



HAMS

MARCH 2009

keywite NEWS

P.O. BOX 1076, HILTON, 3245



AFFILIATED TO
THE SARL & IN
ASSOCIATION
WITH THE
NATAL
CARBINEERS

CLUB COMMITTEE: 2008-2009

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RUMINATIONS

Change is in the air. We have all heard, endlessly, about “climate change”. But this introduction is NOT about climate as generally understood. It is about change to our Club – change to its structure and to its goals and objects.

The first such change is that with effect from this issue of HHN, two people will be responsible for its monthly production as against, previously, just one. As Chairman of MARC, I shall be responsible for the first page: “Ruminations”. Mike Lauterbach (ZS5ML) will be responsible for the main contents which make up the body of our newsletter.

At our Committee meeting held on Saturday the 21st March, last Saturday, it was agreed to appoint OM Shaun (ZR5S) and OM Mike (ZS5ML) as a special task force charged with drawing up a summary of proposals which have been made in recent weeks aimed at (hopefully) improving the structure and workings of our Club. The plan is that when this small team has completed its work it will refer its proposals to the Committee which subsequently will call a special general meeting of ALL members to study them – following the prior reference of the proposals to members for study.

One thing is clear: we cannot go on as we are at present else we shall be forced into winding up the Club: which I for one would simply hate to happen.

Best 73, de Robin
ZS6MRS

The M.A.R.C. Infrastructure

Voice Repeaters (FM)

VHF

Worlds View	145.750 MHz (Tx)	145.150 MHz (Rx)	Emcom SA256 25W
Windy Hill	145.700 MHz (Tx)	145.100 MHz (Rx)	Emcom SA256 25W
Estcourt	145.675 MHz (Tx)	145.075 MHz (Rx)	SCR200 15W
Greytown	145.775 MHz (Tx)	145.175 MHz (Rx)	Storno
Swartberg	145.725 MHz (Tx)	145.125 MHz (Rx)	
Underberg	145.7875MHz (Tx)	145.1875MHz(Rx)	YaesuFTC1525a20W

UHF

Mt Gilboa	439.225 MHz (Tx)	431.625 MHz (Rx)	General Electric MII
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Packet

Digipeater

Mt Gilboa	144.800 MHz (Tx & Rx)	Kantronics KPC3 + V9.10 Alinco DJ -135 50W Diamond X-200 Omni 6db
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The PBBS (mailbox) is on ZS0PMB-1. The digi is on ZS0PMB-2. The KA-node is on ZS0PMB-7. Use Winpack on 144.800MHz to connect to the PBBS and leave a message for someone. The packet digi also acts as the aprs digi (ZS0PMB) and will respond to WIDEn-n or TRACEn-n.

APRS

The national APRS frequency is 144.800 MHz (Tx & Rx). The I-Gate is at ZR5S (Polly Shortts). Fixed stations should beacon at approximately 30min intervals with a path of WIDE5-5. Mobile stations should beacon at approximately 1min intervals with a path of WIDE5-5.

ECHO-LINK

“voip”

Our node number is 244279 Call Sign ZS5PMB. This Echo-link facility is available on the Midlands linked Repeater network.

E-QSO “voip”

We are in the “101ENGLISH” virtual room, on the “repeater.dns2go.com” server. This is linked to RF at Polly Shortts on 433.400 MHz simplex.

BEACONS

Hilton	50.321 MHz (Tx)	ZS5SIX FSK
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WEB SITE

MARC'S very own website

www.marc.org.za

SARL's website

www.sarl.org.za

Editor's Waffle

A big thank you to Robin, ZS5MRS, who we successfully roped in to stand as Chairman after ZS5BLY passed away. We nearly broke his arm in doing so. However, we did not leave it there, and coaxed him further, and he relented and gamefully took on the extra job as editor for HHN. By my taking on this portfolio, I trust this stress will be relieved

Thank you Robin for steering the club in these difficult times. Wessel started a drive to rekindle interest in our hobby, which unfortunately has fallen behind in the popularity stakes, at least as far as the progressing world is concerned. None of us was prepared to take on the sterling work started by Wessel, but must say that Robin's persistence is commendable, and we can attribute some of the renewed interest in Amateur radio in our club to Robin. Thanks for stepping in during this difficult time! I'm sure that this sentiment is echoed by all members in our club.

In compiling the HHN, I have big shoes to fill, and I hope and trust that I will be supported in this by you, our members and readers through the submission of articles and comments. This first newsletter does not contain a technical article, but rather deals with some aspects to enable us to think of ways to pave a successful future for the club. If certain aspects are controversial I request that these be motivation for positive solution orientated input as they are not meant in any way to alienate members or readers. The opinions expressed are mine and are put forward with the aim of instigating active discussion.

The excellent presentations by Peter, ZS5PJ and Mickey, ZS5QB at our last club meeting, on the subjects of squelch and amplifiers respectively, showed what great skills and talents are available within our club. I was impressed how both speakers were able to explain questions with unprepared technical examples. I would like to see some of these skills in the form of articles in this publication. They will certainly teach some of us youngsters a thing or two, and also importantly, they will form part of the rich history of this club.

Digressing from this, I would like each one of you readers to send in articles about your experiences as a HAM. I know that there are great stories to recount, both from technical and social aspects. If these are not documented now, they could be lost for ever. I have heard some of these and they range from light hearted delightful moments to technical achievements, helping various people in need, and many emergency situations. They are all interesting, and we can learn from these. Alex, hopefully I can coax one out of you before your big move ☺

It would be great if every one of you could put pen to paper, or finger to keyboard, and send in your stories. Each one will be appreciated!

As everyone knows, Amateur Radio is in a precarious situation at the moment. It is pointless to blame stagnant progress for what ever reason, but rather look at how we can rejuvenate our hobby, and look at ways in which we can compete with tv games, sms, facebook etc. Fact is that Amateur radio was far advanced technically in comparison with other hobbies years back. Packet Radio was the forefather to the internet. It seems that some time back we HAMS sat back and believed that we were so far advanced technically that we did not have to carry on developing new things to stay ahead. Sadly, we have been overtaken by modern technology. But only to a point:

In spite of all the modern technology and marvels in this cell phone era, our radio operating skills still have value. We have a couple of HamNet members in our club, and they can attest

to the fact that HamNet still gets asked to provide communications for many events throughout the year, as comms with modern cell phones etc are not as adaptable and reliable as those provided by our hobby. We are able to cover dead spots in valleys with mobile repeater stations. When antennas and equipment fail, we are often able to make a plan and are able to reestablish communication lines. This is why Hamnet gets called in to provide communication backbones for many sporting events, like the Duzi Canoe and Bike marathons in the deep valleys of the Duzi and Umgeni rivers, the Tour Natal Rally and the Comrades marathon, to mention only a few.

While I'm on a roll, let's move on to a subject closer to home, ie happenings and interest within our club. Something which is very clear is that things do not work anymore the way they used to work. This is fair enough as things have changed. One example is the simple act of mailing letters. How many of us still do this? A fair amount I suspect, but many, if not most, have embraced new technology and send most mail via the internet – email.

Our old channels of communication are falling into oblivion. These include monthly meetings. Many attended these to stay abreast of what was happening in our club and also to socialize with fellow club members. These traditional meetings are no longer needed. At least this is the impression I am getting as only one or two extra persons attended the last few general meetings in addition to the committee members who were already there for the committee meeting. I also hardly ever attended meetings before being voted into the committee. But I am probably a bad example, as I have almost always detested meetings, and considered them as mostly boring where minutes of previous uninteresting meetings were regurgitated etc. Don't get me wrong, they still do form a necessary and valuable function, both in business and clubs. But personally, as a club member, I would rather attend a club event without a meeting, where exciting subjects, like at our last club meeting last week, are presented. I would also prefer technical field days, and also non technical events, like a braai at an interesting and scenic spot, just being able to converse with all of you.

So, from attendance, it is clear that our traditional monthly meetings need to be reevaluated. Bert, you recounted how your new wood work club conducts their informal meetings, and we might have to think along these lines – leave the boring meetings to the committee members, who you voted in to run the club, and rather hold exciting and enjoyable get-togethers. There have already been suggestions that we combine these meetings/get-togethers with other events, like we did for the HF field day at Midmar Dam, or with Swopshops etc

So, let's hear it from you. What format would you like to see? What events would you attend and which ones not?

But things do not stop here. Let's throw our club house into the fray. Bert and Peter have been faithfully manning the club house every Saturday. Others have stood in for them on occasion. This is a very thankless task, as in the last year or so, very few, and more often than not, nobody, has visited the clubhouse. It might seem that the general unspoken consensus is that this facility has become outdated, purely by the fact that it is not being supported. This is understandable though in our modern era. Mostly we do not have the time. Apart from socializing there, one purpose was to provide information to our members from our library. But nowadays, it is much easier (and cheaper) to sit in our shacks and punch in our questions on Google on our computers, and get virtually instant answers to our questions. It is seldom that we have to amble off to our club house to fetch this information.

So, let's hear some valid reasons why we should keep this facility.

But all is not negative. Our new mailing list has generated more interest in the club again, as has the web site. Many are still tentative to post on the mailing list/forum itself, and quite a few emails have been sent off-list. All have been positive, at least the ones I have seen and know of. This club has incredible resources of knowledge, know-how and a great infrastructure. We are privileged to have members like Shaun, who set up our digital network at his own cost. APRS is becoming very popular in our province, and will become an important tool in search and rescue and hopefully in many HamNet exercises. The APRS coverage is already very good. The N3 is now covered from Durban to Harrismith and beyond, the N2 is covered to Port Edward in the south and hopefully to about Hluhluwe one day when Eshowe will change their frequency to 144.8MHz. Gilboa provides great coverage in the KZN Midlands, and it would be great to get a digi in the Underberg area to cover the southern berg area.

Our voice repeater network is also being upgraded (and maintained) at the moment. Have a look at the second page. Once fully repaired and linked, you will be able to talk long distances in KZN on vhf. I don't think that there is any club in Africa which has such a wide spread working infrastructure like ours – apart from the Eastern Cape, maybe.

With these resources available to the club there many reasons why our club will survive and be prosperous, in spite of present hardships, misgivings and skepticism.

Are you willing to throw away your hobby or are you prepared to fight for it and help it get back on it's feet? Please send us your views – they are vital in decisions which have to be taken in the near future.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DON'T UNDERSTAND AFRIKAANS:

Verlede jaar het ek en my swaer en my skoonseun per vliegtuig na Windhoek gereis om veral die dierelewe van Namibie te besigtig.

[Last year, me and my heavy and my cleanson traveled by flying harness to Windcorner specially to belook the animal-living in Namibia](#)

In die Noorde het ons toe volop springbokke, steenbokke, blesbokke, kameelperde en ook meerkatte gesien.
[In the North we then saw full-up jumping goats, brick buck, bald buck, Camel horses and also more cats.](#)

Een keer was ons senuwees egter skoon op hol.
[One time genuine our sinews were clean on hollow.](#)

Ons het agtergekom dat 'n luiperd besig was om ons te bekruipe.
[We aftercame that a lazy-horse was becreeping us.](#)

In 'n oomblik was ons slag gereed met ons dubbelloop haelgewere.
[In an uncle-tin we were slaughter ready with our double walk hail guns.](#)

Toe die luiperd agter die bos roer, skiet ons almal gelyk.
[When the lazy-horse mixed behind the bush, we all shot equal.](#)

Na alles verby was, was ons hare baie deurmekaar. Ons het dit toe netjies gemaak, in die bakkie geklim en huis toe gery.
[After all was past, our hairs were very through each other. We then made it into small nets, we climbed in the dish, and rode home.](#)

Langs die pad het ons 'n papwiel gekry.
[Along the road we got a porridge wheel.](#)

So het ons lang, opwindende dag geëindig.
[So did our long, wound-up day end](#)

Our Club History by Shaun Rudling, ZR5S

At the MARC, we are attempting to document the clubs history landmarks from 193?. This information will go onto one of our web pages at www.marc.org.za.

I will be going through the minute books to pick up important points. One or two of these minute books are missing. One is from 197?. Please look around your shack to see if you have it.

Please could all members and non-members (especially the elders) read the snippets of memories handed in by a few members shown below and add and/or correct the info I have been told about. If you do not speak up NOW, this info will be treated as accurate and published. Thank you.

Here is some correspondence so far:

There was a lease agreement for the World's view site between MARC (then SARL PMB) and the municipality.
Maurice's wife was involved with this from the Municipality side, so should be able to clarify the details.
Nice work everyone,
Roger,
ZS5EV

Some history I have uncovered wrt the MARC

Groenekloof (Hilton); According to ZS5IE, Ian McAllister, this site was established in 1978. It was funded 2/3 by Ian's father who was not a ham and the other 1/3 came from local PMBurg business's. Ian's father contracted ZS5WA Hartwig Hillermann to build the structure.

The land was leased from the PMBurg municipality for 99 years. Mr HD Hill was the city engineer at the time. This site came about due to the political unrest towards the end of the apartheid era and Ian's father was instrumental in establishing the MARNET equipment and was overseen by The Natal Signals regiment. The 145.700 HAM repeater was installed as a backup to the MARNET system.

The site enjoyed a "non-metered" centricity connection from the municipality due to its "public protection" service. Ian's father achieved this arrangement this with Don Cameron of Havelock Road Electricity dept. The building has no earth leakage protection because this device caused problems with the valve equipment at the time. The cylindrical tower was erected by the MARNET group, and the ham's lattice tower was built and donated by Adolf Wiebel of CYC Steel.

Worlds View; According to ZS5IE Ian McAllister, this building was built by Eskom for their repeater equipment. ZS5V Bill Bayley organized with escom for some space in the building and on the tower. We currently share this site with the SAPS (Hilton) in return for space at the Hilton SAPS radio site.

Shaun
ZR5S

Good day All

I don't know all the details but I thought Hartwig build this building (ask ZS5IE, OM Ian) at Groenekloof and it certainly is a good site. The electricity (if we are the sole users) won't amount to much - so maybe we should approach the authorities.

73
Mickey
ZS5QB

Charles is correct. Groenekloof was built by local hams and worlds view by Eskom on a leased site from the Municipality.

Worlds view was abandoned by Eskom whereupon the former SARL, Pmbg Branch became tenants and a few years later, when it became a club, MARC continued to lease the site from Pmbg Municipality.

The Police and MARC have reciprocal agreements regarding repeaters, 145.700 (ex WRR and then Hamnet) at Hilton Police Station and the Police repeater at our Worldsvie site.

Hope it helps for the history books!

Bill

ZS5KD

Ham Bulletin Readers

29 Mar - Robin Seal, ZS5MRS

05 Apr - Mickey Esterhuysen, ZS5QB

12 Apr - Mike Lauterbach, ZS5ML

19 Apr - Peter du Plessis, ZS5PJ

26 Apr - Errol Wilson, ZS5EGW

03 Apr - Mike Boast, ZS5BGV

Some upcoming events

28 March Combined swop shop at John Fielding's Home at 127 St Andries Street, Monteseel at 10h30 for 11h00 – please note directions below

2 April First leg of the SARL 80 Metre QSO Party

18 April Monthly club meeting - presentation topic to be finalized
World Amateur Radio Day

24-26 April SARL National Convention, Cape Town

Combined Swopshop, 28 March 2009

The next combined KZN swopshop will take place on Saturday 28 March 2009 at the QTH of John Fielding, ZS5JF, at 127 St Andries Street, Monteseel at 10h30 for 11h00.

You are invited to bring your family, some meat and refreshments and come and enjoy time socialising once all the swopping has been taken care of. There will be no food or refreshments available at the event, but braai fires will be provided.

The previous time this event was held, it proved to be a really enjoyable afternoon. Hope to see you all there!

Directions from Pmb:

Proceed along the N3 and take the Cato Ridge turn-off, on to the R103 Durban bound. Proceed along the R103, past Harrison Flats. At the intersection opposite Inchanga Park, turn left and continue towards Durban until you reach the left turn in to Monteseel. After turning off of the R103, take first left in to St Andries Street and follow the signpost for the Hacienda and continue along the sand road to 127.

Directions from Durban:

- Option 1 - Proceed along the N3 and take the Hammarsdale/Inchanga turn-off, on to the R103 Pmb bound. Proceed along the R103 past Inchanga Station. At the

intersection opposite Inchanga Park, turn right and continue towards Durban until you reach the left turn in to Monteseel. After turning off of the R103, take first left in to St Andries Street and follow the signpost for the Hacienda and continue along the sand road to 127.

- Option 2 - Proceed along either the N3 or M13 and take the Shongweni turn-off. Turn right on to Kassier Road and continue until Kassier Road meets Old Main Rd at the base of Botha's Hill. Turn left on to the R103 and proceed up Botha's Hill towards Pmb. Continue on the R103 until you reach the right turn in to Monteseel. After turning off of the R103, take first left in to St Andries Street and follow the signpost for the Hacienda and continue along the sand road to 127.

GPS Coordinates: S29.74111 E30.67364

Should you experience difficulty finding John's QTH, talk in facilities will be available on 145.625MHz and 145.750MHz or you can call Brad on 082 990 6533 or Craig on 082 459 6940.

Please visit our club website at www.marc.org.za. All comments and input will be appreciated.

An Israeli doctor said, 'medicine in my country is so advanced, we can take a kidney out of one person, put it in another, and have him looking for work in six weeks'.

A German doctor said, 'That's nothing! In Germany, we can take a lung out of one person, put it in another, and have him looking for work in four weeks'.

A Russian doctor said, 'In my country medicine is so advanced, we can take half a heart from one person, put it in another and have them both looking for work in two weeks'.

The English doctor said 'Hah! We can take two arseholes out of Scotland, put them in 10 and 11 Downing Street and have half the country looking for work within twenty-four hours!'