addition stations participating could take along other bands of interest.

Three BARG members ventured up to Mt Buninyong at commenced setting up their gear at 8am. The temperature was quite fresh being around 10 degrees however the trees offer good protection from the wind and would certainly be a good location for future field day activity giving the facilities at the site.

This type of activity gives amateurs a chance to test their equipment and help understand propagation on the higher bands outside of normal field day operation and also gives the chance to plan modifications to improve individual setups if necessary.



John, VK3AIG

A good morning had by the three members that attended which may give some enthusiasm to others that haven't yet ventured onto the higher amateur bands. The cost of putting together kits available from suppliers such as minikits and VK3XDK make operation on these bands possible.



Kevin, VK3WN

73's de Ian VK3AXH



Kevin, VK3WN and Ian, VK3AXH



Summits On The Air

With Ernie - VK3DET

Sota activations from Mt Beckworth Sota ref VK3/VC-024 height 635M 2 points for chasers

Saturday 23rd March 2013

Had 20 contacts including 1 summit to summit with VK1NAM/P -all contacts were on 40m.

This time I had company although I had another ham with me Ken VK3VCW (he didn't operate his call sign) we had his 2 children and I had my grandson. This peak was an hour carrying gear in on foot and the last climb to peak was difficult but the views were fantastic all around with Clunes to the north and Ballarat to south.

With 7m squid pole lashed to peak marker and using the trusty FT817 at 5 watts contacts were fairly easy. Qrp is all you need of course having internet on a tablet is handy to announce on Sotawatch website that your station is active and for chaser stations to look for you.

Didn't see any of the scorpions thank goodness- this activation although a good walking was an enjoyable experience and having a sunny day a bonus.

Sota activation of VK3/VC-32 Peak located in Wombat state forest near Blakeville.

This peak doesn't have a name-height is listed as 882m and is worth 4 points to chasers.

Friday/sat/sun 5th/6th/7th April 2013

Had Ken VK3VCW for company again and was a camping operation as well as a Sota activation.

Had 50 contacts over the weekend but was also an excuse to get-away and relax so good time to try out Ham gear and also refine tent and other camping equipment so was a learning exercise for future trips.

My go-box I demonstrated at Barg meeting is being fine-tuned and having the 8 watt solar panel all helps in being self-sufficient on power needed. As usual used the Yaesu FT817 and 40m dipole via squid-pole was able to use tree's to hang antenna, used either the 10AH Lith battery or the 2,6AH Sla battery charged from solar panel.

A great weekend away in a very nice bush area not hard to access and having a GPS to navigate via Lat/Lon to peak gives you an exact destination on arrival with a nice approved although remote camping area.

Ernie VK3DET.

BARG May 2013 Calendar.

◀ Apr 2013 ~ May 2013 ~ Jun 2013 ▶						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Construction! Review of our Groups, reports etc.	7 Visit to ESTA 7.30 pm Meet outside ESTA Turn off mobiles please!	8	9 Coffee Morning 10.30am.	10	11
12	13	14	15 BARG Committee 7.30pm	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Coffee Morning. 10.30am.	24 Dining Night! Queen's Head Hotel Humffray Street North. 6.30pm	25
26 BARG AUCTION! BBQ Lunch 12.00 Auction Start 1.00pm	27	28	29	30	31 No BARG Meeting. Now 1 st June!	

More Calendars from WinCalendar: [June](#), [July](#), [August](#)

No BARG Meeting this month!

Daylight Meeting 1st June!

Morse code training group.

Following out of the group's first meeting at the clubrooms recently, here is another possible training package available from the internet.

AN ADDED ADVANTAGE IS THAT THE SOFTWARE IS DOWNLOADABLE AND IT'S FREE. !

Have a look at the webpage belonging to G4FON. The author has written this package to allow the user to learn the code by starting with just two morse characters letters M and K. and you can adjust the software from the screen to allow from 1 to 5 minutes of mixed code sending. There are some other variations that can be included such as QRM, chirp, signal level, speeds up to about 50wpm. Setting character speed for your desired final speed target, you can also set the spacing between the next character to allow the brain time to recognize the character.

As your speed proficiency increases it's just a front page change to tighten the gap.

One is meant to practice these letters in a random set of groups until you can copy all the code consistently to 90% of the time. Once you feel confident at the 90% or better rate you select a third character to be included with the sending group and the same process continues. You may select play as many times as you wish with the same criteria selected but the program will scramble the characters so it's definitely random. Of course it's easier with only a couple of characters selected but as you progress with extra letters the repetition of characters becomes less frequent. The program uses different sized groups with spacing so do not expect to always receive a five figure group. Eventually as more characters are introduced you will find normal words will appear with different group sizes. There is a capability in Setup to select up to 1000 different words to be sent randomly.

Initially as you select how many characters you wish to have mixed in groups the sent characters are printed on screen just slightly behind the sound. This allows the beginner to learn the sound or rhythm and watch what the character is. Other programs may have the learner singing the sound aloud and calling the character by name. This seems a good way of learning the code when not associated with a group and can be done at a time selected by the candidate. . As proficiency increases and you add more characters you can also close the gap between words until the speed and spacing is brought into line with the intended target speed. I.e. 15WPM.

Using the soundcard output on the computer you may use the loudspeaker or run to headphones. The program also allows you to select the Strength level of the morse as well as adjusting the received tone frequency to your own liking.

There is a maximum of 44 different characters that can be selected and learnt. They are the alphabet (26), numerals (10) and punctuation (5) and there are three undefined that the user can select if desired to.

The punctuation characters are, Question mark, Space or underscore, Comma, Full stop and a Slash.

There is no commence sending CT or end message AR signals although I guess you could use one of the spare character sets and set them later.

I find this a good program and easy to use and set up after looking into the simple MENU selection offered. The author has done some research on different learning styles and techniques for learning code and has selected this process based on work in the 1930's of a German psychologist named Koch. He applied his

research to a group of candidates and found that after only a few hours of learning they could master the coded at their chosen speed quite easily. The other process is known as the FARNSWORTH process and this has been used the military amongst others and uses the principal of learning all the code in one batch at the speed of intended use but leave very long gaps between characters for think or recall time gradually decrease the gaps with time and experience.

Have look at this program some time and see for your self.

73 Craig, VK3KG

Check Out the May Issue of *QST*

The May issue of *QST*, explores the fun and excitement that awaits radio amateurs on the digital modes. So grab your print edition of *QST from our library* to read what the May issue has to offer.

Following up on his January 2013 article "Cheap and Easy SDR," Robert Nickels, W9RAN, explains how to integrate SDR and digital operation. In "Digital Modes for Your SDR," Nickels shows how your PC can serve as an SDR engine to receive digital modes. Using Arduino -- an open-source electronics prototyping platform based on flexible, easy-to-use hardware and software -- Roger Shipley, KA9NAH, talks about his entry into the world of microcontroller programming in his article "Microcontrollers -- No Experience Necessary."

In 2012, 15-year-old Padraig Lysandrou, KC9UUS, convinced his family that the perfect vacation would be a DXpedition to Cyprus -- and they agreed! In his article "A Crazy Idea: DXpedition to Cyprus," Lysandrou tells about how he coordinated logistics and made QSOs on the beautiful island. With a laptop computer, a loop antenna and a low power SDR radio, Dennis Lazar, W4DNN, brought high tech to a North Carolina mountaintop. In his article "SDR at the Summit," Lazar describes how he activated 5600-foot-high Craggy Knob for the Summits on the Air (SOTA) awards program.

Of course, there are the usual columns you know and have come to expect in the May issue of *QST*: Happenings, Hints & Kinks, Eclectic Technology, The Doctor is In, Technical Correspondence, Short Takes, Vintage Radio, How's DX? and more. Look for your **May issue in our BARG library.**



Missing QST Magazines....

There are 3 QST magazines missing !!!
SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER and NOVEMBER.
ALL of the year 2012.
They are not noted in the magazine loan book..
Please return or let Craig, VK3KG know.
Please mark loaned books in the LOANBOOK in Library

Well happy days have just received notification from the WIA that the the Amateur license fee has been increased. They were notified by the ACMA that it's been "increased to \$73 effective immediately."
At this rate it should hit the \$100 by the year 2040 [not so far away for some] makes QSO 'ing on the internet look a viable option instead of the RF bands.
Makes those amateurs holding two or more licenses think about the costs?

73 Craig
VK3KG



George Fowler Memorial Auction

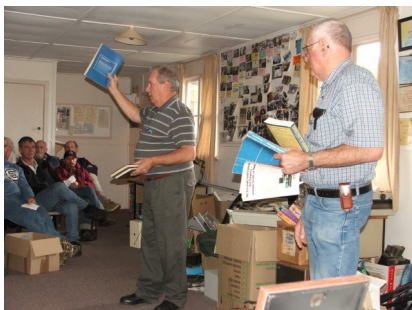


**The “George Fowler Memorial Auction”
Will take place on Sunday 26th of May
At the clubrooms.....**

**Come along and enjoy this great day
DON'T FORGET your junk....**

**This time we will have a Sausage Sizzler
TEA and COFFEE available as usual
All supplied by BARG for lunch starting at midday...**

THIS AUCTION WILL BE HUGE



DON'T MIS OUT !!!

If you require more information:
Email: member.vk3kgl@barg.org.au



VK3FMAL <> VK3MEL

As was reported in the last newsletter, I've sat and passed my standard license. I have to thank Craig VK3KG and Gordon VK3FGC who gave up half a day to quietly watch me wonder why, after 30 years playing with electronics and even working in the electrical and computing industry, I don't actually know which leg of a diode is the anode and which is the cathode. Happily the WIA and I were aligned on the random order of the rest of the multiple choice answers, which resulted in a pass.

A license upgrade meant a change in call sign and I've obtained VK3MEL. I looked for mal, or combinations of my initials but this was as close as I could get. My last choice was vk3lsd. Judging by the reaction of Craig and Gordon I'm wondering if that might not have been a choice that would have been more likely to get a response in a pile up.

For anyone else that's looking to move up from an F call to standard, my study method was to enrol in the Standard License course at the Radio and Electronics school which cost \$30. The course was provided on a CD and consisted of 25 video tutorials for theory and 25 for regulations as well as some drill software that tested my knowledge of each subject area. I mostly worked through the tutorials on the train commuting to and from Melbourne and later worked through the drills.

I found that the RES course was effective and really only assumed a starting knowledge level of foundation license. The drill software had a couple of bugs and the varied length of the videos annoyed me but otherwise the course worked well.

If there was an area that I felt needed more depth then I relied on Fred Swainston's "Radio Amateurs Theory Handbook" from the club library. There's lots of good stuff in the library that can be used as reference material. It's a resource I'm finding I'm using regularly and encourage other members to make the most of it too. As a last resort it was off to Google, though not everything I stumbled onto with a web search helped.

I'd encourage anyone else thinking of upgrading to have a go at it. With some preparation it's not that hard.

Malcolm.

VK3FMAL <> VK3MEL

SOME IMPORTANT DATES !!!

- 1 Don't forget our yearly AUCTION on SUNDAY MAY 26, 2013.
- 2 Our General meeting in MAY has been adjusted to a DAY MEETING on SATURDAY JUNE 1, 2013.

The meeting will start at 2 pm, BUT we will have first a SAUSAGE Sizzler at about 12.30 pm Coffee and Tea available.....