

VK7 REGIONAL NEWS BROADCAST

FOR SUNDAY 11 APRIL 2010

SRI LANKA - 4S7B - CALLING

Request for beacon reports

Shante who is 4S7WP via echolink last Friday 2/4/2010 talked with Mike VK7MJ. Shante is trying to enlist some VK7 amateurs to listen for the 4S7B repeater near Colombo in Sri Lanka. Apparently Sri Lankan amateurs have regular contacts with VK6, but very few with amateurs on the east coast and Tasmania.

The beacon callsign is 4S7B, and is located about 110 km south of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The operating frequencies are: 14.100 MHz, 18.110 MHz, 21.150 MHz, 24.930 MHz and 28.200 MHz.

Shante and his fellow amateurs in Sri Lanka are particularly interested in reception reports from the 21.150 MHz beacon, as anecdotal evidence suggests that the 15m band should be open between Tasmania and Sri Lanka about dusk or early morning.

Any reports can be emailed to Shante 4S7WP at ohms73@hotmail.com
(Thanks, Mike, VK7MJ)

The odd adventures of a Seagoing Sparkie

The following was spotted by Eric VK7TAS in the local West Hobart Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter....

Long-Time Neighbourhood Watch supporter and notable West Hobart character Bob Geeves (VK7KZ) spent quite a bit of his varied career on the ocean wave as the electronics technician for the delivery voyages of the huge Incat ferries to Europe.

Now he's put his memories of journeys through hell and high water on ships designed for smoother seas, undaunted by the scammers of Suez, holes in the sea, misbehaving machinery, fire down below and getting lost in strange places ashore into a book titled "Fowlhouse to the Wheelhouse".

The stories may sound tall, but they're all true, and there are lots of photographs to prove it.

He's offering this well-illustrated book to readers at the special price of \$20; you can call Bob on 0417 543 144 to claim your copy.

And why the title? You'll have to buy the book to find out!

(Thanks to Eric for passing that item on)

VK7 EVENTS CALENDAR

A summary of the events across VK7 over the coming months:

NTARC – April 14 – General meeting at Alanvale campus of the Tasmanian Skills Institute. starts 7.30pm.

www.ntarc.net

REAST – April 14, 21 & 28 – ATV Experimenter's Nights – Queen's Domain Clubrooms from 7:30pm

<http://reast.asn.au/events.php#ATVnights>

And advanced warning for the diaries of all VK7 amateurs – CHARCT Central Highlands Hamfest at Miena in the Central Highlands on December 4th 2010.

NON-COMMERCIAL FOR SALE & WANTED

For Sale

Al, VK7AN has for sale a Yaesu FT950AT transceiver with general coverage receiver, mics, dc-leads, current model, one owner 2010 model, and still under warranty. Absolute mint condition - non smoker, must sell.

As you can see this is a current model, I think the owner must have too many rigs!

If interested then contact Allen VK7AN on 0417354410.

For Sale

Tony VK7DXX has for sale two (2) vacuum variable capacitors covering 2 to 50 pF and able to take up to 25kv. If interested in these then give Tony a call on phone: 63391378

73, Tony VK7DXX.

For Sale

Chris VK7FCSM has for sale four 13.8V power supplies:

One 20 Amp and three 30 Amp PSUs.

All work well and Chris is wanting to sell the lot for \$400.00.

Chris also has for sale two Alinco DJV47 dual band UHF 70cm hand helds with 5 watt output.

Chris is wanting \$200.00 for both.

If interested an any of these items then contact Chris VK7FCSM on phone 62471002.

NORTHERN NEWS

Northern Tasmanian Amateur Radio Club

www.ntarc.net

The next meeting for NTARC is nearly upon us. It seems like only yesterday that we were enjoying a BBQ at Lilydale... but with the cooler weather starting to make an appearance, we'll retreat back indoors to the usual location of the Alanvale campus of the Tasmanian Skills Institute. Wednesday 14th is the date, and 7.30pm is the time. Hope to see you all there.

No doubt many of you will have been taking advantage of the HF conditions when a solar wind hit on Monday. Some rather interesting propagation conditions ensued, from 160 metres to 6 metres there was something for everyone, if only briefly. Perhaps fearful that we'd not see conditions like this again for a while, Karl VK7HDX even took some videos of the action as heard by radios in his shack at the time. Who could blame him, it has been a long time since some really long haul DX on 10 metres has been seen. If it were not for the cloud cover that evening, the auroral display in the night sky would have been spectacular too. Here's hoping the sun sparks up with a bit more activity over the next few months, and make the winter DX'ing a bit better than last years.

Thanks from

(Jason VK7ZJA, NTARC Secretary)

NORTH WEST NEWS

Cradle Coast Amateur Radio Club (CCARC)

CCARC News

<http://www.my-x15.net/ccarc>

The Cradle Coast Amateur Radio Club has been invited to join WICEN (South) to provide communications coverage for an equine endurance Riders for a 24 hour event coming up at St Helens, starting midnight Friday the 21st of May, so if you want to be involved contact David VK7DC.

What to become an Amateur?

If you are a non amateur or a short wave listener living in the North West, or West coast of Tasmania, and would like to become a licenced amateur radio operator, then come along to a meeting and find out about this interesting hobby. If you cannot make the meeting but would like to find out more about the hobby then contact the learning facilitator, Keith Winkler VK7KW, or any of the committee members.

Full contact details are available on our website which can be easily found by a "Yahoo" or "Google" search of CCARC TASMANIA

Regards from

(David, VK7DC, Secretary, CCARC)

North West Tasmania Amateur Television Group

<http://www2.vk7ax.id.au/atvgroup/>

AMSAT-VK Net Tuesday Night

The Monthly National Satellite Net of AMSAT-VK will again take place this Tuesday 13th. April.

The Net commences at 8.30 PM concluding around 9.30PM, with initial check-ins from approx. 8.20PM.

The net is available in the North West of VK7 via the Club's VK7RTV Repeaters on 53.775 and 146.775. MHz. and their associated IRLP Nodes. All Amateurs and SWL's within range of these repeaters, are welcome and invited to join in. You do not have to be active in working the satellites to be involved with the Net. It is a good way of learning how to become involved with communicating in AR via the "Birds". Why not take a listen, you may become interested in yet another mode of Amateur Radio.

Weekly Nets conducted by SCARS.

As of Sunday 4th April, the Australian Connection Net was rescheduled for 1100 - 1200 Hrs. EST (0100-0200 Zulu).

This appeared to be a popular decision with 12 new members signed up with SCARS, 10 of these being from Australia.

To connect to the *scars* server. (use Echolink 96140 or IRLP 9614)

It is suggested amateurs may care to try the net by connecting to the SCARS Server at 1100 hrs. (0100 Hrs. Zulu) following local broadcasts.

Further information about SOUTHCARS and ALL Net schedules can be found at the web address on the email internet editions of this broadcast

www.voip.southcars.com

Amateurs in the North West of VK7 are welcome to use the Club's VK7RTV Repeaters which are connected to the SOUTHCARS Conference Server for the duration of the Net.

Amateur Radio Licence Assessments and Training

Persons in the N/West Area of VK7 interested in Training and Assessments for all classes of Amateur Radio are advised that the Club can provide all these requirements and in addition provision of Facilitators via the Radio and Electronics School if candidates so desire.

For more information regarding these facilities, please contact the Club's Learning Organizer Tony VK7AX, or the Club. Contact details can be found on the Club Web Site or the WIA site under VK7 Clubs.

73's until next time

(Tony VK7AX, News Officer NWT-ATV Group)

SOUTHERN NEWS

Radio and Electronics Association of Southern Tasmania

April Presentation

Tour of ABC TV & Radio Studios Wrap-up

A great big thank you to Jim Parish and Damien Styles (VK7HDS) who showed a large group through the ABC from top to bottom.

The current building started life in 1987 where it was built as a replacement radio studio. In the early 1990s television joined the building from Sandy Bay Rd with a focus on News and Current Affairs and TV was squeezed in to one of the large radio recording studios and is still there today.

The tour started in one of four radio studios and Jim described what was around us in the way of acoustically isolated studio complete with an acoustically tuned elements in the walls, multi-angled multiple glass

windows which all provide an even acoustic environment through the studio.

There is very little “audio” actually in the studio. Even the microphone audio is digitised and fed into the digital audio stream along with control signals and it is not controlled by traditional audio controls but by digital control surfaces with all the audio switching, mixing, etc done in the control room.

One of the key features that is obvious from the start to end of the radio and TV chain is redundancy. Every piece of equipment is at least duplicated and there are controls that seamlessly swap to the other one if one fails.

Jim described a day in the life of the “talent” radio or TV presenter and what they and their producers do to prepare their program and then put it to air. Annie Warburton was doing her evening program in a radio studio just down the hall and we could watch her through the window. It was fascinating.

Jim described the fancy new portable digital codecs that enable radio presenters like Peter Cundell to sit at home for his gardening program with a pair of headphones and microphone connected to the plain old telephone line and be speaking as if he was in the studio in Lonnie!

The music used is chosen by a National Music director and he chooses from a digital library of 1200 tracks and these are offered to the local presenters to maintain a similar feel to the radio no matter where you are listening to ABC radio throughout Australia. These music tracks are encoded and stored using BWF (Broadcast Wave File) which in Jim’s words has “gentle” compression and it can better survive its travel through many digital links, etc.

Jim also described the talk-back 7 second delay antics that presenters have to remember and go through when leading up to news segments, etc.

We then went into Radio Master Control where all radio signals, links and broadcasts are monitored with an impressive array of equipment. Any part of the control chain can be monitored to ensure a high quality signal is always ending up at the transmitter. An interesting device that features in the middle of the vast array of LCD screen was the phase monitor for FM stereo signals to ensure that the phase difference is sufficient to ensure that mono FM receivers actually receive a signal.

We then ventured into the TV studio which houses the ABC News and Stateline sets. This studio has acoustically adjustable walls, an array of lighting rigs and three remotely controlled cameras. During the News there are only three people in the studio – the newsreader, the autocue operator and the weather presenter. In the control room there are two people – the news director and the producer. Much of the program can be

controlled remotely with the news program digitally stored and embedded coding controlling the vision mixers, cameras and audio mixing automatically.

Jim and Damien demonstrated the cameras that are being used by camera operators that store the video to memory cards which are handed to the Journalists who edit the video using special software using the time coded low resolution version then once it is a complete story the software applies the changes to the high resolution version that is uploaded into the news system for the News Director to sequence.

Damien then demonstrated how it is all sequenced together and ran a small portion of that evening news file to demonstrate how everything is automatically sequenced and happens in the studio, very impressive!

Jim described how the ABC uses the 23M/bit/second channel it has for all it's services and how statistical multiplexing is used to ensure that there is relatively even demand from each service/channel wanting bandwidth. Jim also described the suitcase device that can be used by remote journalists to post video stories via NextG or satellite.

We then moved to the satellite room and Jim described the facilities that many of us see in the large dishes on the top of the ABC building and how the ABC uses these facilities.

Then it was out to the very impressive outside broadcast semi-trailer and the Newseye vehicle with impressive hoist-able microwave dish demonstrated by Damien.

It was off to the fibre room which contains the racks of multiplexers, modulators and fibre drivers to Mt Wellington and Mt Barrow.

We finished off in the UPS battery room which can continue to run critical pieces equipment whilst the generator is started and stabilised.

A great big thank you to Jim and Damien for their time and expertise in showing the group the ABC facility.

A DVD presentation of the pictures taken throughout the facility is being created for a future ATV night.

<http://reast.asn.au/events.php#abcstudios>

(Justin, VK7TW, REAST Presentations Officer)

ATV Experimenters Night

We get back underway with the ATV experimenter's night this Wednesday night with some great videos and show and tell in the ATV studio.

If you are capable of transmitting 1250MHz ATV signals toward the Queen's Domain, we would like to hear from you.

We now have the ability to receive 1250MHz ATV and retransmit as part of the ATV program – a kind of – manual ATV repeater!

We will also be working on getting our ATV streaming PC up and going within the studio.

Interested? We get underway from around 7:30pm – on analogue UHF TV – just below SBS on 444.25MHz and very soon to be on DVB-T – 446.5MHz!

Hope to see you along.

<http://reast.asn.au/events.php#ATVnights>

(73, Justin, VK7TW)

SOFTWARE NEWS

EME Calculator Updated

Doug VK3UM lets us know via the VK-VHF mailing list that he has updated his popular EME Calculator and has further enhanced it to:

- include Dish Mesh loss in the effective dish gain calculation and display its value.
- change of some Tsky values to reflect verifiable values.
- Echo calculations now fully independent of Tsky.
- additional Offset feeds for Cassegrain fed dishes – plus much more..

Doug has also included a data file for the Arecibo facility – “for all to wonder!”. The updated software is available from the links on the email and internet editions of this broadcast.

<http://www.sm2cew.com/> or
<http://www.ve1alq.com/downloads/software/vk3um.htm>

Doug reminds all that “When all else fails ... please read the User Handbooks provided !! “

(73 Doug VK3UM via the VK-VHF mailing list)

GENERAL NEWS

Ham Radio Growing in the Age of Twitter

The following story has been sourced from the National Public Radio website and was written by Matt Sepic.

Only a few years ago, blogs listed ham radio alongside 35 mm film and VHS tape as technologies slated to disappear.

They were wrong.

Nearly 700,000 Americans have ham radio licenses — up 60 percent from 1981, a generation ago. And the number is growing.

Ham radio will never have the sex appeal of the iPhone, but it does have a certain nerd appeal, says Allen Weiner, an analyst at the technology research firm Gartner.

"If it creates its own experience, that's really what's key here," he says. "If it just emulates an experience that you can get online, it's not going to grow."

Newcomers to ham radio include Helen Schlarman, 89, who has a compact, two-way radio in her home in suburban St. Louis. She looks up a friend across town by pushing the talk button, announcing the letters and numbers of his call sign (W-0-S-J-S), and then announcing her own (W-0-A-K-I).

Steve Schmitz's voice crackles through Schlarman's radio.

"Hi Helen, how you doing, W-0-S-J-S?" he says, ending his response with his own call letters.

Many "hams," as they're known, hang postcards from global contacts on their walls, the way hunters show off deer antlers, but Schlarman's chats are mostly local. She says this hobby is perfect for an outgoing person who spends a lot of time inside.

"It's a different community," she says. "There [are] no stereotypes of age; it's just talking and sharing and enjoying."

Until recently, ham radio was declining as older operators died. Then the Federal Communications Commission phased out the Morse code test that many saw as a stumbling block to getting a license. Last year more than 30,000 new applicants signed up to become ham radio operators, according to Maria Somma, an official with the American Radio Relay League.

At a ham radio convention near St. Louis, the crowd swapping antenna parts and other equipment is mostly male, and over 50. But 15-year-old Jonathan Dunn is attending along with his father. He says Facebook and texting are fun, but making friends using a \$200 radio that doesn't come with monthly fees is more rewarding.

"With ham radio you can talk to new people, all kinds of ages, races, and it's just amazing what a little radio can do. Because no matter where

you're at, if you have the right stuff and the right power you can talk to anyone," he says.

Jonathan's dad, Steve Dunn, says the polite chitchat between ham radio operators is good for teenagers. "If young people have the opportunity to communicate with a wide range of people, that instills a certain amount of confidence in their ability to carry on the lost art of small talk," he says.

Even the most die-hard hams concede that amateur radio will never be a mainstream hobby. With smart phones and other devices, people are more plugged in to the Internet than before. But people are still discovering the joy of communicating with a technology that's existed for nearly a century.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125586086>

(Sourced from the National Public Radio website via Richard VK7RO)

GENERAL NEWS

The SKA project moves forward

The launch of the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research is a boost to the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project.

With New Zealand now joining Australia in the international bid for the world's largest radio telescope project, the centre will draw together astronomers from around the world to drive the research aims of the SKA.

The impact of this project and its potential cannot be overestimated. But it will need the commitment of governments and scientists, for decades and, perhaps, generations, not just the next few years of the political cycle, said Prof Peter Quinn, director, International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR).

The design and construction of the SKA radio telescope will create a single scientific machine capable of studying the first objects to shine in the universe, the very beginnings of the cosmic avalanche of growth that resulted in mankind some 13 billion years later.

The strengths of the Australia-NZ position are threefold. One, we have, in Western Australia, one of the world's best radio astronomy sites - the 'radio-quiet' Midwest region. The agreement with New Zealand means the antennas and other devices could span from WA to New Zealand, substantially increasing the clarity of the radio images produced.

Two, the world's best radio survey telescope (the Australian SKA pathfinder or ASKAP) will be built on that site by CSIRO using \$110 million in federal funding. ASKAP will be operational in 2012.

Three, two major international centres will be built to support the project. The \$80 million federally funded Pawsey Centre for High Performance Computing and SKA Science will handle the vast amounts of data to be generated by the Australian SKA Pathfinder and other telescopes on the Murchison Radioastronomy Observatory.

In its first six hours, the ASKAP is expected to generate more data than all the other radio telescopes in the world combined. The SKA produces more data per day than is produced by the entire population of planet Earth each year.

ICRAR will ensure Australia is leading international research efforts, will enhance our nation's scientific reputation, enable the development of leading technologies and have positive financial benefits for Australia.

The SKA is a project for the future. It will take more than 15 years to build and will be the leading edge of radio astronomy for the next 50 years, beyond the term of governments and even the future of our children.

The SKA will have up to 4000 antennas spread over a 5000 km baseline to create a single deep space listening device.

Most will be concentrated in outback Western Australia, along with a series of remote 'array stations' positioned in a spiral configuration radiating out over thousands of kilometres.

Array stations in New Zealand will see the baseline of the SKA extend from 3000 to 5000 km. This will result in an almost doubling of the telescope's resolution.

Astronomers worldwide are now working hard on the SKA project. We need to raise the funds, design the facility, perfect the radio technology and work with industry to build a new scale of computing and data resources.

http://www.radiocomms.com.au/articles/39384?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Emailmarketingsoftware&utm_content=383943965&utm_campaign=rc_1004+_ohikdl&utm_term=readmoreonthisArticle

(Reprinted from UWA News from the Radio Communications E-Zine)

WEB & EMAIL EDITION EXTRA BITS!!

Prairie Home Companion by Garrison Keillor

<http://prairiehome.publicradio.org/>

Photo montage of the VK7 Meet the Voice events from 2007 to 2010 video with original harp soundtrack courtesy of Folk Harpist Helen Morrison:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3szzJI3Yipw>

Innovative lighting products

<http://www.cree.com/>

New Cree LED Breaks the Barriers...Again!

http://www.cree.com/press/press_detail.asp?i=1265118848578

Why you should not listen to your customers!!!!

<http://blogmaverick.com/2010/04/06/why-you-should-never-listen-to-your-customers/>

Microsoft's Patch Tuesday!

[http://arstechnica.com/microsoft/news/2010/04/microsoft-patch-tuesday-for-april-2010-11-](http://arstechnica.com/microsoft/news/2010/04/microsoft-patch-tuesday-for-april-2010-11-bulletins.ars?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=rss)

[bulletins.ars?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=rss](http://arstechnica.com/microsoft/news/2010/04/microsoft-patch-tuesday-for-april-2010-11-bulletins.ars?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=rss)

Another Battery Breakthrough

http://www.wired.com/gadgetlab/2010/04/lightweight-lithium-air-batteries/?intcid=inform_relatedContent

Yet another RIP BPL article!

http://gigaom.com/2010/04/08/finally-broadband-over-powerline-r-ip/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed:+OmMalik+%28GigaOM%29&utm_content=Google+Reader

ISS Docking successful

<http://www.spacetoday.net/Summary/4908>

Wired.com How Tos

http://howto.wired.com/wiki/Main_Page

Things like how to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse

http://howto.wired.com/wiki/Survive_a_Zombie_Apocalypse

Flu jab link to increased H1N1 risk: study

<http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2010/04/07/2866210.htm>

Australian lasers to track orbiting junk

<http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2010/04/01/2862616.htm?topic=>

Worldwide PV market reaches 6.43 gigawatts in 2009

http://www.optoiq.com/index/photronics-technologies-applications/lfw-display/lfw-article-display/6622966596/articles/optoiq2/photronics-technologies/news/business-news/2010/3/worldwide-solar_pv.html

Do you have some interesting internet sites you have some across in the last week – send them in to justingc@ozemail.com.au

VK7 Regional News Group Email Addresses

Post message: vk7regionalnews@yahoogroups.com

Subscribe: vk7regionalnews-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Unsubscribe: vk7regionalnews-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

List owner: vk7regionalnews-owner@yahoogroups.com

VK7 Virtual BPL Tours

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcY0Eetvsw> - Mt Nelson

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gsxpya3CnQ> - North Hobart

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G7DfdxjRkpU> - RU ready for BPL?

If you are interested in becoming an amateur radio operator or upgrading your licence then we suggest you contact your local club for details and/or take a look at what the Radio and Electronics School has to offer. They have a range of courses that can be delivered through a variety of methods.

They can be found at: www.radioelectronicschool.com

Finally today, a reminder to those people rostered for next week's broadcasts:

Newsreader: VK7RS

80m: VK7TW

40m: VK7JGD

20m: VK7AR

10m: VK7ZGK

UHF CB: VK7ZCR

HF CB: VK7TED

Thanks to all people and organisations who assisted with this broadcast.

THAT CONCLUDES OUR VK7 REGIONAL NEWS BROADCAST FOR THIS WEEK.

YOU HAVE BEEN LISTENING TO OR JUST MISSED VK7WI. NEXT WEEK THE NATIONAL WIA NEWS CAN BE HEARD AT 0900 FOLLOWED BY THE VK7 REGIONAL NEWS AT 0930 HOURS.

DETAILS TO SEND NEWS FOR THIS BROADCAST CAN BE FOUND AT REAST.ASN.AU AND THE DEADLINE FOR ITEMS IS 21:00 ON FRIDAY PRIOR TO THE SUNDAY OF THE BROADCAST.