



# Q S X P E



**THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED BY THE  
PORT ELIZABETH BRANCH OF THE  
SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE**

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4 - 9 2

# NOTICE OF MEETING

The April monthly general meeting of the Port Elizabeth Branch will be held on **Friday, 10 April 1992**, commencing at 20:15 in the Civil Defence Centre, Westview Drive, Mill Park, Port Elizabeth.

Mike Bosch ZS2EM will speak on VHF – and who is better qualified to talk on this subject than our SARL VHF Manager, and the gentleman who was awarded the Radio ZS Trophy for his series of articles on VHF.

Subject to confirmation, OM

Don't miss this talk!

**PLEASE NOTE THE DATE FOR THIS MEETING: 10 APRIL, NOT THE USUAL THIRD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH.** The date has had to be brought forward since the normal meeting date falls on Good Friday.

## EERSTE STAPPE IN RADIO – 'n Eie Naslaanboek

Afrikaanssprekende kandidate vir die Amateurradioeksamen kan nou in hul eie taal studeer danksy die inisiatief en toewyding van 'n groep Suid-Afrikaanse amateurs onder leiding van OK Marten du Preez, ZS6ZY.

**EERSTE STAPPE IN RADIO** is voorwaar 'n puik stuk werk en is glo die eerste kommersiële naslaanwerk van sy soort wat tot nog toe in Afrikaans verskyn het. Veral die eerste oplaag kan dus 'n gesogte versamelstuk word. Hoe dit ook al sy, teen die weggeeprys van R19.00 per eksemplaar aan lede van die Liga (R27.50 aan nie-lede) is dit 'n publikasie wat 'n ereplek op elke amateur se boekrak verdien.

Marten sê ek was die enigste persoon wat hom en lede van sy span wat die AJV bygewoon het, versoek het om my kopie te teken. Dit sal dus waarskynlik met verloop van tyd nog meer waardevol word – maar dit sal **nie** te koop wees nie!

*Eerste Stappe in Radio* is met spesiale goedkeuring van die American Radio Relay League uit hul publikasie *First Steps in Radio* vertaal en word in Suid-Afrika deur die SA Radio-liga uitgegee.

Marten en sy span moet van harte gelukkigewens word met hul prestasie.

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE PORT ELIZABETH  
BRANCH OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE HELD AT THE  
CIVIL DEFENCE CENTRE, MILL PARK ON FRIDAY, 21  
FEBRUARY 1992**

**PRESENT:** 34 members and visitors, apologies as per register.

**WELCOME:** The Chairman, Marge ZS2OB, welcomed all, especially those whose faces we had not seen for a while.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the meeting of 21st February 1992, as printed in QSX, were approved: proposed by Fred ZS2JS and seconded by Viv ZS2VM.

**MATTERS ARISING:**

- 1 Hobbies Fair: The proposed dates have been revised to Thursday 16th July to Sunday 29th July; further details to follow.
- 2 Our thanks to Owen ZS2AZ for organizing the Branch dinner at the Yacht Club. A very pleasant evening was enjoyed by those attending.
- 3 The Bathurst Show will be graced by an amateur radio stall again this year and is to be followed by a bring and braai to be held at John's QTH (ZS2J). Everyone is invited to be there and to meet fellow HAMS from surrounding towns, all of whom have also been invited to attend.

**FINANCE:** Our Treasurer, Colin ZS2CTR reported that the Branch funds stood at R4816,54 and the AGM fund at R1650,00.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

- 1 Other Branch newsletters tabled.
- 2 Fax received from David Whitehead ZS5TF advising the Branch of the 25th anniversary of the launching of the NSRI, and requesting the PE Branch to erect a station at the NSRI base 18th April 1992.

**GENERAL:**

- 1 Marge, ZS2OB, showed some of the 'fun' certificates belonging to Fred ZS2JS.
- 2 Our Branch Delegate, Marge ZS2OB, related some of her views of the recent AGM held in Cape Town, and was pleased to show the awards won by the Branch:
  - Field Day Award
  - Neil Branch Efficiency Award
  - RADIO ZS Shield presented to Mike ZS2FM for the most outstanding contribution of articles published in Radio ZS.Marge said that the awards were well deserved, and she

congratulated Mike as well as our members in general on their achievements for the Branch.

3 Marge also informed the meeting of the honour bestowed at the AGM upon our member, Bill Browne ZS2BY, in the form of Honorary Life Membership. The announcement met with a resounding ovation.

4 Colin ZS2CTR told the meeting of the forthcoming shuttle program (Westering High School is participating) and asked all to avoid using the following frequencies:

FM DOWNLINK ..... 145,500 MHz  
FM UPLINK for Africa ..... 144,970 MHz.

5 Garth ZS2HB showed the meeting the book "First Steps in Radio" translated into Afrikaans and titled "Eerste Stappe in Radio" and remarked that it was indeed a fine publication!

6 Garth ZS2HB referred to a procedural matter at the AGM and, after discussion, it was decided that he should follow up the question with Headquarters.

#### CONCLUSION

There being no further business, the meeting was closed and all adjourned for tea and biscuits and more lively, enjoyable matters.

After the break, Fred ZS2EQ gave an interesting and very enlightening talk on how lamps are made, passing around samples at regular intervals to illustrate the various stages of the manufacturing processes.

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CHAIRMAN

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SECRETARY



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## Shedding Light on Dark Secrets

Elsewhere in this issue we enlighten you on the operation of fluorescent lamps. At our last general meeting, Fred ZS2EQ gave an interesting talk on the manufacture of electric lamps, passing around several bits and pieces of a motorcar globe at intervals to demonstrate the various stages of construction. Nobody seems to have noticed that, in place of the filament, Fred actually passed around a dead ant! Especially for these people, but also as a service to all members, we complete this illuminating series of electrical elucidation with the following rather alarming report by an unknown author, or one who had the good sense to remain anonymous. He - or she - writes:

For years, the electrical utility companies have led the public to believe they were in business to supply electricity to the consumer, for which they charge a substantial rate. It was discovered recently that this is a massive hoax based on the myth that light bulbs emit light. In fact, these light bulbs' actually *absorb dark*, which is then conveyed back to the 'power generation' stations via wire networks. A more descriptive name for 'bulbs' has now been coined: the new scientific name for the device is **DARKSUCKER**.

This article examines the Darksucker theory, which proves the existence of Dark and establishes the fact that Dark has great mass and, further, that the *Dark* particle (the anti-photon) is the fastest known particle in the universe. Apparently, even the celebrated Dr. Albert Einstein did not suspect the truth, that just as *cold* is the absence of *heat*, **light** is the *absence of Dark!* Scientists have now proved that

*light does not really exist!*

The basis of the darksucker theory is that 'electric light' bulbs suck Dark. Take, for example, the darksuckers in the room where you are right now. There is much less Dark right next to the darksuckers than there is elsewhere, demonstrating their limited range. The larger the darksucker, the greater its capacity to suck Dark. Darksuckers in a parking lot or on a cricket field have a much greater capacity than the ones used in the home, for example.

Darksuckers also operate on a celestial scale. Our Sun makes use of dense Dark, sucking it in from all the planets and intervening space. Naturally, the Sun is better able to suck Dark from the planets closer to it, and so those planets appear brighter than the ones more distant from the Sun.

Occasionally, the Sun over-sucks. Dark spots then appear on the surface of the Sun.

Scientists are only now beginning to realize that the dark spots represent leaks of high-pressure Dark, because the Sun has oversucked and some Dark actually leaks back into space. Collisions between the particles of Dark as they stream out at high velocity via the black 'holes' in the Sun frequently cause problems with radio communications on Earth.

Darksuckers have a finite lifetime, not being 100% efficient at transmitting Dark back to the power company via the wires from your home, causing Dark to build up slowly within the device. Once they are full of accumulated Dark, they can no longer suck. You must have noticed that, when Dark extensively covers the *inside* of a darksucker, the unit is also completely surrounded in Dark outside.

A candle is a primitive darksucker. A new candle has a white wick. You will notice that, after the first use, the wick turns black, representing all the Dark that has been sucked into it. A pencil held next to the wick of an operating candle will turn black because it gets in the way of the Dark flowing into the candle. It is no use plugging a candle into an electrical outlet. It can only *collect* Dark; it has no *transmission* capabilities.

Unfortunately these primitive darksuckers have a

very limited range and are hazardous to operate because of the intense heat produced. This is due to friction as the Dark must travel into a solid wick instead of passing through clear glass. This shows that Dark has great mass.

Because of its great mass, it is very heavy. If you swim just below the surface of a lake you see a lot of 'light' (absence of Dark, to be more precise). As you go deeper and deeper, you will notice that it gets darker and darker. When you reach a depth of approximately 10 metres you are in total darkness. This is because the heavier Dark sinks to the bottom, making the lake appear 'lighter' near the surface.

Dark must be very valuable since power companies go to great lengths to collect it in vast quantities. Some more modern power 'generation' facilities have devised well-guarded methods to hide their collection of Dark. The older facilities, however, usually have gargantuan piles of solidified Dark in huge fenced-in areas. Visitors to these facilities are led to believe that the huge black piles are supplies of coal, but we now know better.

[Note - Investigations into the question are continuing and we will undarken you if any further facts are received - Ed.] ~~S~~

# FLUORESCENT LIGHTS

(LIFTED FROM A BACK ISSUE OF CAPE TOWN BRANCH'S *RAGCHEW*)

Fluorescent light operation is a mystery to most people. Basically it is very simple but also most ingenious.

The light seen radiating from a fluorescent tube is in fact the glow from a powdery substance, Phosphor, which coats the inside of the thin glass tube. The chemical name of the phosphor powder is Calcium Halophosphate.

Let us look at the construction of the tube. The physical size and length depends on the design and application, there being four-inch to twelve-foot tubes (You can convert those to metric sizes yourself - Ed.)

When the tube ends are examined we find, on the outside of each, two pins connected to what appears to be a filament on the inside of the tube. However, the pins on one end are not connected with those on the other. The two pins at either end make contact with the sockets inside the ends of the holder unit. This unit consists of a fancy or plain holder, a starter, end fittings and a ballast, which is very similar to a choke. The starter is a glass-encased bi-metal neon gas-filled switch.

You still with me??

BY CLAUDE STEENKAMP ZR1CU,

CAPE TOWN BRANCH'S *RAGCHEW*)

Light-giving action occurs when the phosphor powder is bombarded by ultra-violet rays - a type of light energy in itself but not visible to the human eye. The ultra-violet rays come from the mercury vapour that fills the tube, and which is *ionised*. This activates the phosphor and presto! Light with no heat!

## SWITCH ON

When the on-off switch is turned on, line voltage reaches the starter, whose contacts are normally open. Neon gas within the starter tube conducts thermionically, heating up the gas. The bi-metal contacts bend, and line voltage flows through the two end filaments, heating up the mercury gas. Since the neon gas is no longer conducting, it cools and the bi-metal contacts open, removing the heating source of the mercury gas.

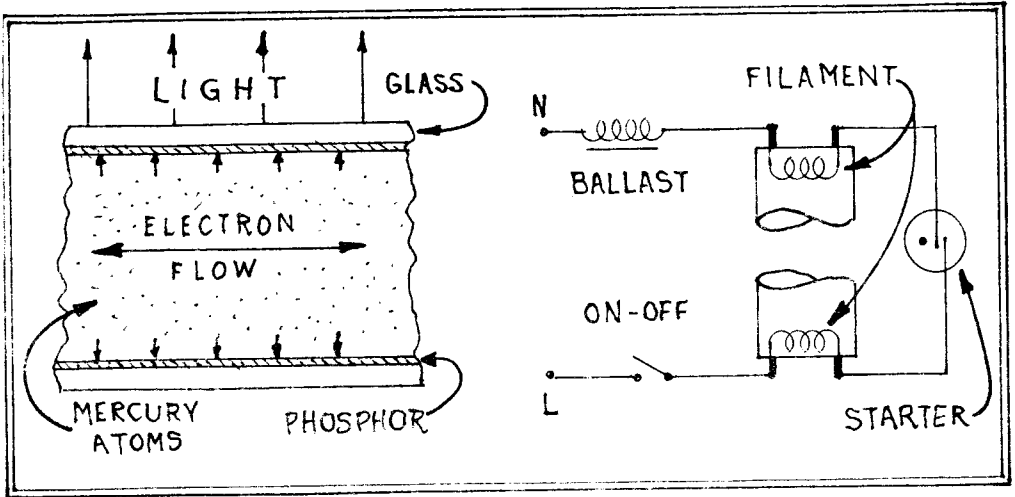
This sudden drop in line voltage now causes a very large back-EMF to be generated, upwards of 800 volts. The induced surge strikes the mercury gas, causing ionisation, radiation of ultra-violet light and visible light.

With line voltage applied, the tube now acts thermionically and light radiation continues due to electron flow. The

ballast now limits the line current through the tube and the voltage drop across it keeps the voltage across the starter tube below the ionisation

potential of the neon gas. When the switch is turned off you are in the dark, same as you were before you read this!

5



## SILENT KEY

We learned with sadness recently of the passing of OM Bill Nuttall, ZS2GE, of East London.

Bill and XYL Eileen, later to become ZS2KZ, took up residence in that city around the end of the 1940's, living for a while in a mobile home at the Nahoon Mouth Caravan Park. Their home soon became the regular Sunday morning meeting place for virtually the whole Branch right after the Headquarters and branch bulletins, enjoying tea and cake and a large helping of camaraderie in the sunshine.

Under Bill's chairmanship, the East London Branch grew to new heights of vigour and enthusiasm, even being acclaimed by Headquarters as a model that other branches could follow.

Bill had been in poor health for a number of years recently and no longer able to be active on the air. We extend our condolences to Eileen and all the other members of Bill's family.



# ANTENNA MATCHING UNITS

Some antenna coupling units may be quite satisfactory on some bands with some aerials, but will not load up on all amateur HF bands. The circuit shown on the next page has proved to be very versatile, and it was possible, due to the various circuit configurations (see A to E) to load a co-axially fed 20m/40m trap dipole as a random wire (i.e. with the inner conductor and braiding of the co-ax tied together) on all bands from 160m to 10m with a VSWR at the transmitter no worse than 1.2:1.

The *ARRL Handbook* 42nd edition 1965 supplied the cir-

*AMATEUR RADIO*, JULY 1991  
cuit. The switching to any one of the five L and C combinations can be performed by a three-pole five-position switch (not readily available these days) - see fig. 2 or, quite conveniently, with six banana sockets and three jumper leads terminated in banana plugs - see fig. 1.

Normal two-gang broadcast receiver (the old valve type) capacitors (approx. 20 to 400pF) were used, only one gang on each connected. The capacitors need to be at least 150pF. No arc-over has been experienced on any band with the TS-520S. *[to page 10 ->*

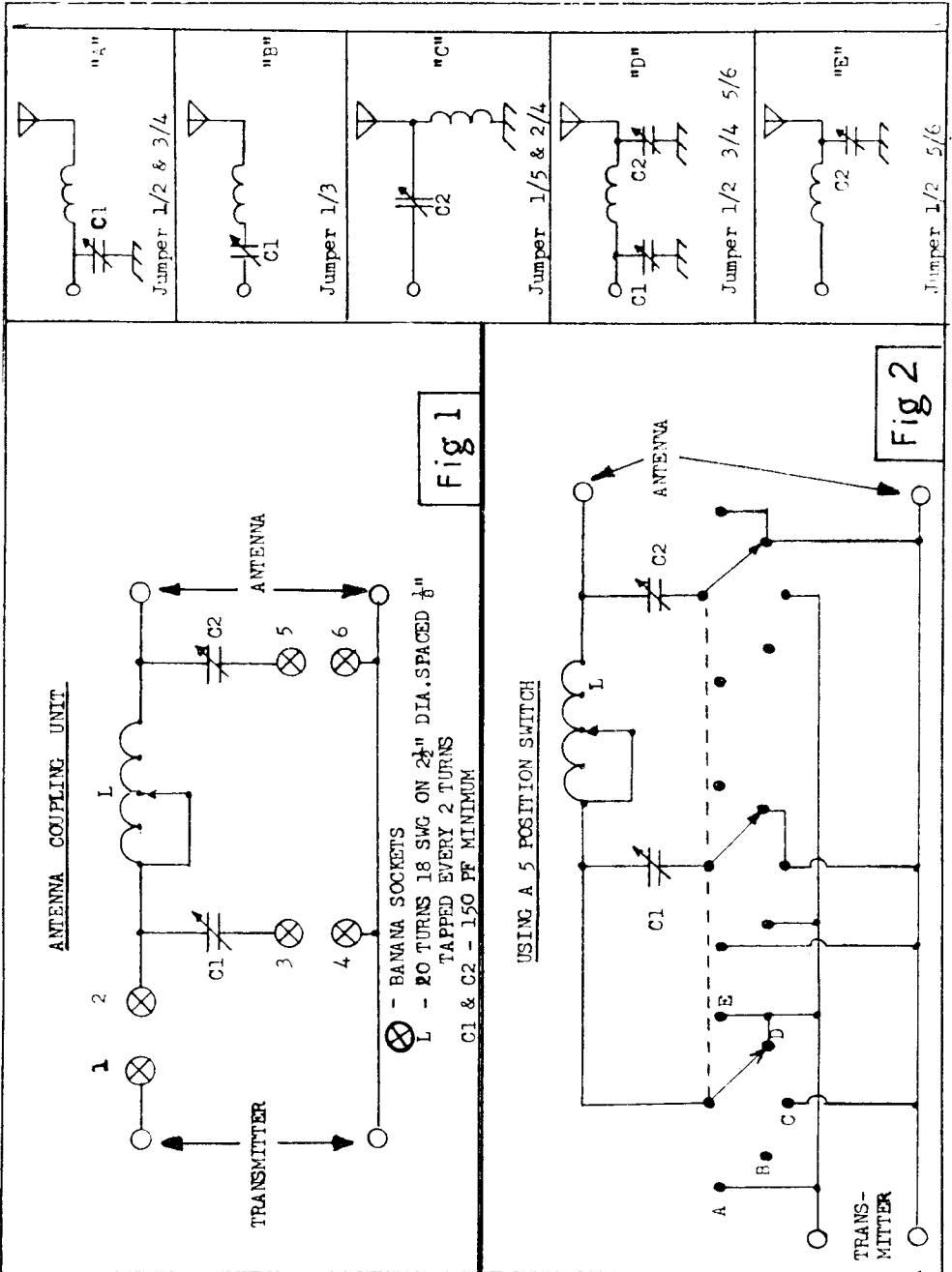
## ZS2PE, NSRI Co-operate

The NSRI celebrates its 25th anniversary from 18 to 25 April with a special event Amateur Station ZS25NSRI. It invites SARRL branches to also operate special stations on 18 April and our Branch plans to erect one at the NSRI base here. So look out for all the special stations throughout the period. You can help to make the displays interesting for the public by giving these stations regular contacts to keep them active.

### BULLETIN ROSTER

		40 METRE BULLETIN	2 MTR RELAY
Apr	5	ZS2CTR	ZS2HB
	12	ZS2EQ	ZS2AZ
	19	ZS2HB	ZS2U
	26	ZS2AZ	ZS2CA
May	3	ZS2U	ZS2SZ
	10	ZS2CA	ZS2VH
	17	ZS2SZ	ZS2CTR

# ANTENNA MATCHING UNITS



# "Stirring" - or Leading the Way?

Port Elizabeth did pretty well for itself at the SARL AGM held in Cape Town last month. Although there were no motions from the Branch as such, some of our members submitted private motions and **not one of them was lost!** What is more, two far-reaching suggestions by our delegate regarding other motions were also accepted with very nice majorities.

This is a far cry from the 1990 AGM when we could not secure majority support for the several PE motions, some of them objecting to what was perceived as unconstitutional actions by the (then) new Transvaal-based Council.

One of our complaints was that Council had made the QSL Bureau a free service in contravention of an earlier AGM decision. The ZR's and the many ZS operators who are not interested in collecting QSL cards are consequently subsidising the DX hounds. This year, the so-called "free" service will cost us R12 500 - no less than 15% of the total income from all our subscriptions! Obviously, returning to the constitutional method would reduce the size of the subscription hike needed to balance the books, and Marge's proposal that QSL stickers be re-introduced resulted in Council being instructed to investigate this possibility in collaboration with the branches. (Personally, I believe that such an investigation is ultra vires: An AGM dictated that the QSL Bureau should NOT be made a free service and it was unconstitutional for Council to ignore the majority decision).

Another proposal by the PE delegate (Al, ZS2U's idea, I believe) was that piecemeal

amendments to the Novice regulations had already produced a mishmash of confusion between the ZR, ZU and ZS levels and that we should press for their total revision at this time. The proposal met with resounding support. **This is a significant turnabout and complete vindication** for an action for which I and another PE member were chided at the 1990 AGM: we had asked the Postmaster General, at a business function here, to delay the introduction of the Novice regulations for a few weeks until the branches had had an opportunity to see what they contained. We felt sure that members might like to suggest a few changes.

The PMG's office complied and sent Headquarters a draft of their proposals, requesting that they be discussed at the AGM. Unfortunately, Council only handed out copies **after** the meeting had started, yet the delegates of the other branches agreed to the acceptance of this extremely important legislation without even studying them! Obviously, had they done their jobs properly, there would have been no need to ask for a total review of those regulations a mere two years after their acceptance, doing little for our image with the Authorities.

We in Port Elizabeth must be doing things right to have increasing numbers throughout the country coming around to our way of thinking, not only on the points detailed above. The lesson to be learned is that you can add sugar to your tea but it won't grow sweet on its own. You have to stir!

And the less responsive the sugar the more stirring it needs. S

# HAM RADIO and the RUSSIAN COUP

EVERYDAY ELECTRONICS, Dec. 1991

An intriguing story in the *W5YI Report* reveals that an amateur radio station, R3A, inside the Russian "White House" parliament building was used by Boris Yeltsin during the recent events in Moscow.

Both CNN and ABC television showed Mr Yeltsin transmitting on the Icom amateur equipment, while the *Wall Street Journal* reported "Mr Yeltsin's efforts to rally support are still being hampered by a lack of communications with the nation. So far his aides have been broadcasting news to ham radio operators on a makeshift short wave transmitter installed on the sixth floor of the Russian parliament."

When it was all over, Dick Ehrhorn, W4ETO, received a handwritten Fax from a radio amateur in Moscow. "Dear Dick, I send you the Fax from the Russian Prime Minister office. We win! Mr Gorbachov back in Moscow. Our special emergency

station R3A still operates from "Russian White House". Equipment: IC-726 (transceiver) and Alpha 76 (amplifier). Photos will be! 73! Gene, RA3AA."

Gene is a friend and business associate of Dick who owns Ehrhorn Technological Operations Inc., makers of the Alpha line of amplifiers, one of which was used by the Russian station. In talking to the *W5YI Report*, Dick commented "The average Soviet salary is around 200 to 300 rubles a month...which is around ten dollars...No one can afford to buy commercial ham gear. The Alpha amplifier they have came from a flea market in western Europe." ✍

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## ZS2PE at the BATHURST SHOW

As this issue of QSX-PE is being readied for the printers, the famous Bathurst Agricultural Show is in full swing, with Phil ZS2PP and his band of willing helpers going great guns demonstrating Ham Radio at its best. They had electrical interference problems at the beginning and OM A1 ZS2U made good and unexpected use of the direction finding equipment that he had taken along as an exhibition piece. It seems an ESCOM power cubicle was the offender, and I hope they were able to cure the interference in time for the opening to the public. ✍

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## HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP:

### Recognition for an Old Stalwart

OM Bill Browne, ZS2BY, was awarded the ultimate honour that the SA Radio League can bestow on a member at the 1992 AGM in Cape Town: Honorary Life Membership. Happily, Bill was in Cape Town for bowling purposes and was able to attend the AGM, not knowing what lay in store for him. The expression of surprise, almost disbelief, on his face when the award was announced was a treat to behold.

Bill has been a member of the Port Elizabeth Branch for at least two periods in the last 50 years or so. He was also a member of the East London Branch for several years back around the middle of this century (!) before being transferred to Bloemfontein, Pretoria and, later, Durban. As a senior Engineer in Telecommunications Head Office, Pretoria, it fell to Bill's lot to administer the technical side of the Radio Regulations and it was he who drew up the first amateur technical examination paper in South Africa when it became a necessity.

As official delegate of the South African Post Office to many overseas conferences of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and in other forums, Bill was also able to look after the needs of the amateur fraternity and protect our interests at the highest level. He retired from the service of the Department of P&T as Regional Manager of the Natal Region, very near the rank of Postmaster General.

From both the official side and ours, Bill has served Amateur Radio well. Over more than half a century, from when he first started tinkering with 'wireless', he was always willing to guide and help his fellow ham, infecting them with his enthusiasm.

Our most sincere congratulations go to Bill on his elevation to Honorary Life Member. May his cheery presence grace our fraternity for many years to come.

★ *'No road is long with good company - anon*

★ ★ PERSONAL NEWS ★ ★

**CONGRATULATIONS** ... to the following members and/or their spouses as well as other friends who are celebrating in the coming month or so:

**Birthdays** - **April**: Margaret Bartie (ZS2WM) (19th); Kay Harvey (ZS2RU) (20th); Trevor Scarr ZS2AE (20th); Alan Bowles ZR2BL, Doris Edwards ZS2DJ and Marge van Loggerenberg (ZS2LR) (all on 22nd); Colin Robertson ZS2CTR (23rd); Arthur Edwards (ZS2DJ) (24th); Toff Scarr ZS2AAW (28th).  
**May**: Marge Weller ZS2OB (1st); Wim van Vorstenbosch ZS2WV (6th); Sean Allen ZS2SNA and Langley Lookwhy ZS6BGN (9th); Attie Barnard ZR2DY (10th); Shirley Cockbain (ZS2TC) (11th); Dot Plumridge (ZS2VP) (16th).

**Anniversaries** - **April**: Hanni ZR2JB and Gerhard Baum ZS2UM (29th). **May**: Shirley and Gus Winter ZS2MC (2nd); Anne and Jock Morris ZS2MD (16th).

- ... to **Bill Browne ZS2BY** on being made an Honorary Life Member - the highest award that a member can receive. Well done, Bill, and thank you for a lifetime of service to the Amateur cause. We salute you.
- ... to **Colleen Lemmer**, our HQ Office Secretary, and her OM on the birth of a daughter recently,
- ... to **Mike Bosch ZS2FM** on being awarded the RADIO ZS Trophy for his very fine articles on VHF,
- ... to **all you wonderful people out there**, the members of the Branch, whose active participation or at least your enthusiasm and encouragement made it possible for us to win the Neil Branch Efficiency Award and once again take top honours in the 1991 Field Day contest.

The AGM '94 FUND stood at R1650 at the last general meeting of the Branch. At the recent SARL AGM, Marge revealed our plan to keep costs to delegates and visitors down to a minimum, so we have to go all out to boost our AGM fund. We need at least R7 000 to make it a memorable AGM and show the Amateur world why we are...  
**the PREMIER BRANCH - of course!**

**WANTED** - The Branch needs a trophy cabinet in which to keep the growing number of awards at the Clubhouse. Any offers?

## **PORT ELIZABETH BRANCH COMMITTEE**

CHAIRMAN & PUBLICITY	Marge Ueller	ZS2OB	31-1639
VICE CHAIRMAN, TREASURER	Colin Robertson	ZS2CTR	30-0570
SECRETARY	Fred Bonthuys	ZS2EQ	63-3804
SPECIAL EVENTS, CONTESTS, HAMNET	Al Akers	ZS2U	30-2983
AWARDS, RALLIES	Bud Voortman	ZS2CA	34-2770
PROJECTS, TRAINING & QSX COMMITTEE	Viv Moore	ZS2YM	30-4433
EDITOR: QSX-PE	Garth Laaks	ZS2HB	38-1101
LIBRARIAN, DF HUNTS, IPHA	Yic Olivier	ZS2SZ	30-2440
SOCIAL, GUEST SPEAKERS	Owen Thomas	ZS2AZ	54-2177
-----			
DIGITAL TECHNICAL LIAISON	Lionel Coombe- Davis	ZS2DD	32-1770
REPEATER WORKING GROUP CO-ORDINATOR	Trevor Scarr	ZS2AE	32-1746

## **BULLETIN ROSTER**

Bulletin readers please refer to your roster sheet.

## **SUNDAY BULLETINS**

Bulletins are transmitted on Sundays at about 08:40  
(after the Headquarters bulletin) on -

- 7,098 MHz (40 metre band SSB)
- 145,700 MHz (2 metre band FM - Lady's Slipper)
- 51,400 MHz (automatic link with 2 m Lady's Slipper)
- 14,130 MHz (20 metres SSB) when conditions require.

## **BRANCH VHF & HF SERVICES**

Town Repeater (PE Central)	145,050	/	145,650 MHz
Grahamstown Repeater	145,150	/	145,750 MHz
Lady's Slipper Repeater	145,100	/	145,700 MHz
6 metre link with Lady's Slipper	51,400 MHz		(simplex)
Cockscomb Repeater	145,000	/	145,600 MHz
Kareedouw Repeater	145,075	/	145,675 MHz
University Repeater	145,175	/	145,775 MHz
6 metre beacon (ZS2SIX CW ID)	50,005		MHz
2 metre beacon (ZS2PE CW ID)	144,910		MHz
Packet Bulletin Board	ZU8KCD -	144,675	& 14,109 MHz, KAM Version 3.0 software

## **BRANCH MEETINGS**

20:15 (8.15pm) on the third Friday of the month in the  
Civil Defence Centre, Westview Drive, Mill Park

**\*\* We like being your branch \*\***