



BARG News

Ballarat Amateur Radio Group

Inc. #6953T

July

Monthly Newsletter

Next Meeting

Friday 30th July - Online

Face to Face! Out at the clubhouse at the Ballarat airport

All Welcome



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 1218
Mail Centre
Bakery Hill Vic. 3354

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

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

Presidents May Report

Welcome to the July newsletter. Again we've been impacted by Covid lock downs. The rapid change meant the VK100AF special event call sign weekend wasn't able to be run as a combined club event. Instead a number of members used the call and operated from their home stations.

This wasn't such a bad outcome. As result there was better coverage of the bands, longer hours worked and no doubt more power behind most of the calls. While it was disappointing not to be able to be in the same place, it was still a successful weekend.

While thinking about how we operate for the VK100AF it was agreed that we should have a better operating position in the larger meeting area out at the club. While there is a radio room at the club, it's become quite cluttered with the development of the remote base infrastructure and it's reasonably complicated to swap antennas from the remote base to a local radio.

To address that the plan is to add an 80m EFHW antenna strung in front of the exiting antenna farm. The primary operating position is intended to be where the printer currently sits. If the setup is successful we'll look at purchasing a new radio as well. An 80 EFHW will also work on 40m, 20, and 10m.



There's been a fair bit of clean up done in the back yard area to minimise the interference from trees to various wire antennas we have.

We're starting to re-look at the George Fowler Auction. We had to postpone due to Covid. Now that we've also cancelled the Hamvention for 2021, we will most likely run the George Fowler as the replacement activity. Something to discuss at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be another virtual meeting. While restrictions may well be lifted somewhat, it seems unlikely we'll be back to being open enough to have a face to face meeting. The topics will be antenna issues and what to do about them. VK3ALM, Lachlan will be leading a discussion / workshop on what you might do to address issues members might have. For example, restricted space or perhaps QRM. Some may have restrictions on visibility, both by neighbours and other members of the same household.

Ben will send out the details ahead of the meeting. Guests are welcome to join too.

That's all for this issue.

73, Malcolm, VK3OAK.

VHF and Above for July 2021

Although we are in the depths of winter there is still some activity on these bands which pops up from time to time. I'm told that Trevor VK3VG near Shepparton has been up on the lower end of 2m in the mornings which is good news so keep a look out for him.

Andy VK3HMY was re-arranging his gear for mobile operations which would have excluded him from the bottom end of 2m but has now reviewed that decision and will now continue which will keep the local Ballarat station numbers up.

However on a sadder note our friend Rick VK3BEB who has been in Australia for more than 20 years is heading back to the USA. He will be missed but it's hoped that via the digital networks or perhaps echolink or IRLP communication will enable communications to be made.

BARG was fortunate to take part in the VK100AF activity organised by Peter VK3PWG recently on several bands with BARG members actively involved. With the moon in the right spot VK3AXH was able to have 10 2 metre EME qso's into Europe in just over one hour to add to our overall tally.

Microwave activity is raring to go with both Chris VK3QY and Peter VK3PWG both recently getting 2.4GHz operational. Tests will be done as soon as the weather is better than freezing to allow some field tests to be done so watch this space for updates. This brings the number of stations in our area to 6 with one other member nearing completion.

6 Metre Band Activity

Even though it's Winter in VK there is still plenty of activity to be had on this magic band. I hear that VK3KQT, VK3TXR, VK3DAE, VK3BNC, VK3OT/ZAZ and possibly others as well have been having success with WSPR and FT8 signals both within VK, ZL, Asia and Eu. In addition the weekend activity with meteor scatter still continues. In this month's AR magazine there is an excellent article by VK4UH. If you have a small 2m or 6m yagi and wish to have a go Saturday and Sunday mornings then this is worth a read. Setup using a variety of software etc can be found in this article.

Below is a report from Steve VK3OT/ZAZ of what he's been observing and is typical of his activity over the winter months.

44215 -9 0.1 2189 ~ CQ VK3ZL QF22	045230 -13 0.1 1706 ~ CQ DX UR5LAK KN89
044230 -8 -0.1 1513 ~ JA1RXQ VK4RF QG62	045245 22 0.1 802 ~ CQ VK3OT QF12
044245 -7 0.9 2189 ~ CQ VK3ZL QF22	045300 -18 0.3 1897 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99
044300 -9 -0.1 1512 ~ JA1RXQ VK4RF QG62	045300 -11 0.1 1708 ~ CQ DX UR5LAK KN89
044315 -5 0.1 2189 ~ CQ VK3ZL QF22	045315 23 0.1 802 ~ CQ VK3OT QF12
044345 -1 0.1 2189 ~ CQ VK3ZL QF22	045415 22 0.1 1416 ~ CQ VK3OT QF12
044445 -7 1.0 2189 ~ CQ VK3ZL QF22	045430 -13 0.0 1043 ~ CQ VK UT7QF KN77
044515 -3 0.1 2189 ~ CQ VK3ZL QF22	045445 24 0.1 1416 ~ US0KW VK3OT -19
044800 -17 0.3 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99	045500 -15 0.0 1043 ~ CQ VK UT7QF KN77
044830 -15 0.3 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99	045500 -14 0.3 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99
044830 -18 -0.0 1704 ~ JA3PIS VK3HY -08	045515 23 0.1 1416 ~ US0KW VK3OT -19
044845 -19 0.3 797 ~ UT7QF VK3OER -13	045530 -13 0.0 1043 ~ CQ VK UT7QF KN77
044900 -13 0.3 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99	045530 -13 0.2 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99
044900 -19 0.2 1021 ~ VU2DED US0KW R-15	045545 24 0.1 1416 ~ US0KW VK3OT -19
044915 -20 0.3 798 ~ UT7QF VK3OER -13	045600 -15 0.2 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99
044930 -19 0.2 1896 ~ VK2ZQ UR0MC R-22	045615 22 0.2 1416 ~ US0KW VK3OT -19
044945 16 0.2 802 ~ US0KW VK3OT QF12	045645 19 0.2 1416 ~ US0KW VK3OT 73
045015 22 0.2 802 ~ US0KW VK3OT -18	045730 -14 0.0 1043 ~ VK5ZK UT7QF 73
045045 23 0.1 802 ~ US0KW VK3OT -18	045745 24 0.1 1416 ~ CQ VK3OT QF12
045100 -10 0.3 1897 ~ VK2ZQ UR0MC R-22	045800 -12 0.2 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99
045100 -12 0.1 1701 ~ CQ DX UR5LAK KN89	045800 -14 0.2 1044 ~ CQ VK UT7QF KN77
045115 23 0.1 802 ~ US0KW VK3OT -18	045800 -11 0.1 1715 ~ VK6KXW UR5LAK R-20
045130 -5 0.3 1896 ~ VK2ZQ UR0MC R-22	045800 -17 0.2 2577 ~ VK6KXW UR0MC -10
045130 -10 0.1 1703 ~ CQ DX UR5LAK KN89	045815 24 0.2 1416 ~ CQ VK3OT QF12

045130 -14 0.2 1022 ~ VU2DED US0KW KO30	045830 -11 0.2 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99
045145 22 0.1 802 ~ US0KW VK3OT -18	045830 -11 0.1 1716 ~ VK6KXW UR5LAK 73
045200 -9 0.2 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99	045830 -16 0.2 2577 ~ VK6KXW UR0MC -10
045200 -9 0.1 1704 ~ CQ DX UR5LAK KN89	045830 -16 0.0 1043 ~ CQ VK UT7QF KN77
045215 23 0.1 802 ~ CQ VK3OT QF12	045845 22 0.2 1416 ~ S59A VK3OT QF12
045230 -13 0.3 1897 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99	045900 -8 0.3 1896 ~ CQ DX UR0MC KN99

Remember this column is only as good as the input it receives so if you have something to report then drop me a note or simply contribute your report to the magazine editor.

Till next time 73's VK3AXH

VK100AF Weekend

If you've ever heard of Murphy's Law, well good old Murphy certainly turned out for this one, but we weren't letting Murphy get in the way. Surprisingly enough the operators for the weekend put in a pretty good effort and should be commended for their persistence.

With a handful of us embarking upon this once in a lifetime event, we had good intentions of establishing a group to operate across the bands to activate the VK100AF Call Sign to celebrate the Centenary of the RAAF. Some of the group had got together on several occasions to check radios, antennas and access points within the clubrooms to ensure we could be fully operational for the weekend. There were also a few others who had committed their time for the weekend and be on duty to operate. There was a new antenna on order and a couple had done a little work in anticipation towards installing it. Things seemed to be coming together reasonably well, until Murphy turned up.

SO in came Murphy, firstly not all of the radios were behaving themselves as they should, and adaptors for antennas were not to be found. We had one radio, a Kenwood TS50 that apparently was working, but didn't want to play, so it had some inspection by one of our technical people . . . it was discovered that it does work, it just had a loss of memory. But that's OK, we had plenty of offers of operators bringing their own radios and power supplies, all good in that department. We had a logging software program loaded on the club computers to record all of the calls, at least this was working. After spending a bit of time deciding on where to put a new antenna and how to install it, the antenna never turned up in time. Then Murphy pulled the trump card . . . Covid19 Lockdown No 05 . . . two days before the event.

Not to be deterred, we hastily threw together a contingency plan between a few of us over the 2m repeater after the 80m net. We are going to run with this, and pull the bits together operating from home stations. Now some of the operators who offered their time originally, and I'm one of them, don't have a suitable antenna system and we were looking forward to using the club station. That counted a few of us out, however a few other operators stepped up to the plate to hold it all together.

All set to go, times and bands allocated what could possibly go wrong. Nothing really, apart from the atrocious weather conditions and not to mention the band conditions. In an effort to maintain some form of order out of chaos, we stayed in touch with one another over the 2m repeater to monitor how things were going, and it was a slow start with band conditions being fairly poor.

By evening, numbers were adding up, Ben VK3NRD had a few 40m contacts, Andy VK3HMY had done some on 80m and Ian VK3YFD after a slow start was getting DX on 20m. The numbers were improving and it was looking like our operators were going to put in a respectable number of contacts.

At the beginning, we never set out to put in huge numbers, it was just about activating the call sign due to the fact that we occupy a former RAAF hut at the Ballarat Aerodrome. It was going to be a chance to get together and work as a team and it was a chance to learn a bit from one another. It was the fact that we were unable to operate from the club that was the disappointing part, as due to the pandemic, we were unable to operate to get together at the very place we were trying to promote.

All in all it came together and thanks to the operators that put in their time it was eventually a success. So huge thanks to those who participated and also to those who helped along the way, without these people it would never have happened. In total our operators made 197 calls, with 46 of those being DX calls. It was also interesting to hear some of the comments over the nets in the days following as many familiar call signs weren't even aware of the heritage at the Ballarat Aerodrome and it's connection to the RAAF.

OPERATORS -

VK3HMY Andy	- 80m
VK3YFD Ian	- 20m
VK3NRD Ben	- 40m
VK3ALM Lachlan	- 80m
VK3MCL Scott	- 160m, 80m, 40m
VK3AXH Ian	- EME

VK3PWG, Peter.

WIA Update

The WIA AGM was recently held, resulting in some changes to directors and president. The full president report with some commentary on progress the WIA and AR is making and the risks to the hobby going forward can be found on the WIA site, here:

https://www.wia.org.au/members/armag/2021/july/index.php?fbclid=IwAR3_rkWDpDJshlXyAAe2yCEY6M0iub2f1zf7G_4pSoaf84DmQuQJHKVRueg

The Future: I firmly believe the WIA, now 111 years young, will be able to continue to reinvent itself as it has done over many decades – but only if the membership understand that it is their WIA. The WIA needs the goodwill and continued support of its members to survive. The WIA is a democratic organisation that needs volunteers passionate about a bright future for amateur radio. The WIA has a vital role to play in the future of amateur radio, but it can not do that without you!

73

Greg VK2GPK