



# Q S X P E



**THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED BY THE  
PORT ELIZABETH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY**

**WEBSITE: [www.qs1.net/zs2pe](http://www.qs1.net/zs2pe)**

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**APRIL 2004**

# MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING

The monthly general meeting of the PORT ELIZABETH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY will be held on Thursday, 15 April 2004 at the St Hugh's Church Hall, Newton Park, starting at 20:00 (8 pm).

Our SARL AGM delegate, Barry Murrell ZR2DX, will give a resume of the happenings at the meeting and will answer any questions. This AGM seems to be a good opportunity to get the League down to business. There will be two representatives from ZS2 on the new council, i.e. Richard Seddon ZS2CLI and our own Barry Murrell ZR2DX.

On the home front, the April meeting will be the last opportunity for anyone to hand in motions for the PEARS AGM to be held in May.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be laid on by Bill ZS2ABZ, and remember the **bring and buy** table to rid yourself of what's unimportant at present – until you get rid of it.

## Wrinkly Ravers

This issue of QSX is going to press long before our April get together so I am unable to say how many turned up. We certainly hope there has been a good turnout and that Bill Browne ZS2BY, who had a bad patch at the March do, will be up and about for this one.

Our next get together will again be at Barney's Steak Bar, Circular Drive, Lorraine. It will be held on Thursday, 6 May.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING JAARVERGADERING

The Annual General Meeting of the Port Elizabeth Amateur Radio Society will be held on Saturday, 22 May 2004. We hope to have it at the St. Hugh's Hall in Newton Park (see next QSX). It will start at 1600 (4pm).

The Agenda is as follows:

1. Welcome
2. Minutes of 2003 Annual General Meeting
3. Chairman's report
4. Treasurer's report
5. Club awards
6. Election of Chairman
7. Election of Committee
8. Discussion of motion/s
9. General
10. Close of Meeting

Please note that any motions that you would like to have discussed at the AGM must be in the hands of the Secretary by not later than the April 2004 general meeting of the Society.

Die Jaarvergadering van die Port Elizabeth Amateur Radio Vereniging sal op Saterdag, 22 Mei 2004 plaasvind. Ons hoop om dit in die St. Hugh's Kerksaal, Newton Park te hou (kyk volgende QSX). Dit sal om 1600 (4nm) begin.

Die Sakelys is soos volg:

1. Verwelkoming
2. Notules van 2003 Alg. Jaarvergadering
3. Voorsitter se verslag
4. Tesourier se verslag
5. Klubtoekennings
6. Verkiesing van Voorsitter/voorsitster
7. Verkiesing van Komitee
8. Bespreking van mosies
9. Algemeen
10. Sluiting

Neem asb. kennis dat enige mosies wat u graag op die sakelys vir die AJV wil plaas, die Sekretaris nie later nie as die April 2004 algemene vergadering van die Vereniging moet bereik. ☐



## from *The* *Chairman*

**A**pril sees the sitting of the SARL AGM and the closing, for public comment of the amended radio regulations pertaining to amateur radio – both events which could potentially impact on our hobby.

If you are a paid-up SARL member, play your part and ensure that our regional representative, Barry Murrell (ZR2DX), has your proxy.

While it is doubtful that we will ever be entirely satisfied with the SARL, let's try and be positive. Griping never solved a single problem – rolling up one's sleeves and pitching in, does.

The survival and growth of amateur radio should be addressed at a club level. It is up to us to promote the hobby to our own communities.

As a club, we are in the enviable position of being reasonably well-funded. Let's utilize a portion of this money to market ourselves to potential new conscripts.

One thought, discussed on the air recently, was for the club to purchase an old Kombi, and to kit it out as a mobile communications centre. To my mind, this is an excellent idea – we could efficiently move the station around to high-profile venues, and give the public a glimpse of what we can

do.

Yet another idea is to rent a venue for a few days and set up station – once again inviting the public to visit us. There must be a dozen more worthy ideas waiting to be voiced. Please share them with us, and let's make things happen.

While on the subject of funds, please do not forget that subs are now due – and we would appreciate timeous payment. As mentioned in last month's QSX, we will also need to review subscriptions for 2005/6. I'm sure that all will agree that the value that you receive from club membership is worth more than the current (subsidised) R50 per annum. We can guarantee however that the increase will be minimal – just enough to cover the increased costs relating to printing and mailing QSX.

April is holiday time once again, and to those of you heading off into the blue-yonder, enjoy your vacation and get back safely.

Finally, get radio active – switch on that transceiver once in a while, and actually operate!

73,

**Rory, ZS2BL**

## PREVENTION IS BEST

They say that prevention is better than cure. We would do well to remember this.

It is surprising that so many people take little or no note of what is going on around them. In this day and age we cannot afford this. We need to be alert and be prepared for any possible danger.

One of the latest scams which illustrates the necessity to be alert is for the thief or thieves to place a sticker on your vehicle rear window when it is unattended. When you try to reverse out of a parking bay you cannot see out the rear window, so you get out to remove the sticker and the thieves climb in the car and drive away.

You no doubt spend a lot of time at home, so make sure it is as safe as

possible. Recently, a well-known ham, Buddy McCullum ZS1MP, had his home broken into and R70 000 worth of equipment was stolen.

Also recently, presumably while being robbed at home, Kevin ZR1KDG had his head bashed in with a hammer.

Apparently there was even some incident at the home of Nelson Mandela.

So, I repeat, try to make your home as safe as possible and be on the alert all the time.

73

**Al Akers,**  
Director  
ECARES 

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## AGM AWARDS

Several of the PEARS awards can be applied for, and others are allocated after consideration by the Committee. These are based when possible on input from members. You are therefore requested to nominate likely recipients for the following awards and offer them at the April meeting:

**ZS2OB DX Trophy** (to whom the Committee considers the most deserving);

**ZS2AB Constructor's Trophy** (number of construction projects, their complexity and the quality and appearance of the finished products);


**Ham Spirit Trophy** (those qualities

which make a good all-round Ham);

**PEARS Merit Cup** (the person who has done most to promote amateur radio);

**Appreciation Award** (services willingly rendered to the Society or its members);

**Achievement** (special or outstanding achievement in the context of amateur radio).

Those who feel that they have achieved the requirements for the other awards and certificates should please also make application to the Committee not later than the April meeting. 

# SARL MATTERS

Richard Seddon ZS2CLI tells us that he has been reviewing the logs and can report the following usage statistics for the SARL web:

*Everyday an average of 126 visitors visit the SARL website (about 60 in Feb 2002.)*

*Of those 85% are South Africans (or at least in the same time zone as South Africa.)*

*38% of visitors are SARL members. (62% are non-members and the general public.)*

*Each day about 4.5% of SARL members log into the site.*

*Over an average 7 day period 34.8% of SARL members log into the site.*

*In all 52.4% of SARL members have logged into the SARL web.*

*99% use Microsoft OS's and Web Browsers. (Windows and Internet Explorer.)*

Analyzing what these people are looking at reveals the following:

*The Short Message forum / Swop shop is the most popular page.*

*The Callbook comes in as Second.*

*Third is the Radio Age and Price guide.*

*Fourth, the English news bulletin. (AFR bulletin ranks 15th)*

*Fifth, the ICASA update page. (news on SARL interaction with ICASA)*

*Sixth, the Site Index.*

*Seventh is the Radio ZS page.*

*Eighth, the Members landing.*

*Ninth, the Search Page.*

*Tenth, the Downloads list.*

*The most downloaded e-Radio ZS was the Oct-Dec 2003 edition which was downloaded 439 times. (39% of members potentially got a copy.)*

There you have it, the latest stats from the SARL web. I've sent these out to the new council to expose them to what the SARL web does and more or less how many of our members use it and what they use. I hope you find this information useful.

## SARL AGM – HOW WE WILL VOTE

After discussion at the March AGM, we decided that Barry Murrell, ZR2DX, should vote "for" on all the motions for the AGM and the points for discussion there. They were—

Motion 1 – Increase in power to 600 Watts.

Motion 2 – "third" be removed from Rule 16.4 and the second sentence also be removed.

Motion 3 – Amendments to Constitution:

- That the following be added to the end of the clause under 10 INDEMNITY: "on condition that such action be in accordance with the constitution of the SARL and have been authorized by the council.
- Under Subscriptions and Fees, that the following new rule be added: "7.5 Senior members may with the approval of Council pay their subscriptions in 12 monthly instalments, by stop order or other approved methods. Members paying by this method should be considered as fully paid up members where this term applies."
- Under PROXY, that all words after "the hand of the grantor" be removed and replaced with "and clearly indicate the name and call sign of the grantor and to whom it is granted as well as the date of validity. Only originals and faxes bearing clearly identifiable signatures will be accepted."

### Under Points for Discussion,

Point 1 – That Council investigate the possibility of an improved and organized method of representation of the various divisions on Council.

Point 2 – That the SARL request the IARU to permit SA radio amateurs to use 30 metres at night time for phone.

All the motions and points for discussion came from members in the Cape area. ☺

# VHF NEWS

## FIRST 144MHz EME CONTACT FROM PORT ELIZABETH

Tuesday 9 March 2004 saw the first ever 144MHz EME contact from Port Elizabeth when Barry ZR2DX successfully worked Dave Blaschke W5UN in Mount Pleasant, Texas, using the WSJT JT65B mode.

Signals from W5UN peaked at -16dB in Port Elizabeth, with traces of signal being audible at times. Signals in Texas were marginal, with W5UN reporting readings of around -25dB. Signals were copied in Port Elizabeth from 05h05 UTC, with RO from W5UN being copied at 05h41 and 73 at 05h51. Screenshots of the contact, as well as a sound file of the -16dB period received in Port Elizabeth, will be posted on ZR2DX's website at <http://www.qsl.net/zr2dx>

The station used by ZR2DX comprised an Icom IC910H with 100W output and an Icom AG25 masthead preamplifier, with a single Cushcraft 17B2 17 element yagi, approximately 10m above the ground (no elevation).

Subsequent to the success with W5UN, ZR2DX has received several sked requests. At time of writing skeds are under way with KB8RQ in Ohio, and following that will be skeds with DF2ZC and DF7KF. Lance W7GJ has also requested a 6m EME sked, using JT65A.

- *Hearty congratulations, Barry, on working the USA on 2 Metres using JT65B. It has put PE on the DX map for the digital modes. Let us know if you manage to work the others!*

## SIX METRE NEWS

With the decline of the solar cycle little activity has been reported on 6m TEP this year. A small opening to the Mediterranean was reported by Division 6 stations on Saturday 20 March, but propagation did not stretch down below Division 6. Some stations operating in the SARL VHF Contest were able to work into Italy and the Southern Mediterranean, and Hal ZS6WB reports working North Africa. Signals were however not strong, and this looks like pretty much the end of the TEP propagation for this solar cycle!

## 50MHz FSK441 ACTIVITY WEEKEND

The March 50MHz activity weekend to try out the new FSK441C mode proved to be a success, with a number of stations taking part. Stations from Divisions 1,4 and 6 were heard in Port Elizabeth, with ZS4SS and ZS6WB particularly strong. This was the first attempt at FSK441C, and further evaluation and comparison is required against the original FSK441 mode before opinions can be formed.

## STILBAAI ON 50MHz WSJT

Werner ZR1WZ is the latest newcomer to WSJT on 50MHz, from Stilbaai (KF05) down in the Western Cape. Werner was easily worked in Port Elizabeth by ZR2DX on the JT6M mode. Werner is equipped with a 5 element yagi and 40W, and from a rare grid will certainly be in demand!

## 144MHz SSB OPENING TO DIV 5

Wednesday 17 March saw an excellent opening to Division 5 on 144MHz from Port Elizabeth, with Dave ZS5DJ in Ramsgate romping in at S7 signals on SSB. Al ZS2U was the first to hear the SSB transmissions on 144.400MHz, and he alerted Barry ZR2DX, who joined in. The opening lasted from around 18h00 UTC until 18h45 UTC. During the conversation Dave was also in contact with Lee ZS5LEE and Rob ZS5LA in Durban, but nothing was heard of them in PE and they could not copy the PE stations.

## BLOEMFONTEIN ACTIVE AGAIN ON 50MHz

Hal ZS6WB reports as follows:

"All you hungry DXers have got another grid to look for that has been very scarce on 50 MHz for the past few years. Bernie, ZS4TX in Bloemfontein (KG30BW) has just gotten his 50 MHz beam back up, an M2 6M5X at 30 metres. He reports that it looks very small up there next to his 80 m beam.

I was copying his 100 watts in Pretoria on CW with no problem and he expects to have completed upgrading to the latest WSJT version later today (Saturday 19 March)

His operating frequency schedule is unknown but due to his central location and antenna height he will be able to work on ground wave as well as meteor scatter in several directions. With this in mind it might be a good idea to treat him initially as a DXpedition station and ask him to operate on 50.265 JT6M using a 15 second period and always transmitting first period. JT6M is probably better for now because it gives good copy with continuous ground wave signals as well as shorter bursts of meteor scatter."

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## THIS 'n THAT

- Physicists in New Zealand have shown that last November's record-breaking solar explosion was much larger than previously estimated, thanks to innovative research using the upper atmosphere as a gigantic x-ray detector.

Before the storm peaked, x-rays overloaded the detectors on the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites (GOES), forcing scientists to estimate the flare's size. Taking a different route, researchers from the University of Otago used radio wave-based measurements of the x-rays' effects on the Earth's upper atmosphere to revise the flare's size from a merely huge X28 to a "whopping" X45, say researchers Neil Thomson, Craig Rodger, and Richard Dowden .

- A small near-Earth asteroid (NEA), discovered Monday night by the NASA-funded LINEAR asteroid survey, made the closest approach to Earth ever recorded. There was no danger of a collision with the Earth during this encounter.

The object, designated 2004 FH, is roughly 30 meters (100 feet) in diameter and passed just 43,000 km (26,500 miles, or about 3.4 Earth diameters) above the Earth's surface on March 18th at 22:08 UTC.

- Europe's Rosetta mission has launched successfully and is now heading into space on its daring journey to chase and land on a comet. The £600m probe lifted off at 0717 GMT from its launchpad in Kourou, French Guiana, on an Ariane 5 rocket after being delayed twice.

Rosetta is primed for a 7bn-km journey to Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko. 🌠

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE PORT ELIZABETH  
AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY HELD AT THE St HUGH'S CHURCH HALL,  
NEWTON PARK, PORT ELIZABETH ON 18 MARCH 2004**

**Welcome:**

Chris ZS2AAW chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chairman, and welcomed everyone who had made the effort to attend the meeting. A special welcome was extended to Paul ZR6ACV, who has joined the Society.

**Present and Apologies :**

As noted in the attendance register.

**Acceptance of Previous Meetings Minutes :**

Proposed : ZS2ABZ    Seconded ZR2AG.

**Matters Arising:**

AI ZS2U reported that the Westview Drive Civil Defence building has been taken over by another organisation, and will not be available to us.

**Correspondence:**

*In:* Letter of thanks for VHF Contest from ZS1NAZ, with offer of contribution – ZR2DX to respond with banking details

*Out:* None

**Finance:**

In the absence of the Treasurer no financial report was available.

**Social:** Nil

**Special Events:**

PEARS AQ 2m FM Contest to take place on Saturday 20 March 2004.

**Repeaters:**

ZS2AAW reported that work would be undertaken to correct the HF problem on Lady's Slipper over the long weekend. The Cradock repeater requires attention . New batteries are ready for installation at Governor's Kop, and the tower there still needs to be sorted out. Cockscomb repeater is still in Chris' garage, awaiting reinstallation. Mention was also made of unauthorised switching taking place on the repeater link network.

**General:**

AI ZS2U outlined the formation of awards and contest committees.

A discussion was then held as to the SARL AGM proposals, and agreement was reached on the PEARS viewpoint in this regard. It was agreed to support all the motions as proposed.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 20h30, and tea and refreshments were enjoyed. After the break Ewalt ZS2EHB gave us a fascinating presentation on digital audio recording and editing by means of computer. 🎧



# INTERNET RADIO LINKING PROJECT (IRLP)

by Brad ZS5BP, from February 2004 Highway Hotline

With the increase in IRLP activity recently, I have received many requests for information pertaining to IRLP.

IRLP allows local hams to connect to repeaters elsewhere in the world using the Internet as the backbone. The system runs on a Linux based PC, connected to the Internet. It is based on a software package called Speak Freely and is the brainchild of David Cameron, VE7LTD.

It allows the local operator to use DTMF to control the node and cross-link our UHF repeater network to other international repeaters.

Websites worth visiting for more information on IRLP:

- <http://www.irlp.net> – IRLP homepage
- <http://www.irlp.net/guidelines.html> – Operating guidelines for IRLP
- <http://status.irlp.net> – Latest list of IRLP nodes.

The following access codes may vary from node to node but are common on both the Durban and Harrismith nodes:

- \*01 – Check Current node status
- \*02 – Check Local time
- \*03 – Parrot repeater script for checking your audio

- \*04 – Last node connected
- \*05 – Call counter for incoming and outgoing connections
- \*\*5452 – Local time at node 5452 is ... (currently not working)
- 5452 – Calls node 5452
- 73 – Terminate current connection.

## RECOMMENDED IRLP OPERATING PRACTICES:

- Monitor the repeater for at least 30 seconds before transmitting
- Check if the frequency is in use or if node is connected (\*01)
- Identify yourself **before** sending DTMF tones and regularly between tone sequences
- When connected to a remote node, listen for at least 15 seconds prior to calling – you may have interrupted a local contact
- Leave a 3 – 5 second break between transmissions
- Leave a 1 second gap after pressing the PTT before talking
- Don't use a reflector for lengthy one-to-one contacts – rather disconnect from the reflector and connect direct.

Queries to: [irlp@harc.org.za](mailto:irlp@harc.org.za)

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## CONTEST COMMITTEES

It has been decided that Mike Bosch ZS2FM, Barry Murrell ZR2DX and Al Akers ZS2U will serve as the contest committee for the PEARS National VHF/UHF Contests.

For the other local contests, Barry Murrell ZR2DX, Rory Norton ZS2BL and Al Akers ZS2U will do the necessary.

All concerned may send their logs by e-mail to Barry Murrell, ([zr2dx@mweb.co.za](mailto:zr2dx@mweb.co.za)) in all cases or to Rory ([rory@commco.co.za](mailto:rory@commco.co.za)) for the local contests. ☺

# A "HOSPITAL" SLIM JIM ANTENNA

from JOHAN TERBLANCHE, ZSII

Many radio amateurs are faced with the problem of being unable to erect any type of 2M outdoor antenna. This means the only viable alternative is an indoor antenna.

The simple antenna described in this article is easy to construct and needs little by way of materials. These amount to brazing rods (or wire coat-hangers), two strips of 30A "chock-block" screw type connectors, a few woodscrews and a piece of wood for a base.

No soldering is required except for a plug on the transmitter end of the coax cable.

It takes very little time to construct and, aside from its application as a permanent indoor antenna, it could be taken away on holiday or to the hospital and used for portable operation.

The antenna arrangement is based on the popular "Slim Jim" design, designed some years ago by F.C. Judd G2BCX. The method of construction and other modifications have not only allowed a significant reduction in size, but also provide a broader bandwidth, the SWR being virtually 1:1 right across the 2M band.

## CONSTRUCTION:

The major part of construction is the matching line, which is fixed to the base board as shown in Fig 1. The illustration shows the positions of the three electrical connector blocks which carry the matching line wires.

One of these connector blocks also provides a support and connecting point for the vertical radiating element, which is fitted at the points marked "X". However, before screwing down the connector blocks, cut from one of the lengths of brazing rod the sections that will form the matching line as given in

Fig. 2. These are connected, as in Fig. 1, to form a continuous pair of lines between the coaxial cable and the bottom of the radiating element.

The positions of the blocks may require shifting slightly to obtain a symmetrical layout. After this has been achieved they may be screwed into place.

Next the radiating element, details for which are given in Fig. 3. The two long wires are cut to the dimensions given, and then the electrical connector blocks are fitted.

These give the vertical element wires the correct spacing, as well as support and their positioning is not critical.

The very top section of the radiator is a separate "U" shaped piece of brazing rod. (no. 5 shown in Fig. 3). This part is slotted into the top connector block, and consequently will provide a small variation in radiator length.

With this method of adjustment, the antenna can be made to resonate, allowing minimum SWR to be obtained.

## TUNING AND SWR:

First, a few words about the coaxial cable which must be 50 Ohm. Low-loss cable would be preferred if the cable run is more than 6 metres long.

The lower the cable attenuation, the more r.f. power there will be available for radiation by the antenna. Remember, for indoor operation every little bit counts, especially when it is realized that brick walls and tiled roofs may offer as much as 10 dB

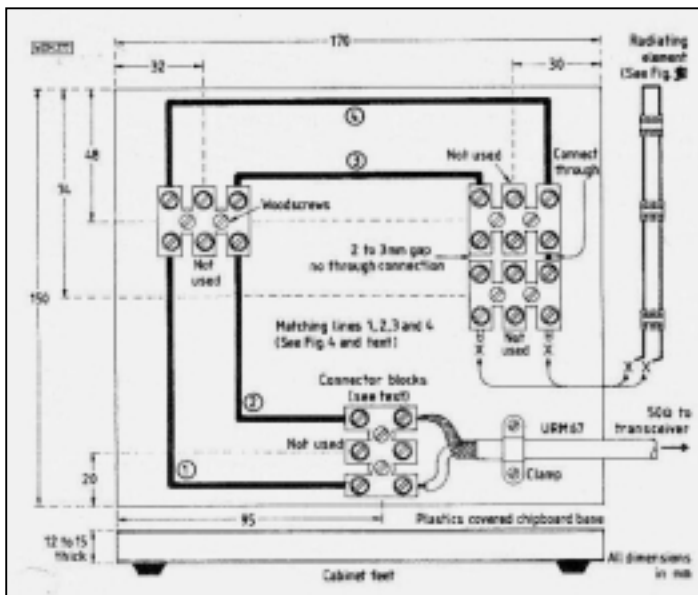


Figure 1 – Base board of the antenna

until the SWR is brought within respectable limits.

Stand back from the antenna after each adjustment as “body capacity” can affect tuning. Some experimentation may be necessary to find the best SWR reading.

**FINALLY: Why the name: A “Hospital” Slim Jim?**

I constructed this antenna for a fellow radio amateur who visited a Mossel Bay hospital quite regularly.

attenuation, even when dry.

Final adjustment should be carried out at mid-band with a SWR meter in line at the transmitter end.

Stand the antenna on a table and make a quick check on SWR. It may be a little too high, in which case adjust the top section of the radiator up or down

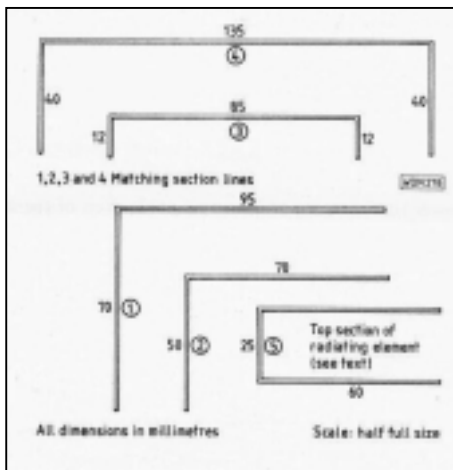


Figure 2 – The bottom sections

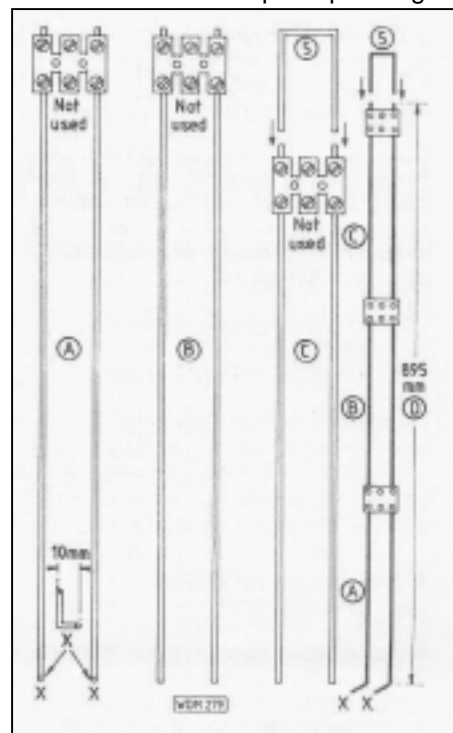


Figure 3 – The vertical sections

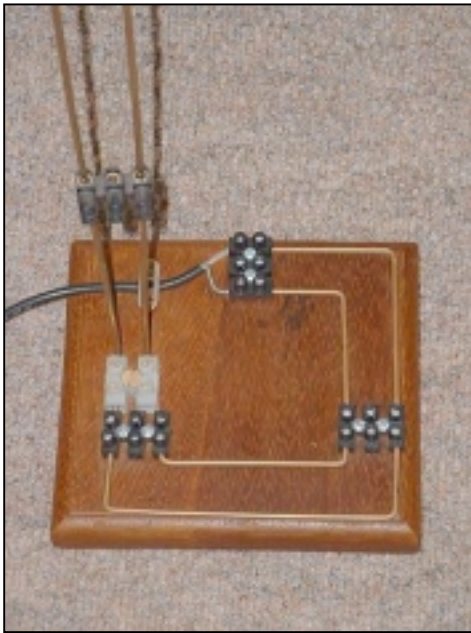


Figure 4 –  
Photograph of the  
lower section of the  
completed antenna

Tests carried out under hospital conditions showed that reliable contacts with stations using outside antennas could be made over distances of 16km.

#### REFERENCES

THE SLIM JIM 2 METER ANTENNA,  
F.C. Judd,  
PRACTICAL WIRELESS, August 1988  
MULTI-WIRE DIPOLE ANTENNAS,  
J.D. Kraus.

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## Are You Over 80?

We have never made a note of the ages of our members because it doesn't normally matter to us. We simply know the birthdates – month and day (although even here we don't always have them in spite of several requests over the years). In a number of cases we have been informed of special birthdays, but that doesn't help the overall picture.

A couple of years ago a decision was taken at a PEARS AGM in terms of which anybody who turns 80 and who has had an unbroken period of ten years' membership of the club should

get the following:–

- an "Outoppie" award,
- free future membership of the Club.

If you turn 80 and have *not* been a member for ten years, you will get just the "Outoppie" award but *not* be entitled to free membership until you complete ten years' in the fold.

Please, people, let the Secretary or any other committee member know if you are 80 or becoming 80, and also whether you have been a member for ten years or less.

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#### THANKS

Lionel Coombe-Davis ZS2DD, who was in hospital for a couple of weeks last month, has asked me to express his thanks to all who took the trouble to

visit, phone or send cards while he was there.

He is back at home and is doing well. 📺

# SATELLITE NEWS

## 3B9C ON SATELLITE

David G0MRF / 3B9C writes: "Although I've been keeping my fingers crossed, it's looking increasingly unlikely that AO-40 will be recovered in time for the 3B9C operation from Rodrigues Island. March 17th to April 12th.

As 'satellite specialist' I'm probably going to get more of a sun than I expected. However, it still may be possible to get a few satellite QSOs into the log.

I would be very pleased to hear from anyone who would like to set up a sked on ANY of the remaining satellites. The best possibility looks like FO-29 which appears to be working well. Using just a triband vertical around 435.850, I've heard a few stations today including EB8 and VE3. RS15 could also work. Unfortunately the 6 minute schedule on AO-27 is good for areas of high population but it would be difficult for 3B9.

David has subsequently been in contact with both ZR1L and ZR2DX in South Africa, and will be looking for South African stations on the LEO satellites from 5 April to 12 April 2004. Activity will be centred on FO-29 and AO-7, with FO-29 being the primary satellite. FO-29 is relatively easy to work, with uplink from 145.9 to 146.0 MHz LSB and downlink 435.800 to 435.900 MHz USB. There is also a beacon on 435.795MHz. Operation will be in the middle of the passband.

## AO-40 – SOME POSITIVE NEWS

On 10 March 2004 Colin Hurst, VK5HI said today, during the period

0310 to 0320 UTC (orbit 1541) prior to issuing the command sequence we tuned around the beacon frequency, taking note of the "noise spectrum". No variance in amplitude detected, just clean white noise.

At 0310, commenced sending a 12 block sequence, 3 \* (Reset, Tx-Off, Reset, Tx-On).

At the completion of the sequence, again tuned around the beacon frequency, and noted a noise peak of 4 to 5 dB, in the vicinity of expected beacon frequency. The width of this peak was about 5 kHz. Listened to it for about 15 seconds and then sent a Reset, Tx-Off command and the noise peak disappeared, approximately 2 seconds after the Tx-Off block was completed.

This tends to suggest that the IHU and L Band Rx are operational. Bus voltage insufficient to open that relay. Considering SA=-72, the remaining cells are holding up well. Hope this makes your day, like it has mine.

## NO-45/SAPPHIRE UPDATE

The NO-45 digipeater remains on. Users are requested NOT to use the Bulletin Board. When the Bulletin Board is used it effectively "locks out" ground access to the spacecraft CPU.

Everyone is welcome to use the digipeating/APRS features of Sapphire, callsign KE6QMD, as per the user service agreement located at the following URL  
[http://web.usna.navy.mil/~bruninga/pcs\\_at/contract.txt](http://web.usna.navy.mil/~bruninga/pcs_at/contract.txt) There will be occasional dropouts caused by the CW beacon.

## OSCAR-11 REPORT 16 MARCH 2004

OSCAR-11 celebrated its 20th birthday on 1 March. After 20 years in orbit, it is still transmitting useful data. To commemorate this event, AMSAT-UK is issuing a special QSL for reports of reception during March.

There are special endorsements for hearing the satellite on its birthday, and for mode-S reception. It's still not too late to apply for a QSL, but all reception reports must be received by 7 April. For full details visit the AMSAT-UK website at <http://www.uk.amsat.org/>

At the present time the satellite is operating in a default mode, transmitting continuous ASCII telemetry on 145.826 MHz., for ten days followed by ten days of silence. However, during March ground control are hoping to reset the timer each time the VHF beacon switches OFF. This should minimize the OFF time, but there may be some gaps in the transmissions. The mode-S beacon is ON continuously.

For the latest news, visit the website <http://users.zetnet.co.uk/clivew>.

Users of OSCAR-11 should note that the date in the telemetry is now advanced by FOUR days. The time is advanced by 19.5 minutes, and this error is increasing by about one minute per year.

The mode-S beacon on 2401.5 MHz. has been heard by Ferruccio IW1AM, Dean AL7CR, Mark CT1JFC/G4MAW, Ken W7KKE, Ferracio & Piero IW1AM/IZ1ERR, Martin G7MRF, Mirek OK2AQK and Bill GM0ICF. Also, many more reports have been submitted to the AMSAT-UK website for the special birthday QSL endorsement. Many thanks for all those reports.

The 435.025 MHz. beacon is normally OFF. It can only be heard on the very rare occasions when the satellite is being commanded by ground control, i.e.. within range of Guildford, UK. When the 435 MHz beacon is transmitting, the 145 MHz beacon is normally OFF. The data transmitted is mainly binary.

The web site contains details about using a soundcard for data capture, and also details about using hardware demodulators. There is software for capturing data, and decoding ASCII telemetry. There is an archive of raw data for analysis, which is continually being expanded, as new data is captured.

Originally this was for WOD, but it is now being expanded to include ASCII telemetry. At the present time the telemetry covers 1996 to April 2003. In parallel there is a news archive which provides an overview of the state of the satellite, at the times when the telemetry was captured.

If anyone out there can provide any data, particularly for the 1984 to 1993 years, this would be most appreciated. Please e-mail me with details. However please DO NOT SEND ANY FILES, before further discussion.

Also included are some audio files, examples of each type of data transmitted by OSCAR-11, each one plays for about ten seconds. There are also examples of mode-S reception. All the audio files are zipped, so that they can be played off-line. These should help listeners identify the various types of data, and give an indication of the signal quality required for successful decoding.

The URL is -

<http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/clivew/> 

# Pearstalk



(Some of these items are from SARL bulletins and ZS4BS Dennis Green's HF Newsletter)

## DONATION

Nasri Gasant, ZS1NAZ, very kindly offered to make a donation to the Club in appreciation of the various contests that we have organized.

Our grateful thanks, Naz!

Also, Bryan Marshall ZS1NQ has donated six technical books on basic electronics to be loaned to those studying for the RAE. Many thanks, Bryan. We will use them.

## SARL AGM AND AWARDS DINNER

The SARL AGM took place at the National Amateur Radio Centre on Saturday, 3 April 2004.

On the Friday evening, a pre-AGM social get-together was hosted by the Sandton club at a venue in the area.

The AGM itself was held in the Sentech hall, adjacent to the NARC and the Dinner and Awards ceremony took place at the same venue.

The presentation of awards followed the guest speaker's presentation. Perhaps one or two of our members will get something again.

## LOGBOOK OF THE WORLD

Don Field G3XTT says "Is this the beginning of the end of the QSL card, as we know it?"

With the ARRL's Logbook of the World ('LoTW') now live, there has been a lot of discussion about it. As always, many of the contributors seem to enter the fray without fully understanding the topic they

are discussing.

One of the recurring themes is that LoTW removes the need for paper QSLs, which will gradually disappear. Indeed, at least one DX station has now said that he will start uploading his logs to LoTW and will no longer offer paper QSLs. It seems to me that he and others like him have 'lost the plot'.

LoTW is absolutely *not* an electronic QSL facility. It is a QSO-matching facility specifically for the purpose of allowing amateurs to apply for awards without the necessity of sending QSL cards. Initially it is aimed at the ARRL's DXCC suite of awards, but can be extended to other awards run by other sponsors, by arrangement with the ARRL.

This is helpful for several reasons, not least of which is that many amateurs don't wish to risk their hard-won QSL cards to the postal service while applying for awards. If you still want a QSL card, which many amateurs do, to put on the shack wall, have as a keepsake, or whatever, then you will still need to apply for QSL cards in the time-honoured fashion. There is no facility, as with eQSL, which I have discussed previously on these pages, to print out a QSL card.

About 7000 to 8000 amateurs are active in the DXCC programme, whereas the evidence from major expeditions such as D68C suggests that several times this number not only chase DX but actively seek QSL cards to confirm their contacts.

Each year, directly and through the

world's QSL bureaus, something less than one million will find their way to the ARRL for DXCC purposes.

Whether I will be writing the same sort of thing in 10 years' time is another matter. Maybe by then we'll be more than happy to have a database of digitally-signed electronic verifications, accessible from our personal web pages, as an alternative to that bulky collection of QSL cards gathering dust in shoe boxes and incurring the wrath of the XYL. Only time will tell!

#### **DIVISION 1 FORUM**

The Division 1 Forum, which was reported on in the SARL bulletin of 28 February was established on Saturday 6 March at Swellendam.

Twentyone representatives from the following clubs were present:

Cape Town Amateur Radio Centre;  
Boland Amateurradioklub;  
Overberg Amateurradioklub;  
Oakdale Amateur Radio Club;  
Suidkaap Amateurradioklub;  
Gizmo Radioklub;  
Winelands Amateur Radio Club;  
Garden Route Amateur Radio Club.

It was decided to rename the Forum to the "Western Cape Amateur Radio Forum".

A management committee was chosen with the following members:

Chairman Marten Holland, ZS1SM;  
Vice chairman Abe Zwegelaar, ZS1ZS;  
Secretary Karl Canitz, ZS1KC;  
Treasurer Rassie Erasmus, ZS1YT.

Furthermore, each club will be represented on the forum by two delegates. All SARL council members with ZS1 call signs will serve as ex-officio members of the forum.

A constitution has been drawn up for the forum and has been accepted. A copy of the constitution is available at

[www.qsl.net/zs1ct](http://www.qsl.net/zs1ct) and follows just after the switch to "forum".

It was unanimously accepted that the Western Cape Amateur Radio Forum has the goal to promote the SARL and amateur radio.

A copy of the minutes of the inaugural meeting and the constitution have already been posted on the packet network.

#### **AUTOMATIC POSITION REPORTING SYSTEM (APRS)**

A couple of local APRS users would like to get together with Ton, ZS6ANA – (Digital Council Portfolio)) at the NARS to discuss the implementation of APRS in Gauteng and possible growth in the rest of South Africa.

The plan was to combine it with the Southern African Antique Wireless Association (SAAWA) get-together on the 20th March at 10:30.

For further information, please contact Andy, ZS6CEY, on 082-444-9047, or via email, [andy@netstar.altech.co.za](mailto:andy@netstar.altech.co.za).

#### **STATUS OF THE REGULATIONS SUBMITTED TO ICASA**

Graham Hartlett ZS6GJH, the President of the SARL, says that the new Regulations were published in the Government Gazette No. 25814 of 17 March 2004 for a period of 30 days for public comment.

Graham believes that members and non-members of the SARL are communicating directly with ICASA and the minister's office.

"While I appreciate your frustration with the process, talking directly to ICASA or the minister's office at this time is not helping our position at all. Please address your comments to the League that we may have a united front in our dealings with ICASA. Your co-operation in this matter will be greatly appreciated," says



Graham.

marathon@saila.org.

### **SILENT KEY**

It is with deep regret that we announce the untimely death of Kevin Geustyn, ZR1KDG. He was found murdered in his flat last month. It is thought that he died on Sunday.

He was brutally tied, beaten and stabbed many times. Kevin was 48 years old.

Kevin was a committee member of the Oakdale ARC and was very popular, being one of the few who was always ready to jump in and help with any project. He will be sadly missed especially at the monthly meetings where he helped with the catering and setting up of the hall and then the cleanup afterwards.

We extend our sympathy to his family and friends.

### **NEW SARL ADMINISTRATOR APPOINTED**

The Council of the SARL is pleased to announce the appointment of Vee Antal as full-time administrator at the NARC. She started work on Tuesday 23rd March.

Vee has worked in various positions dealing with the public, including seven years experience in the retail book industry. We wish her all of the best in her new post.

### **SIX METRES MARATHON 2004**

The Six Metres Marathon 2004 is open to all amateur radio operators worldwide. The objective is to work as many DXCC entities as possible on 6 metres between 00:00 UTC on 8 May and 23:59 on 8 August 2004. The results will be continuously updated at [www.50mc.tk](http://www.50mc.tk).

For further information please contact Hannu Saila OH3WW at e-mail

### **“SWITCHING” ON THE LINK**

In spite of various requests, there is (or are) chaps who repeatedly send tones on the link, either to verify if a repeater is connected, or to actually disconnect or connect one of them.

Very seldom is a callsign given and, if a repeater is disconnected, anyone monitoring is left in the dark.

Quite probably the guilty person does not receive QSX and would not have seen our previous requests, so we ask any other clubs to repeat the same message, namely:

**PLEASE DO NOT USE  
TONES ON THE LINK  
WITHOUT *FIRST* USING  
YOUR CALLSIGN AND  
SAYING *WHICH REPEATER*  
YOU ARE DISCONNECTING  
OR INTERROGATING.**

**IF YOU ARE RECONNECT-  
ING A REPEATER, PLEASE  
USE YOUR CALLSIGN  
*AFTER DOING SO* AND SAY  
*WHICH ONE YOU HAVE*  
RECONNECTED.**

### **SCIENCE FESTIVAL**

We saw a couple of hams at the Science Festival in Grahamstown between 17 and 23 March. Unfortunately, the exhibition seems to have dropped off quite a bit and we found some vacant areas around the place.

There were a couple of “electronic” tables showing various kits; the man with his blow-up bottle was there; and the Military exhibit was quite fascinating, but that one was two storeys below “ground floor” and hot! We were not expecting anything that far down – but that serves us right for not buying a program! ☹

To those celebrating special days (18.4 to 22.5) we say

# Have a Happy Day...



## ... on your birthdays

Joe Jasson ZS2JLJ

### April

- 18 Anthony Marran ZR2AI
- 20 Trevor Scarr ZS2AE
- 22 Marge van Loggerenberg, XYL of ZS2LR
- 22 Allan Bowles ZS2BO
- 23 George Bowes ZS2QN
- 24 Deidré Allen, XYL of Tony
- 28 Chris Scarr ZS2AAW
- 29 John Hugo ZS2J
- 30 Louis Jordaan ZR2J

### May

- 2 Shirley and Gus Winter ZS2MC
- 20 Magda and Albrecht van der Merwe ZS2JC

... on your engagement Karen Bowles ZR2AAW while in Austria last month.



### May

- 1 Marge Weller ZS2OB
- 4 Paul Rhodes ZS2VU
- 6 Joan Browne, XYL of ZS2BY
- 7 Rouhe Danielson, XYL of ZR2HPD
- 10 Attie Barnard ZS2Q
- 12 Chris du Plessis ZS2BST
- 13 Gerald Berlyn ZR2GB
- 16 Dot Plumridge, XYL of ZS2VP
- 16 Lynne Thomas
- 19 Johannes Pieterse ZR2JLP
- 20 Marjorie Forsyth, XYL of ZS2AW
- 20 Otto van Rooyen ZR2VAN
- 22 Saney Martin ZR1S
- 22 Bill Hodges ZS2ABZ

New Member: Congrats to Paul Galpin ZR2ACV, who has joined our Club. We hope you will be happy with us, Paul.

In Hospital and out again: Lionel Coombe-Davis ZS2DD was in hospital for a couple of weeks getting things sorted out but is back home again and is doing fine.

Gone Overseas: Anne and Graham Butcher ZR2GIB gone to the UK, especially Wales, to see his family again after quite a while.

Home Again: Our Treasurer Clive ZS2RT and Jane returned from a tour

New Address: Kay and Fred Strutt ZS2JS are now located at Jeffrey's Bay. Hope you have at least a 2-metre antenna there, Fred. of the Kruger Park. 📶

## ... on your anniversaries

### April

- 21 Elizabeth ZR2EJ and



## Your Society's Committee

Chairman, Awards.....	Rory Norton ZS2BL	585-9330	rory@commco.co.za
Vice Chair, .....	Chris Scarr ZS2AAW	368-1344	cvscarr@intekom.co.za
Secretary, Internet Website .....	Barry Murrell ZR2DX	083 717 9210	zr2dx@mnet.co.za
Treasurer; Assets Control .....	Clive Fife ZS2RT	367-3203	cfife@absamail.co.za
Repeaters, packet,.....	Chris Scarr ZS2AAW	368-1344	cvscarr@intekom.co.za
Social, Refreshments, .....	Bill Hodges ZS2ABZ	581-2580	whodges@absamail.co.za
Special Events .....	Ewalt Bouwer ZS2EHB	933-3482	ewalt.b@freemail.absa.co.za
QSX printing and info .....	Ashley Goosen ZR2AG	372-2052	ashleygoosen@xsinet.co.za
QSX Editor (ex com).....	Garth Laaks ZS2HB	368-1101	glaaks@iafrica.com
QSX distribution (ex com)....	Trevor Scarr ZS2AE	367-1746	t&j.scarr@intekom.co.za
Technical Classes (ex com)...	Al Akers ZS2U	360-2983	makers@firestone.co.za

## PEARS' VHF/UHF & Other Services

### REPEATERS

Town VHF .....	# 145,050/650	
Town UHF .....	# 431,050/438,650	Knysna .....
Cockscomb .....	145,000/600	Lady's Slipper.....
Colesberg .....	* 431,075/438,675	Noupoort.....
Cradock .....	* 145,050/650	Uitenhage.....
Grahamstown .....	* 145,150/750	

\* These form the PEARS long-range 2-metre repeater system, also linked to which are East London 145,775 MHz, George 145,700, Danabaai 145,600, Stilbaai 145,750, Butterworth 145,725, King Williams Town 145,625 and Umtata (438,725 duplex). It is further extendable to Cape Town via the WCRWG system. # These can also be linked as required.

### OTHER SERVICES

Packet Bulletin Board (ZSØNTP) .....	144,625
Packet Rose Switch ZSØGHT-3,046101 (144,675 in/out) or 046102 (UHF out to BBS).....	144,675
2m Beacon (ZS2VHF CW ID, FSK) (horizontally polarized, 160W ERP) .....	144,415
6m Beacon (ZS2SIX CW ID) (horizontally polarized, 25W ERP) .....	50,005
6m Simplex Link with Lady's Slipper 2m Repeater (vertically polarized) .....	51,400

## Sunday Bulletins

PEARS bulletins are transmitted on Sundays immediately after the SARL English transmission, i.e. at about 08:45, on 7098 kHz as well as the 2 metre linked network that provides coverage from East London to George as well as Cradock and environs. PEARS' 7098 or 3640 kHz transceive facilities are also remotely linked as needed. In addition, the SARL's 40m operations on 7082 or 7066 kHz or Hamnet's 7070 kHz can be remotely patched to the 2m network, in receive-only mode or with full transceive capability for interactive events.

Date	Repeater and Read on 2m Repeater Link
11 Apr	ZS2AAW
18	ZS2RT
25	ZR2AG
2 May	ZS2ABZ
9	ZR2DX
16	ZS2BL

<u>DIARY DATES</u>	
<u>APRIL</u>	
11	SARL Hamnet 40m Contest
15	PEARS MONTHLY MEETING
15	RAE closing date
18	World Amateur Radio Day
25	SARL President's Net
<u>MAY</u>	
6	Wrinkly Rave

\* We like being your Society \*