



NERG NEWS

Incorporated 1985 in Victoria
Reg No A0006776V - <http://nerg.asn.au>

SEPTEMBER 2001

NERG Inc.
PO Box 270
Greensborough
Victoria 3088

This Month's Meeting:
7.45 pm Thursday 13th September 2001
Simpson Army Barracks

Guest Speaker:

John Kolm

**Wild and Woolly stories from the
Corporate Training World**

This Months Guest Speaker:

John Kolm, of R&C magazine and RadioMag fame (and the infamous Nuke-the-NERG foxhunt team), has offered to talk about corporate teams, with some wild and woolly tales. You may know from Johns R&C articles that he runs motivational training sessions.

John has also donated a famous Kolm cartoon for the NERG. This will become a perpetual trophy to be awarded for the best story or editorial to be submitted to NERG NEWS each year.

Last Month:

Tony, VK3JED, talked about and demonstrated Internet linking of repeaters. Several NERGs have since used IRLP and are now very keen to set up IRLP on a local repeater. More about this later in this issue.

Thanks Tony for an interesting night.

The 2001 NERG AGM

from Jim VK3DBQ

As required the Annual General Meeting was held as part of our August meeting with the usual suspects in attendance except for our President VT who was away traveling in warmer and northerly parts on the country.

In place of the President, 3DBQ ran the meeting in usual NERG abbreviated style. Our Treasurer 3VOJ presented and moved her Annual Financial Statement, which was seconded by JMB. DBQ thanked all those who helped run the NERG through the year especially the in running Novice classes, arranging speakers, the construction evenings, field days, finances and the production and distribution of NERG NEWS.

The election of office bearers was then held with all positions being passed unanimously. The President, Greg VT, having previously agreed to stand again was nominated by DBQ and seconded by JMB. Secretary is Jim DBQ proposed JMB seconded ????. Treasurer is Marg VOJ nominated DBJ and seconded by

3HBK. The Committee members are Peter DU (KDT & DBQ), Dave JMB (VOJ & Andrew Weir), Mark BYY (DBQ & JMB), Don KDT (DBQ & OW) and Betsy HBK (JSE & VOJ).

Steve, VK3JNH, retired from the committee to take a medical posting in England. Many thanks go to Steve for all his efforts on the committee and for running the Novice classes over the past few years. Betsy VK3HBK and Peter, VK3DU have joined the committee in his place and are sure to provide NERG with yet another viewpoint in the committee.

AGM SUPPER

Following our guest speaker, the evening wrapped up with the traditional NERG's birthday party supper! Thanks Marg 3VOJ, and all her helpers for a delicious supper.

Below is a photo of some keen birthday cake connoisseurs (Steve VK3JSE, Christine VK3KJI, & Jim, VK3BDQ).

Next Months Meeting:

David Aston has offered to talk about Digital Television - something we have heard a lot of promises about but have yet to see much of!

Special meeting 20th Sept: IRLP project meeting

Several NERGs are interested in using and/or providing an IRLP service in the local area. However it will need a core interest group to bring it to fruition. All interested persons should meet at the NERG meeting rooms on Thursday 20th 8.00pm to discuss relevant issues (the week after the NERG meeting).

NERG have repeaters that can be used, but perhaps the single biggest problem is in gaining access to a high speed Internet connection at low cost. So lets see what can be done, and as the old saying goes: nothing ventured, nothing gained!



Editors Ravings

Hi all,

I've been involved in so many amateur radio things this month that I can't remember much about them all. The important thing though is that they all happened (more or less) and were mostly enjoyable.

One of these things was manning the WIA stand at that show Great Australian Science Show. Although the success of that event may not be apparent for some time to come (kids grow slowly!), it was good to see several local radio groups working together with WIA Victoria and our Federal Education representative on a common cause. Over pizza and a few beers at the "debriefing" there was discussion of continuing the camaraderie that had formed between groups in a not too formal setting. Maybe this will help break down the disassociation many amateurs feel for their representative organisation. Lets hope it happens!

73's, Mark ("Harry") Harrison, VK3BYY

NERG fund raiser event:

The Heidelberg Symphony Orchestra meets Jazz

It's not too late to join NERGs for an evening of orchestral music. Hear the Joe Chindamo Jazz Trio with the orchestra on Saturday night, 15th September. The venue is Ivanhoe.

Tickets \$18, Kids \$5, Concession \$13. Please contact Social Secretary Don, VK3KDT for tickets on 9439 1102

Great Australian Science Show

It was good to see a large number of kids and adults at the GASS. The WIA had two stands on opposite sides of an aisle making for some interesting DX (and a few puzzled faces – just where is that strange voice talking to me from?).

Interestingly the Morse keys were one of the most popular exhibits amongst the kids. Perhaps it was because we told them it was the only means of communicating with sailing ships and was used to send the distress call S-O-S from the sinking Titanic (They have all seen the movie!)... After that they just had to have a go at sending something! Other demonstrations included 2m FM and 80m AM transmitters, various crystal sets (one made from a milk carton), and videos of slow scan, packet radio, ARDF, etc.

FOR SALE

**ICOM IC3200A
Dual Band 2m/70cm FM
25 Watts, 10 memory
1980's Vintage
\$375
Call Bruce, VK3JWZ**

Lighthouse Weekend

After an uncertain start the NERG eventually participated in the International Lighthouse & Lightship Weekend (ILLW) event. NERG was the 300th station to register for the event!

Permission was eventually gained from Parks Victoria to use the derelict land next to the Williamstown Lighthouse and Time Ball Tower at Gellibrand Point. This square bluestone tower has had a colourful history. In 1852 it was built as a time ball tower. The time ball ceased operating in 1926 but continued as a lighthouse. In 1932 a cylindrical tower was built on top to turn it into a 98ft lighthouse. This structure has since been removed and the time ball restored. The datum point for all Australian maps is located nearby in the Williamstown park.

The weather wasn't great, but apart from a constant wind blowing straight from the Antarctic, it didn't rain.



Gerhard VK3EWM portable at the ILLW

ILLW Participants:

Gerhard VK3EWM, Christine VK3KJI and boyfriend, John VK3ZRV, Michael VK3KMG, Betsy VK3HBK, Steve VK3JSE, and N/AOCP student Lawrence.

Antennas:

Mobile whips, G5RV on 20m, Inverted dipole on 40m, longwire (20m) on everything else.

Activity was fairly busy on the HF bands as the R.D. contest was also on at the same time. Unfortunately the RD activity masked many more distant ILLW stations, with only a dozen or so lights being heard. Two other stations operated from local lighthouses at Port Melbourne VK3YE, and the Gellibrand Light (now at the Polly Woodside museum by the Yarra) operated by the EMDRC (in great comfort without rain or wind - so we were told - often!).

The event will be held at the same time next year - also the same date for the 2002 RD contest. Perhaps we will find a much warmer light house next year – maybe a nice warm spot by the Yarra?

NERG CW Net

Reminder: I will listen around 8.30 am EST time on Wednesdays at about 3.540 MHz for suitable frequency. 73 Jim VK3DBQ

70cm repeater on air (at last!)

It's taken a while, but the NERG 70cm repeater, VK3RMH, is back on air (really!). In case you have forgotten and removed the frequency from your handheld years ago, it's input is 433.325MHz and output 438.325MHz. No access tones required.

This repeater ran quietly on the tower without any attention for many years. However the radio, built in the 1960's, eventually developed a number of transmitter faults which I decided weren't worth repairing. Fortunately a Philips FM815 was donated to the club and looked like it should be a lot more reliable. Unfortunately it was designed for use at 500MHz and took considerable conversion efforts to work on 438 MHz. After a few years of looking for circuits, parts, and crystals the job was completed but the transmitter occasionally jumped frequency by 25kHz. This fault was traced to a cracked crystal. Another crystal was ordered and the repeater put back on the air. However occasionally the transmitter wouldn't start (in truth it hardly ever worked, except on the work bench where it worked every time!). Various modifications to the circuit and testing in hot and cold environments couldn't make it reliable. These changes often had to wait several weeks before I could make the trip to the tower to retrieve the device. The weather was often either too wet, too hot, or just too good not to be somewhere else! In the end I replaced the entire exciter board and wired the transmit oscillator to run continuously. Now it's back on the hill and has even survived a few power outages (after which the oscillator apparently started each time!). So far so good...

Coverage reports will be gratefully accepted. Plans for the future include improvements to it's sensitivity and maybe raising the antenna to improve coverage of my "drive-time" path towards the city.... Mark, VK3BYY

Calling Guest Editors!

NERG NEWS is looking for guest editors. This a chance to have your say and to present a special edition on your favourite subject. You'll need to write an editorial and an article or two about anything you like. I'll complete the job with the usual news bites, calendar, and handle the layout and publication side of things if you like. I'll even do the typing if you don't have a computer.

All guest editors and other contributors will be in the running to win the prestigious NERG NEWS writers perpetual trophy.

But that's not all! You won't have to listen to me grouching every month about membership fees, repeater bugs, and LIPD devices!

Membership Fees Due

NERG membership fees have been due since the AGM last month. Rising insurance costs have forced a fee rise of \$5. See back page for details. Please send fees to our treasurer!

Wanted - FM900 radios

The NERG has converted a bunch of Philips FM900 FM radios to 2m over the years for the express purpose of getting more members onto 2 meters and more involved in the NERG nets. The price was purposefully kept to a minimum. Unfortunately insufficient radios were available at the time to meet demand and are still sought after by NERGs.

The NERG would appreciate it if these radios were passed on other NERG members if they become surplus to your requirements (especially for to new callsign holders).

Dave's DX Notes:

Dave VK3JMB reports that GX4BJC will be operating from Jersey Island from 17th to 31st of October. His normal call is GH4BJC. and would love to contact Australian amateurs.

Other DX stations can QSL as follows:

ZK1AWG (Cook Is.) via DL2AWG

K6AA via WB6ROH

GN4GTY via GI4GTY (St Johns light, North Ireland)

ZL1AB via North Shore Radio Club.

Addresses can be found at QRZ.com

73's, Dave, VK3JMB

Report from GB land:

Hello from Canterbury!

After a week of cooler weather with several thunder storms (radio definitely unplugged each time!!!!!!), summer has returned with glorious weather. I've managed to get back my 5 wpm Morse and have booked in to sit the exam in Dover in just under a month. Over here, the exam is set up to simulate a real QSO- not really a problem except for the damn prosigns which I must say have been something of a drag, although I am making good progress now. We have to know AR, CT, SK, BT, VA, / and ?. Not a big deal I guess, but seems to have taken nearly as long to learn these as the rest of the alphabet!!

The G5RV was up within 3 days of arriving and reception from this position at least seems good. I'm currently building a 2m antenna in the roof space.

Best wishes from Canterbury-

Stephen,(VK3JNH/portable GB)



Antenna raising party

Can you identify the willing workers in the photo? Taken recently during the erection of a self supporting tower in a NERG member's backyard, the merry gang enjoyed a sausage sizzle and appropriate beverages afterwards.

But that was the easy bit! Getting the lattice tower section attached to the top of the pole shown took considerably more ingenuity and effort. Unfortunately nobody would let go the ropes to take a photo!

I'm told the shack is nearly finished and will hold ample NERGs in luxury for the next 48 hour CQ-World Wide contest!



Novel Foxhunt Excuse #13:

The following is yet another novel excuses for loosing a Friday night foxhunt. Names removed to protect the not-so-innocent....

What happened...?

Lets see.... Someone repaired the cable for the back (antenna rotator) system and reversed the polarity on the motor. The system thinks it is turning clockwise but antenna is actually going the wrong way...So 12 o'clock is 12 o'clock, 6 is 6, 2 is 10, 4 is 4, etc....

But wait, it gets worse! As the antenna is going the wrong way the cog on the motor UNSCREWS itself and falls off (to be found 2 hunts later wedged on the sniffer on the LHS of car (Phew)).

We didn't work all this out until after 4 hunts. After that we did OK...

I now have to repair the cable again, reversing the polarity in the upper plug and fixing the cable where I cut it with side-cutters and wired it backwards. I guess we're really lucky

the negative on the motor is not connected to the chassis or it could have been really spectacular.

I also need to check the battery on the Paj(ero) and the cable to the antenna as the comms rig causes the engine to stall when used at idle.

(anonymous foxhunt team)

Avian Beacons???

I was adding sound recordings to my NCDXF/IARU Beacon Schedule web page when I heard a new and interesting beacon from Ontario. Having played all the beacon signals that I had recorded several times, I stopped the playback and was surprised to hear the familiar sequence of tones of a beacon reducing power in steps.

But the radio was off!

The windows were open.

I played one again. Immediately after playing the recording I clearly heard an echo of the 3 audible tones coming from outside my window.

I repeated the experiment several times with the same result.

A Mourning Dove outside the window was responding to the beacons by repeating the 600 Hz tones.

I hope I haven't frustrated the poor bird. As they say in Canada, "What a hoot!"

Peter, AB6WM / VE3SUN

Mobile Phone Boosters Banned

Non-compliant Mobile phone booster amplifiers currently being used to increase the performance and coverage of GSM and CDMA mobile phones have been prohibited by the Australian Communications Authority (ACA). Anyone found in possession of a non-compliant booster may face a fine of up to \$220,000.

The devices are likely to interfere with the mobile phone network and can potentially place users of that mobile phone network at risk.

The boosters are not recommended for two reasons. Firstly, mobile phone transmitters are made to adjust their output power so that the signal level received at the base station is optimal and similar in level to all the other phone signals being received at the time. Boosters upset this delicate balance by pumping out too much power and may swamp other user's signals. Secondly, non-compliant amplifiers may not meet the extreme linearity requirements of modern CDMA systems, resulting in production of interfering sidebands and harmonics that could affect other services.

It was also found that many non-compliant boosters tested by the ACA actually degraded the owners range and quality of service.

The ACA recommends that a better solution is to fit a car-kit with a well mounted external antenna. In extreme cases, a compliant (Austel-tick) booster may be help.

The Remembrance Day Contest by Jim VK3DBQ

The RD Contest has come and gone for 2001. This year's was a very friendly 24 hours with no really competitive situations. The report that follows only applies to the VHF section of the competition. There were several club stations including VK3GH (Healesville ARC) and VK3ER (EMDRC). The action slowed down around 1.30am and did not start again until about 8.00am allowing for a reasonable time for a good sleep.

There was very little activity on 6m with various operators using different frequencies, such as 50.150 SSB, 52.250 FM and 53.500 FM. The only station heard in this area on 23cm were DBQ, KDT and OW. The contacts on 70cm were restricted to 439MHz and were handled in a very gentlemanly manner. Two YL's were participating with one being on a club station. The action on 2m was mainly on 146.500 MHz with 25 kHz up and 50kHz up occasionally being used and the NERG's using 146.575 MHz as required.

It was great to hear a number of new voices on the bands along with many of the older regulars. The NERG was well represented with members giving out numbers when they

could like OW and JMG managed to do. The likely highest score in the VHF phone section for Victoria will come from DBQ.

The NERG Daytime Meetings by Jim VK3DBQ

Several of the non-working NERG's, namely BIZ, DBQ and JMB meet at the home of Ian BGE and his XLY Lyn at 10.00m only to leave after 3.00pm. A most enjoyable day was had all. The group was never short of things to talk about.

While amateur radio was discussed in various ways it did not dominated the conversation. The visit to Ian's shack, an inside room, was a most rewarding experience with amount of and diversity of HF equipment. It consisted of large value receiver from the early 1960's, the original Yaesu dual box set and a twenty-year-old transceiver. Ian had added various modern devices to improve performance when required. The room was decorated tastefully which memorabilia Ian school days and working past.

It has been agreed that morning tea meeting will be the 4th Tuesday of the month. The next meeting with at Dave VK3JMB's home 12 Hertford Place Lalor at 10.00am Tuesday 25th September 2001. A schedule of future meetings will be published shortly.

IARU ARDF championships in VK, 2002

The Wireless Institute of Australia (WIA) is to host the 5th IARU Region 3 ARDF championships next year. WIA ARDF Coordinator, Jack Bramham VK3WWW advises that it was announced at the just held championships in Mongolia that Australia had been chosen. Jack says now that the WIA has been confirmed as the host radio society for 2002, the details including the location and timing of the championships can now be further considered.

An estimated 120 competitors from Japan, Korea, China, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, USA and quiet a few European countries, can be expected to travel downunder. Many competitors still have fond memories of the 2nd IARU Region 3 championships which were held in Townsville, Queensland, in 1996.

The hosting of the IARU ARDF championships next year will certainly be a boost for local ARDFers who are among some of the world's best skilled. For example, at the Friendship Radio Games held in Victoria, British Columbia last month two Australians came out victors. In the ARDF event, Bruce Paterson VK3TJN won gold and Adam Scammel VK3YDF took out silver.

From the WIA Vic news

The 'rough' NERG calendar to Amateur radio activities (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER NOVEMBER 2001)

Activities where NERGs are participating shown in **BOLD**. Please check all dates with a reliable source!

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
10 SEPTEMBER	11	12	13 NERG Meeting	14	15 NERG fund raiser-Heidelberg Symphony Orchestra	16 Shepparton Communications Day
17 SEPTEMBER	18 Novice Exams???	19	20	21 Friday Night Foxhunt	22	23
24 SEPTEMBER	25 Novice Exams???	26	27	28	29	30
1 OCTOBER	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 NERG Meeting	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20 Jamboree On The Air (JOTA)	21 Jamboree On The Air (JOTA)
22	23	24	25	26	27 Ballarat Hamvention	28 Ballarat Hamvention
29	30	31	1 NOVEMBER	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 NERG Meeting	9	10	11

The NERG Inc. Reg No A0006776V <http://nerg.asn.au>

The North Eastern Radio Group, Inc. is an amateur radio club devoted to encouraging members and others to enjoy the hobby of amateur radio. It tries not to hang on ceremony and endless reporting but rather participate in the fun aspects of this fascinating hobby.

Membership Fees (due each August):

Full: \$30 Family: \$40 Concession: \$20

Committee

President	Greg Williams	VK3VT	9432 0563
Secretary	Jim Baxter	VK3DBQ	9467 1253
Treasurer	Marg Baxter	VK3VOJ	9467 1253
Committee	Betsy King	VK3HBK	9431 2191
	Dave Pictor	VK3JMB	9465 9708
	Peter Cosway	VK3DU	9379 3626
Social Sec.	Don Haslam	VK3KDT	9439 1102
News & Repeaters	Mark Harrison	VK3BYY	9435 3043

Meetings

2nd Thursday of each month at 8.00 pm (excepting Dec. & Jan.) at the Mactier Club (Golf club), corner of Blamey & Stevens Rds, Simpson Army Barracks, Macleod. (Melway map ref 20-F7)
Car Park opposite in Blamey Rd. **Obey the traffic signs!**
Facilities kindly donated by the Army for community use.

Classes

NERG occasionally runs classes and exams for Amateur license candidates.

Callsigns and Repeaters (25km North East of Melbourne)

VK3CNE - The club callsign.

6m VK3RMH FM 52.550 MHz in 53.550 MHz out

70cm VK3RMH FM 433.325 MHz in 438.325 MHz out

10m VK3RMH CW 28.2565 MHz Beacon (20Watts)

Occasionally home to the Scout Radio & Electronics Group repeater:

2m VK3RSR FM 146.375 MHz in 146.975 MHz out

NETS

NERG NETS run on 146.575 MHz FM Simplex (8.30 – 9.30 pm Thursdays).

Please join the discussions. NERGs often monitor this frequency or the VK3RSR repeater most evenings.

WEB Site: <http://nerg.asn.au>, <http://www.qsl.net/vk3rmh> & [/vk3cne](http://www.qsl.net/vk3cne)

NERG NEWS submissions and comments

editor: Mark Harrison VK3BYY

ph: 9435-3043 hm (btwn. 7.30-9.30 p.m. please)

post: 266 Nell Street West, Watsonia, 3087

email: vk3byy@qsl.net



NERG

North–East Radio Group VK3CNE
Incorporated 1985
BOX 270 GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088

MEETING This week::

7.45 PM Thursday 13th September 2001

--- Venue: Simpson Army Barracks ---

Guest Speaker: John Kolm – Wild and Woolly stories from the Corporate Training sector.

CALENDAR 2001

September 13th

NERG Meeting - John Kolm on Corporate Training - the funny side!

September 15th

Heidelberg Symphony Orchestra - Jazz special - NERG fund raiser

September 16th

Shepparton and District Amateur Radio Club "Communications Day", St Augustines Hall, Orr Street, Shepparton. Info: Hamfest 2001, SADARC, PO Box 692, Shepparton 3630.

September 21st

Friday night mobile foxhunt

October 11th

NERG Meeting – Digital Television

October 20/21

Jamboree On The Air (JOTA)

October 27/28th

Ballarat Hamvention

November 8th

NERG Meeting - TBA