



NERG NEWS

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

August 2002

NERG Inc.
PO Box 270
Greensborough
Victoria 3088

7:45 PM THURSDAY 8th August 2002

Greenhills Community House

At the meeting this month:

- Annual General Meeting
- Inside a Panel Antenna

What's on this month?

This month there will be loads to see and do.

For a starters it's August so it's time for the **AGM** and the **election of office bearers!** - That should only take up the first few minutes of the meeting so don't be late or you'll get elected to something ☺. Get your agenda items and nominations in quickly.

Next a **talk** by a well-known club member on the inside secrets of a **high gain "panel" antenna for mobile phone towers.**

Later the **NERG Birthday Party** finishes off the night with the traditional Chocolate Cake and other goodies.

Finally, a reminder that **memberships fees are due** and Marg will happily accept all contributions to keep the club going another year.

p.s. If you miss the meeting then there is every chance you will be elected for something and we will send a bill for membership - so you may as well come along to defend yourself and at least get some tea and cake ☺ ...

August Meeting Report:

The August meeting saw Mark, VK3XXX demonstrate the use of computers for sending and receiving digital modes over amateur radio. Unfortunately this roving reporter (3byy) couldn't get there but by all reports it was very well presented and appreciated.

NERG NOVICE CLASSES!

Classes are already underway.

Past NERG students are welcome to drop in at no cost for a refresher before tackling their next exam or a full-call bridging classes

Classes run for 14 weeks,
and will be followed by exams.

Phone Peter Cosway on 9379-3626
or email Greg at vk3vt@nerg.asn.au



- Birthday Celebrations
- Membership fees are due

Membership Fees Due Now

A quick reminder to all NERG members that 2002 fees are due from the 1st August. Fees are \$30 single, \$40 family, \$20 concession, rising much less than inflation! Send payment to our treasurer (address on back of NERG NEWS) or drop in to our next meeting and pay Marg, VK3VOJ !

Great Aust. Science Show - WIA display 23-25th August

This year the WIA is mounting a hands-on display of amateur radio at GASS 2002. Loads of science related Displays, Demonstrations, Lectures and hands-on activities will be held inside Melbourne's new Museum from Friday 23rd to Sunday 25 August as part of Science Week.

This is an excellent chance to bring amateur radio to a younger audience.

Museum entrance fees applies unless you are a registered volunteer and get in for free!☺

Entrance fees are:

- \$15.00 Adult
- \$8.00 Child
- \$11.00 Concession
- \$35.00 Family

Open 10am-5pm daily

The Museum is located in the Carlton Gardens, right next to the Old Exhibition Buildings, Carlton.

At least two NERGs have volunteered to look after the WIA stand at the GASS and invite others to join in. Please let me know if you can help out,

Mark VK3BYY ph 9435-3043

International Lighthouse & Lightship Weekend

This event runs from 10 am (local EST) Saturday 17th to 10 am Monday 19th August, overlapping the Australian RD contest.

NERGs plans will be discussed at the meeting. Location is still undecided due to high QRM levels at Williamstown.

Listen out for interesting calls on these frequencies:

CW:

80m	3.510 - 3.540 kHz	Centre	3.521 +/-
40m	7.005 - 7.035 kHz		7.021 +/-
20m	14.010 - 14.040 kHz		14.021 +/-
15m	21.010 - 21.040 kHz		21.021 +/-
10m	28.010 - 28.040 kHz		28.021 +/-

PHONE:

80m	3.650 - 3.750 kHz	Centre	3.721 +/-
40m	7.040 - 7.100 kHz		7.051 +/-
20m	14.125 - 14.275 kHz		14.221 +/-
15m	21.150 - 21.250 kHz		21.221 +/-
10m	28.300 - 28.400 kHz		28.351 +/-

You may find some Port Philip Bay stations on VHF and UHF as well.

Registered VK3 stations so far are:

VK3APP/p Split Point LH, Airey's Inlet (QSL via VK3JMG at Buro - Royal Australian Airforce Williams ARC)

VK3BRZ - Queenscliff White LH

VK3DK/p - Upper & Lower Lady LH (QSL PO Box 1068, Croydon, Victoria 3136)

VK3FII - Troubridge Island LH South Aus. (EMDRC)

VK3KXG - Cape Liptrap LH
VK3OWL - Cape Otway LH
(QSL Direct to VK3BTV)
For more on the ILLW, see:
<http://vk2ce.com/illw/2002.htm>

RD Contest

The Remembrance Day Contest will be held on 17 & 18th August to commemorate radio amateurs that made the ultimate sacrifice during the 2nd World War.

Starting Saturday night on 17th August, it runs until Sunday night. This is the most popular all band Australian contest held during the winter months.

Contest rules can be found in the WIA's AR magazine and via any WIA web site.

National Science Week

Every year millions of Australians take part in a range of activities that bring science into everyday life in an exciting way. There are national experiments such as the *National Kilowatt Count*, a project for households and schools to learn about using less energy; science festivals; and heaps of travelling science shows.

Feast of Victoria's Science will be held at the new Melbourne Museum in Carlton (next to the old Exhibition buildings). Normal entrance fees to the museum apply.

NERG Globetrotter Update:

Steve Warrillow and family are off again! Having completed their specialist medical work experience with the NHS they are about to hit the road. Together with the trusty stead (campervan) they intend to wreak havoc all over Europe before heading for home in several months time.

At the 12th hour Steve VK3JNH/M0CYT finally made a two-way contact on HF with local DX experts Jim vk3DBQ and Dave VK3JMB. The contact deserves a certificate as it involved several months of planning, several more IDD phone calls, and even more e-mails to organise the QSOs, only to be thwarted by solar disturbances and a few 40-hour stints at the hospital. Finally last minute negotiations with the XYL delayed packing the HF box away just long enough to make the sought after contact.

Here is what Steve said about the contact:

Success finally!

Thanks especially to Don, Jim and Dave, we have had a few contacts on 20m.

I am certain that my signal was very faint and difficult to copy and I am grateful for the patience and persistence of Jim and Dave in attempting to make the contact.

I am delighted to finally have a few NERGs in the log and look forward to exchanging QSL cards in January.

The G5RV antenna has been packed away now and I'm about to put the radio into boxes to ship back to Melbourne.

Steve won't be HF mobile but will probably have a handheld for working IRLP into our VK3RMH node so listen out! (Unfortunately IRLP is a bit rare in Europe).

Best wishes to Steve and family and hope you have a safe and enjoyable trip.

Seeing double?

Radio & Comm. magazine returns as RadioMag (!?)

A series of messages recently appeared on the aus.radio.amateur.misc Internet newsgroup from Len Shaw and Trent of Radio & Communications magazine fame claiming they would have the August 2002 **RadioMag** on the news stands by the end of July. That's right – after a sager of Dallas proportions R&C is now publishing Radiomag with many of the old R&C contributors, but minus one very prominent previous editor.

Could it all be an elaborate hoax ??? The e-mail addresses appear genuine, but given all the hype over the last few years it will be interesting to see what really eventuates.... ... and when....(it's August now and I haven't seen a copy anywhere yet).

Room for a worthy cause?

The NERG is on the lookout for a more permanent home for meetings and classes, and ideally somewhere to set up a permanent amateur station that could be used by members on a more regular basis.

The NERG committee is investigating a few possibilities with local government but they are hard to come by. Please let us know if you have any ideas – schools with vacant class rooms, halls & community houses with a spare annex, or maybe the corner of a warehouse or something mobile – anything will be considered, especially if on the top of a hill and the rent is cheap!

Exhaust Noise

This useful tip was overheard on a repeater the other day:

The ham concerned had noticed a sudden increase in ignition noise on his radio. The usual checking for the usual broken spark leads, earth straps, etc, didn't help.

Thinking back he could only put it down to a new exhaust system fitted recently, and after close examination found the problem. The exhaust pipe had not been flared properly so that it was loose where it joined the engine pipe. The gap was wide enough to let exhaust gas leak out and form soot around the joint.

The ignition noise was greatly reduced by simply cleaning the joint and tightening it properly! The liberal use of extra grounding straps along the pipe to chassis was also discussed as a means of removing the last traces of noise.

VNG not dead - yet!

Australia's HF standard time and frequency transmitter, VNG, did not close down in June as expected. The closure was postponed at the last moment for six months to ensure that all users are given the opportunity to make alternative arrangements.

Voice announcements on Radio VNG will now advise all users that the service will close on 31 December 2002.

The VNG Users Consortium members will be advised by writing that they will need to make their own arrangements to receive time services from other sources after closure.

In the event of a major breakdown in equipment, the Commission will not be able to guarantee the continuation of the service for the full six-month period.

See: http://www.nsc.gov.au/PAGES/Policy/policy_consult.html

Crystal Set challenge

The NERG has the task of providing a crystal set display for the Great Australian Science Show. This should be a hands-on display. Ideally kids will take home a sheet of instructions and be able to build a similar one themselves (with a reasonable hope of it working!).

If you have any ideas (or better still a working model) for a novel crystal set then please let me know ASAP.

Last year my crystal set was made from items found in the kitchen, including:

Empty milk carton = coil former
Aluminium foil = plates of tuning capacitor
Lunch wrap paper = Capacitor separator

Unfortunately I had to resort to the electronics shop for wire, diode, and crystal earpiece. I suppose I could have disassembled the microwave oven to get those parts but thought better of giving kids this rather dangerous idea ☺.

Mark Harrison, VK3BYY

Dave's DX Info

Countries of interest that are around at the moment include 5U (Uganda), 8Q (Maldives), 9N (Nepal), 9Q (Democratic Republic of Congo).

Conditions on 15 metres haven't been all the best and problems are being encountered on other bands at different times.

Had a good catch the other day, worked NERG Steve Warrillow, M0CYT in England. I have tried over the past 12 months but it appears an organised contact is the way to go.

73' s Dave

DX QSL Routes for QSL card hunters:

AH6HY/AH8
VIA AH6HY
DAVE A. FLACK
P.O. BOX 6005
HONOLULU HI
96818-0005, U.S.A.

ER4DX
VASTLY ROMANYUK
P.O. BOX 1662 MD 2044
KISHINEV, MOLDOVA

KIB
SSB VIA. ROMAN R. THOMAS
P.O. BOX 38
MOSCOW, 129642, RUSSIA

EA6/SP4AOQ
VIA. EC6TK
JUREK
BOX 356 PARMA MALLORCA
BALERIC ISLANDS, SPAIN

VK0MQI
VIA. JEILET
MASAHIKO OTOKOZAWA
985-7 KUNO
ODAWARA 250-0055, JAPAN

HV0A
VIA. IK0FVC
FRANCESCO VALSECCHI
VIA. BITOSSI 21
00136 ROMA RM, ITALY

JT1Y
VIA. I0SNY
NICOLA SANNA
STRADA GUALTARELLA 8/M
06132-S, SISTRO PERUGIA
ITALY

BQ9P
VIA. KU9C
STEVEN M. WHEATLEY
P.O. BOX 5953
PARSIPPANY NJ 07054, U.S.A.

5B4FL
NICK WAITE
BOX 42842
LARNAKA, CYPRUS

XM3KZ
ROBERT NASH
5260 FOURTEEN SIDE ROAD RR#6
MILTON, ON L9T 2Y1, CANADA

TK/IK2WZM
OCCHIPINTI SEBASTIAN
VERBENE 8
ROZZANO MI 20089, ITALY

TG9
FRANCISCO CAPUANO
16 AVE 17-20 Z10
GUATEMALA CITY, GUATEMALA
GUATEMALA

WB6SFA
DAVID B SMITH
1503 DORTHY DR.
BOULDER CITY NV 89005 U.S.A.

V51AS
FRANK
BOX 2516
SWAKOPMUND, NAMIBIA

Calendar 2002

AUGUST

17th/18th - International Lighthouse & Lightship Weekend

17th/18th - Remembrance Day Contest

24th and 25th August - ALARA Contest

SEPTEMBER

19/20th - Jamboree On The Air (JOTA)

26th/27th - Ballarat Hamvention:

At the Wool Pavillion at the Showgrounds, access off White Street. Info: Steven Dick VK3MNA 5331 5526 vk3mna@barg.org.au Hamvention will be held at the Ballarat Showgrounds, on the corner of Creswick Road and Howitt Street Wendouree, on the last weekend of October, this is the same location as previous years, access is off White street.

Entry is \$5.00. (under 15 free), trestles hire is \$10.00 per trestle (Bookings Essential)

from WIA Vic. News Web site

Disposable Mobile Phones!

Believe it or not, a US company is planning to sell throwaway cellphones from convenience store shelves, just down the aisle from disposable razors and cameras.

Hop-On, a small 15-employee company based in California, said it has won U.S. regulatory approval to sell its first phones. The phone is expected to cost \$40 US and come with 60 minutes of prepaid calls.

While the plan sounds crazy, the price of components has now dropped so low that they claim to make a profit after the phone is recycled just a few time, in much the same way as disposable cameras are re-manufactured and resold six times on average. Lets hope they are right – if they are disposed of in the rubbish bin then they could fill waste dumps with all sorts of toxic materials ☹

See: http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/181_27079,0003.htm

Foundation licence a hit

The Radio Society of Great Britain reports that the first six months of the new Foundation Licence in Britain has been highly successful, especially among youth.

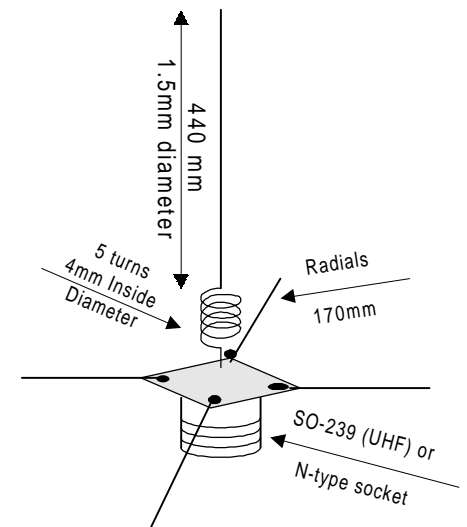
RSGB President, Bob Whelan, G3PJT says since it was introduced in January, some 2,500 have taken out the licence either as an entry point into the amateur radio or to add to their existing VHF-only Limited licence to gain HF band access.

Of the 700 new radio amateurs, 250 of them are under the age of 21. There has been a good response to the Foundation licence from schools, and the scouting and guiding movements.

From WIA Victoria's WEB NEWS

A simple $\frac{5}{8}$ 70cm antenna

The "five-eighths" antenna has long been popular on 2m, 10m, and even 6m for mobile work. In theory they have a good combination of gain, radiation pattern, and are easy to mounting and feed with 50ohm coax.



Here is a simple version that is suitable for portable or home use and can be built in minutes. Wire size is not particularly important but could be thicker to stand up to gale force winds. Stainless steel or brass wire should stand up well to the elements. Some trimming may be necessary so follow the old rule – start long & trim to resonance.

The coil could be wound on a plastic former or be unsupported if the wire is stiff enough. The coil is 20mm long with 5 turns.

Radial length is measured from the centre pin of the socket and should be 170mm (or 340mm from tip to tip). Radials are bolted or soldered to the mounting holes of the socket. They should not be drooped downwards as you would do for a quarter wave antenna.

For outdoor installations, connect to the antenna with a waterproof coax plug (i.e. with rubber washers inside). Seal the centre pin of the socket and all external solder joints with a non-acidic sealant.

SWR was measured below 1.5:1 across the band 433 to 440 MHz (~1.2:1 at resonance).

Thanks to Peter VK3DU for sending in the design and Steve VK3JSE for building one to verifying it really works.

Solar Activity

Beacon reports from Texas indicated that 10m propagation was really knocked about this month by sunspot activity and huge coronal mass ejections from the sun.

Apparently the 11-year sunspot cycle isn't over yet! Activity has been so severe that not even their local beacons were heard in Texas on some days. NERG's VK3RMH beacon is nevertheless still being heard when many others aren't via "Grey Line" propagation (ie over the North or South poles when both stations are in twilight).

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	Mark Beacham	VK3XXX	9459-9876
Treasurer	Marg Baxter	VK3VOJ	9467 1253
Committee	Dave Pricter	VK3JMB	9465 9708
	Betsy King	VK3HBK	9431 2191
	Peter Cosway	VK3DU	9379 3626
Social Sec.	Don Haslam	VK3KDT	9439 1102
Repeaters	Mark Harrison	VK3BYY	9435 3043

Meetings

2nd Thursday of each month at 7.45 PM (excepting Dec. & Jan.)
Greenhills Community House, Yandell Reserve, off St. Helena Road,
Greensborough. (Melway map ref 21-B1)

Classes

NERG occasionally runs classes and exams for Amateur license candidates.

Callsigns and Repeaters (25km North East of Melbourne)

Club call - VK3CNE <http://www.qsl.net/vk3cne>

6m rpt VK3RMH FM 52.550 MHz in 53.550 MHz out

70cm rpt VK3RMH FM 433.325 MHz in 438.325 MHz out

IRLP node 635

6m beacon VK3RMH CW 10 Watts 50.295 MHz – Soon!

10m bec'n VK3RMH CW 20Watts 28.2565 MHz

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 and the 70cm VK3RMH repeater.

WEB Sites: <http://nerg.asn.au> and <http://www.qsl.net/vk3rmh>

NERG NEWS submissions and comments invited:

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@nerg.asn.au



NERG

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

MEETING this week::

7:45 PM Thursday 8th AUGUST, the 2nd THURSDAY of each Month at
Greenhill's Community Centre, Yandell Reserve, Greensborough

This Month: Annual General Meeting + Panel Antennas Dissected + Birthday Party

CALENDAR 2002

August 8th	NERG Annual General Meeting & Birthday Party
August ??? 16 th	Friday Night Fox Hunt - Start and supper locations to be announced
August 17/18th	International Lighthouse Weekend (NERG activity)
August 17/18 th	Remembrance Day Contest (HF & VHF)
Sept. 12th	NERG Meeting – Astronomy (tentative)
Sept. 19/20 th	Jamboree On The Air (JOTA)
Sept. 26/27 th	Ballarat Hamvention