



## Gympie Communications & Electronics Group Inc. Newsletter

**Editorial by Greg VK4VBU**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, 2013**

Welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter GCEG newsletter, this month I will kick off a new segment where members explain how they got into Amateur Radio. I invite all members to share their stories and we will publish the stories in our newsletter.



### **VK4VBU – How I became interested in Amateur Radio**

My interest in amateur radio did not happen over night in fact it took many years before I became interested in the hobby. As a young boy I used to enjoy listening to the radio of a night time as I went to sleep and then in the early eighties I purchased my first CB radio, I remember listening to North Sydney Crest and calling them up. I only found out who they were recently when I did a google search.

In the early nineties when I moved up to Queensland I purchased a side band CB and was able to make contact with stations in New Zealand, I found this exciting and didn't believe it at first, I then became interested in scanning and in the mid nineties I purchased my first scanner from Dick Smith in Caloundra, the scanner was a Uniden 9000XLT.

I still have this scanner today in fact I loved it that much I purchased a second unit which I have next to my bed. Having a scanner was great fun in the early days and when emergencies happened around the town you were always up to date with all that was happening, in fact it was scanning that got me interested in the emergency services and I became an part time urban fire fighter in July 2004.

In early 2008 I was playing around with the scanner at home and after doing a general search I came across two Amateurs talking, those two Amateurs were Paul VK4YPM and Chris VK4BX. This is where my interest in Amateur radio started and I ended up phoning up Chris and told him that I had heard him on the air talking with Paul. Chris then explained what I needed to do to get my licence and I made contact with Harvey Wickes from the Sunshine Coast Amateur Radio Club. Around the same time I started listening to the Gympie & District Monday night net which was run at the time by Len VK4JZ and transmitted on VK4RGY. I made an audio recording of one of these nets and it still survives today with the recorded audio being crystal clear.

Soon after I travelled down to Harvey's house at Buderim and did my F-Call training. Harvey was a



great teacher and very quickly I had all the necessary skills to obtain my F-Call licence. I received my F-Call license on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 (VK4FGDW) and my first contact was with Chris VK4BX on that same day. I must thank Chris for all his encouragement, he certainly gave me a very warm welcome into the hobby. I sometimes wonder why it took me so long to get involved in the hobby, the answer was, I was listening to the wrong frequencies.

73's Greg VK4VBU

[newsletter@gceginco.org.au](mailto:newsletter@gceginco.org.au)

---

## **Presidents report for August 2013**

This report on things GCEG will come to you via Roger VK4BNQ as I will, I hope, be up in the Northern Territory parked up at the famous watering hole that is Daily Waters pub and standing at the bar with a cold beer. This absence brings me you newly elected president having to apologise for not being at this meeting, or the next one, in person; however I will try and keep up the reports to you despite my absence.

As you would all be aware the group now has a new management team at the helm, following the election results of the AGM held last month. I believe we are in good hands with Roger as our new Secretary, Paul taking on the job of handling the groups finances and Ed as our Vice President. On behalf of your new management team I would like to thank Isaac, Barry and Ed, the outgoing management team, for their diligence in managing our affairs over the preceding period.

Right from the start of our group taking the move to become incorporated it was always my view that it would take the establishment of a home before we would see any real progress towards consolidating our objectives. A home would address the important and critical need to pave the way for us to attract new members to our hobby, and in particular, GCEGInc.

To that end we have all seen over the last year the stunning amount of work money and commitment that has now brought us to the point we are now at with the new restored club rooms. I think it is fair to say that along with the physical endeavours to repair the building, so generously offered to us by MVHR, I believe we have also benefited from the support of all members who have given freely of their time money and goods to see us where we are today. Without that generosity simply put it would not have happened at the pace it has.

This commitment has achieved not just the establishment of our group on a far stronger platform, excuse the pun, it has also now seen the arrival of a number of new very welcome members. I know you will all look to ensure these new members are encouraged to enjoy the benefits of membership and help them extend themselves to gain a radio Licence, thereby absorbing the full benefits we licenced Hams have, the privilege to call Amateur Radio our hobby.

The current projects still before us are the establishment of another radio mast and the accompanying antennas which should also include a basic HF triband wire antenna of sorts. Other matters are related to the final detailed work on the inside fit out of the club rooms, radio



operating stations, along with work to finalise the roof fix down and I guess the painting of the building outside.

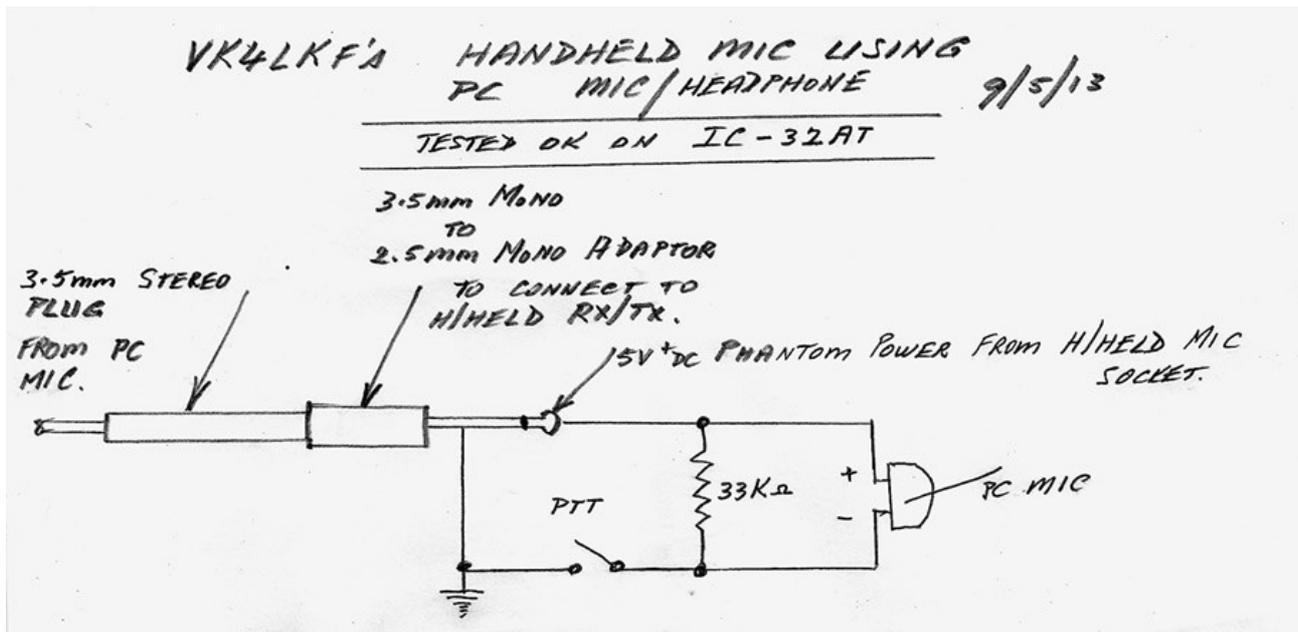
In my absence I would encourage you to continue with these endeavours and above all continue to enjoy each other's company in the pursuit of our unique hobby.

Bob Dixon VK4MR  
President GCEG Inc

---

## Circuit Ideas

Contribution by Kerry VK4LKF - Thanks Kerry.



---

## 2m Net Roster Aug to end Oct 2013

5th August	Tony VK5WC/p4	23rd September	Tony VK5WC/p4
12th August	Owen VK4FAAQ	30th September	Owen VK4FAAQ
19th August	Roger VK4BNQ	7th October	Roger VK4BNQ
26th August	Greg VK4VBU (EchoLink)	14th October	Greg VK4VBU (EchoLink)
2nd September	Jim VK4FAAU	21st October	Ed VK4ABX
9th September	Paul VK4YPM	28th October	Paul VK4YPM
16th September	Erik VK4AES	4th November	Erik VK4AES

## Sausage Sizzle Club Fundraiser Dates

Saturday August 3, 2013  
Saturday August 31, 2013



## **ClubHouse News**

### **New Generator for the Club**

A new Honda powered generator has been purchased by the club. This will be a very useful piece of equipment in the event of a power failure or major incident and will also be suitable for field days. Thanks also to Owen who is making up a cover and trolley for security and ease of storage.

### **New Service Bench up and running**

The club rooms are really starting to take shape and a major step forward for the club was to have a professional service bench up and running. Thanks to Paul VK4YPM and Roger VK4BNQ for their kind donations of test equipment which will be invaluable for members new and old to learn the skills of electronics repairs.

Photo below shows Kerry VK4LKF working on a Yaesu FT-707



## **Twilight Markets**

**Sat 15/06/2013 at The Historic Mary Valley Heritage Rail Station**

The Gympie Communications and Electronics Group now have a new home at the MVHR Station. Saturday night was time for the Twilight Markets at the station which gave us the opportunity to show off our new Club Rooms.

There was a steady flow of people interested in the communications side of things that we have set up so far. We also had offers of equipment and the possibility of some new members. I certainly met some very interesting people during the night.



Many thanks go to the members that assisted with the market side of things which was a positive financial outcome for the club.

The Twilight Markets are held at the MVHR Station on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month.

### **Graham Alder**

*(Editor comment) We were open again on Saturday 20th July and again the Clubroom proved to be popular with visitors and a few more items were sold on our table. I encourage all members to join in and bring anything they'd like to sell along. Please remember you will need to take it with you again if it doesn't sell or fully donate it and accept that if not sold, it may be binned due to storage space limitations.*

---

## **Interesting Amateur Radio related YouTube video's to watch**

From time to time members find some real interesting YouTube video's that would be of interest to members, so we will make this a regular feature of the newsletters by including a link to video every newsletter.

The video in this edition features the WLW 500,000 Watt Transmitter. This video is the latest piece of work from Randy K7AGE who is getting a good name for posting interesting video's on youtube. Below is a brief description from the video comments section and the direct link is to follow. You can also just google K7AGE YouTube channel to find this video.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbHjcwloTiY&feature=c4-overview&list=UUzgG5iIOZpqFBBkAgg5iN1w>

Back in 1932 WLW increased their power from 50,000 watts to 500,000 watts. They were the only AM broadcasting station in America ever to operate at 500,000 watts. Much of the old transmitter still exists. It is really a high power amplifier with a high level modulator (360,000 watts). The amplifier was driven from their existing 50,000 watt Western Electric transmitter. The system used 20 100,000 watt tubes (\$1,600 each in 1932) that required water cooling that used a cooling pond located outside the station. Tons, and tons, of hardware was required to achieve the 10 dB gain.



## The Great Australian Ride

Local Widgee amateur Kevin VK4KEV is taking part in the Great Australian Ride raising money for Sids & Kids. Kevin needs your support so if you can help please log on to the webpage below and make a donation it would be much appreciated. Best of luck Kevin from all the GCEG members.

[http://www.everydayhero.com.au/kev\\_white](http://www.everydayhero.com.au/kev_white)

Help us save more babies' lives  
Proudly Supporting: **sids and kids**

THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN RIDE  
EAST TO WEST  
Commencing 18th August 2013

Are you ready for Australia's Ultimate Adventure?

TRAVELLING EAST TO WEST

THE ROUTE JUST A ROUGH MAP

Steep Point

Byron Bay

ADVENTURE COURAGE FREEDOM

APPROX 20 DAYS TO COMPLETE

Follow us on Facebook  
The Great Australian Ride

Founder Stuart Ball

There will be a fund-raiser show at the Bushman's Bar, Widgee on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2013. Ghett will be performing!

Come along and have some fun while supporting a great cause. It's Kev's shout at the bar!! :-)



Old Gympie Railway Station - Home of The Valley Rattler & VK4GYM

## Home Brew Antenna Insulator used for an Inverted Dipole by Chris VK4BX

The inverted dipole with the elements sloping down can be adjusted to 50 ohms.

HOME BREW: ANTENNA INSULATOR

By Chris VK4BX.



A INSULATOR USED FOR A INVERTED DIPOLE.

The inverted dipole with elements sloping down can be adjusted to 50 Ohm.

MATERIALS: Two end caps from plumbers supply and a piece of pvc tube to suit. A panel mount, electrical terminals and s/s bolts etc.



## For Sale - Alinco DX-70 Mobile HF Radio

The Secretary was contacted by a lady who's son had recently passed away and she wishes to sell this radio detailed below. The unit appears to test OK on the bench and it can be viewed at the Clubrooms. She is asking between \$200 - \$250. For more info, please see Roger, VK4BNQ. Mobile unit with remote head, 100W, All Mode, 160 thru 6 mx with instruction book & diag.



## Putting Up a Radio Tower – Part 3

With more favourable weather and a little more time, I was able to make some good progress erecting the main parts of the tower. It's probably a good thing to just leave the tower standing bare for a few weeks to give the neighbours and passing traffic time to get used to it before it really starts looking like a big radio tower installation. Fortunately I have a builder friend who lives nearby and he owns a little mobile crane that did the lifting for me.





I was able to move my tower around the place with my front loader on the tractor (just) but it was too dangerous to try to lift it to vertical, and in any case, there was no way my tractor could lift the top part up to the hinge point height. Whilst special rigging could have been made, it was easier and safer to lift it all into place with a crane. Being a free standing tower, it is quite heavy and solid. I'd moved the tower base-lower part close to the concrete base so that it would be an easy job to lift it vertical and into place.

So the lower part was carefully lifted and placed onto the 6 studs that were in the well and truly set concrete base. Once there, I quickly threaded the six bolts onto the studs and we disconnected the crane and started to work out the next phase – raising the top tilting part.

The upper tilting part of the tower was not as heavy but I had to climb a ladder to the top of the lower section to put the pin through once the crane operator had it in place so it was a little tricky. It all went together fine and after a quick tilt to check and test, I'm happy to say it's finally up and standing tall.

In the next and hopefully final chapter, we'll look at the earthing, the top section with rotator installation and of course the first antenna.





End of part three. 73, Roger - VK4BNQ

---

### **GCEGinc. OFFICE BEARERS**

PRESIDENT: BOB DIXON VK4MR [president@gceginc.org.au](mailto:president@gceginc.org.au)  
VICE PRESIDENT: ED FISHER VK4ABX [vicepresident@gceginc.org.au](mailto:vicepresident@gceginc.org.au)  
TREASURER: PAUL MEDWAY VK4YPM [treasurer@gceginc.org.au](mailto:treasurer@gceginc.org.au)  
SECRETARY: ROGER STIERLI VK4BNQ [secretary@gceginc.org.au](mailto:secretary@gceginc.org.au)

Snail-mail to PO Box 679, Gympie, QLD 4570

---



## **Fun with NDB's – By Greg VK4VBU**

How many of you out there have listened to signals from NDB's? What is an NDB I hear you ask? NDB stands for Non Directional Beacon and it's used for aeronautical navigation.

You can usually hear NDB's in the 200 – 425 Khz range, these frequencies give good ground-wave coverage during the daylight hours, but also offer excellent propagation during the nighttime via sky-wave.

If you tune into a NDB signal you will hear an International Morse code signal and sometimes also a computer generated voice message giving current weather conditions and runway information. The NDB closest to my QTH is at Emerald Airport and the morse code identifier is EML (. -- -..)

The frequency is 324 Khz and the transmitter power output is 15 watts.

For those who have a computer connected to their radio, I would also recommend downloading and running a program called spectrogram, this will help you identify those hard to hear distant signals by displaying the morse code signal clearly on the screen. Why not have a go and see what NDB's you can receive, you might be surprised by the result.



Emerald Non Directional Beacon Antenna  
& Transmitter building

---

Next Newsletter is due out around the end of October, 2013.

Please submit articles to [newsletter@gcegin.org.au](mailto:newsletter@gcegin.org.au)

Club meetings are held at 7:30pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month except January.

The Clubrooms are open for social meetings every Wednesday morning from around 10am. The location is the northern platform at The Old Gympie Railway Station, Tozer St. Gympie.

Full information on the website.

