



HAMS Keywite News

August 2008

www.marc.org.za

MIDLANDS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O.Box 1076, HILTON, 3245



AFFILIATED TO
THE SARL & IN
ASSOCIATION
WITH THE NATAL
CARBINEERS

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Scribbles from the Skipper

It is sometimes jokingly stated that a camel is a horse that was designed by a committee. Now if your newly elected committee tries to put humps on the Club-horse, you have all the right to object to it if you do not agree. In order to object, you have to attend the Club meetings - no objection aired on the bands will get you anywhere. After all, you elected the committee, or were you absent, forgot to appoint a proxy, or simply not interested. Well, you are invited to attend Club meetings so your committee and fellow members can hear your voice, listen to complaints, get suggestions and make MARC a club that you are proud to belong to.

Unfortunately things don't just happen on their own - somebody has to do it! You have elected a committee to manage the affairs of the Club. It is an experienced team that is capable of handling matters, but they will need more hands on many occasions and I trust that their calls will not fall on deaf ears.

I would like to welcome OM Mike, ZR5ML on the committee, he is the only newcomer and, apart from his ability to work, also reduces the average age by quite a bit!

As you will see in the modified window to the left, I am including telephone numbers as well as e-mail addresses for all the committee members. This increases your private communication channels with them by a hundred percent! Please make use of this to communicate with them privately should you so desire.

73, ZS5BLY

PLEASE NOTE THE NEW CLUBHOUSE HOURS.

Saturday from 08:30 to 10:30

The Clubhouse will be manned by Bert, ZS5MQ and/or Peter, ZS5PJ

The club meets on the third Saturday of every month, except December at 13:00 at the Natal Carbineers Conference Center, Geere Street, PMB.

Sunday Morning Bulletins (MARC and SARL) as well as the Club Net from 07:45 on 3620 kHz and the 145.750 MHz repeater.

Sunday Club Net Controller: Mickey Esterhuysen, ZS5QB

National News Bulletin: Robin Seal, ZS5MRS

Clubhouse Manager and Carbineers liaison: Bert Cornell, ZS5MQ

From the Editor

Have today's radio amateurs become appliance operators? That depends on your definition of the term "*appliance operator*". If using a commercial transceiver is the only qualification, then yes, 99% of us are appliance operators. But the radio alone does not make an amateur station or, for that matter, a radio amateur. We need an antenna, feed lines, SWR/power meters and a host of other gadgets and gizmos to do the things that we want to do. All of these are well within the constructional capabilities of most hams and is also done by them. Many moons ago the late Fred Anderson, ZS6PW, asked: "Why do we have to spend 90% of our time making the things that we need to enable us to do the things that we want to do?". This was no criticism on home construction but merely a reminder that the multi-band, multi-mode SSB transceiver of today is a far cry away from the straight forward AM transmitter and receiver of yesteryear. Commercial transceiver or not, amateur radio today offers even more scope for the radio experimenter than ever before. Just start operating your appliance and see what happens!

73,
Wessel, ZS5BLY.

Renewal of Club fees for 2008/09.

This is to remind members that the annual membership fees are now due. At the AGM a very slight increase was announced which brings the amount due by the four membership categories to the following:

Ordinary full member	R90,00
Country member	R60,00 (lives further than 20 km from PMB Post Office)
Joint member	R110,00 (husband and wife)
Student member	R30,00

Payment can be made by Electronic Transfer, a deposit into the Club account, or by cheque or cash at the next meeting. The Club banking details are set out below.

CLUB BANKING DETAILS

Bank: First National Bank	Branch: Bank Street	Branch code: 220-825
Account holder: Midlands Amateur Radio Club	Account Number: 625057756507	
Type of account: Current	<i>Reference to use is your call sign</i>	

News and Views

① Hobbies Show (Report by OM Bert, ZS5MQ)

Your Club had been invited to take part in the annual Hobbies Fair hosted by the PMB Model Engineers Society over the weekend of the 2nd and 3rd of August. Having taken part last year, we looked forward to this event. Once again we were not disappointed with the outcome, although it would have been handy to have OM Rod there as he does have the patience of Job at functions like these. However, Barbara and I manned the tent which had been allocated to Ham Radio over the two days with OM Shaun installing a laptop and 17" screen to demonstrate the APRS mode on the Sunday.

It was most interesting to hear the comments about Ham Radio over the two days by some people who had a father or uncle who had been a ham in the past. A lot of interest was shown in the Morse key and oscillator which had been set up for the public to try. Many fathers showed their offspring how to send Morse.

We had the large Morse code poster mounted near by and the youngsters had a lot of fun sending their names in very slow Morse

A lot of interest was shown in the Hallicrafters tube radio which was left working on the BBC. At one stage I was demonstrating Echolink on 2 m when all of a sudden a ZL station came back and an interesting QSO took place with a large crowd listening to what was going on. That surely was the highlight of the whole morning.

The woodworkers guild was outstanding with their chaps doing their thing on three wood lathes and making various items. I think I will have to get one of those units. I think it must be very rewarding to be able to produce those items from the exotic wood they were using and it did not look too difficult.

The ladies of the lace club seemed to enjoy what they were producing but to me it looked far too complicated with all those shuttles going here and there, you really would have to keep your wits about you.

Model aircraft were flown and some really outstanding maneuvers were performed by their pilots. The highlight of the model aircraft section was the firing up of a model jet with an model jet engine costing R40 000. I thought ham radio was expensive.

All in all a well spent and enjoyable weekend and our thanks must go to OM Alex who stood by on 2m for the odd bit of chit-chat now and again. Also to Errol, Mickey, Peter, Stanley and Robin as well as Dave Gemmel (all the way from ZS6). These chaps surely enjoyed the outing with their families. Thanks for the support - see you there next year!

① Repeaters

The new Swartberg repeater has been installed and is working very well. Thanks to Craig, ZS5CID for putting it together and to Philip, ZR5PDL and Malcolm, ZR5MRI for once more going on safari to do the installation.

① More repeaters

While on the Swartberg site, OM Philip discovered that he could work the UHF repeater at Mt Gilboa using a 5 watt handheld feeding a mobile whip. This means that we can technically bring the Swartberg repeater into the UHF link. The present power budget at the site will not allow this at present and we will have to wait until we can improve the situation.

AGM 2008

The Club AGM was held on Saturday, 19th July at the Natal Carbineers. Present were 13 members while 2 proxies were received. After completion of the formal matters, the following members were proposed and duly elected to the committee:

Mickey, ZS5QB
Mike, ZS5BGV
Mike, ZR5ML
Robin, ZS5MRS
Shaun, ZR5S
Wessel, ZS5BLY

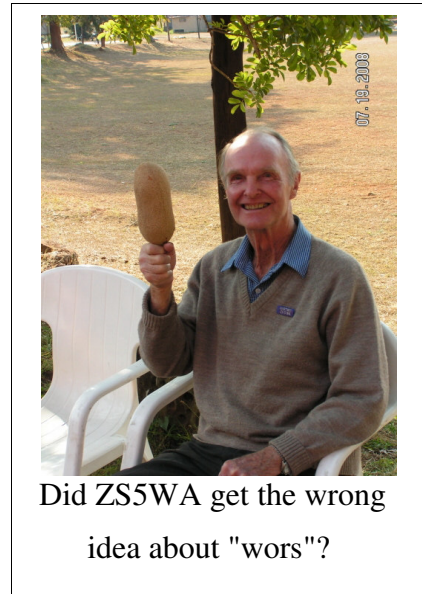
From the list above Wessel, ZS5BLY was elected as chairman for the coming year. The outgoing chairman, OM Bert, ZS5MQ then proceeded to hand out the Club trophies to the following members:

Bennett Cup	Bert, ZS5MQ (this is voted on by the members present)
HHN Cup	Shaun, ZR5S
Cindy Cup	Mike, ZR5ML
Robin Cup	Gudrun, ZU5GL
Chairman's Cup	Shaun, ZR5S
Walter Reid Trophy	Wessel, ZS5BLY

This was followed by a pleasant get together under the sausage trees (*Kigelia africana*) where OM Bert proceeded to process the wors for the rolls as only he can. The photos tell the rest!



Shaun receiving the Chairman's Trophy



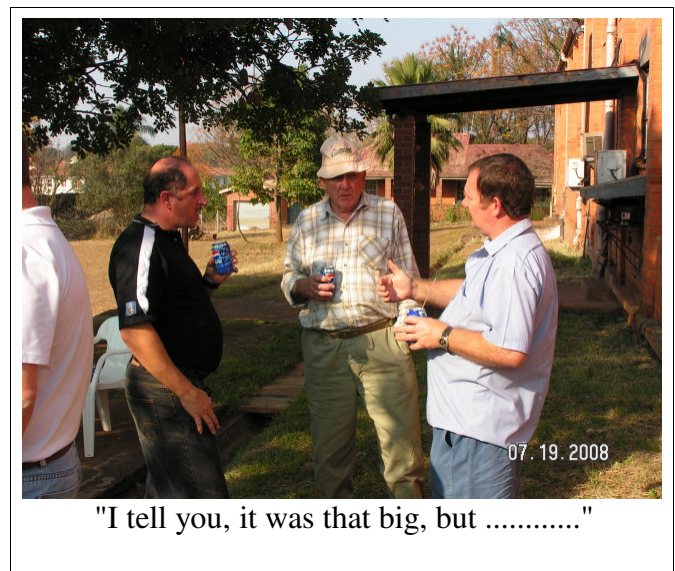
Did ZS5WA get the wrong idea about "wors"?



During the afternoon things seemed to get too hot for some members and hi-tech methods were employed to ensure efficient cooling. In typical ham fashion the hi-tech was very down to earth!



Assistants or just very hungry onlookers?
OM Bert doing the magic his way.



"I tell you, it was that big, but"



Standard Resonators
Power Rating 400 Watts

Part Number	Description	Approximate Bandwidth
		2:1 SWR or better
RM-10	10 Meter	150-250 kHz
RM-12	12 Meter	90-120 kHz
RM-15	15 Meter	100-150 kHz
RM-17	17 Meter	120-150 kHz
RM-20	20 Meter	80-100 kHz
RM-30	30 Meter	50-60 kHz
RM-40	40 Meter	40-50 kHz
RM-75	75 Meter	25-30 kHz
RM-80	80 Meter	25-30 kHz



Stop tuning, start talking.

The SG-230 Smartuner was the first product in the HF market to offer fast, flexible tuning without any user interface. This unit works with ANY radio and ANY antenna without any special interface, making it the most versatile tuning product available. The SG-230 can be used in base station, mobile, marine and aviation and has been the "Gold Standard" of automatic antenna tuning for nearly twenty years. The SG-230 is built in a rugged ABS plastic enclosure which is sealed to protect it, and allows ultimate versatility in installation.

X200
144/430MHz(2m /70cmz)
Gain:6.0dB (144MHz),8.0dB(430MHz)
Max. power rating:200W
Impedance:50ohms
VSWR:Less than 1.5:1
Length:2.5m
Radial length:approx.52cm
Weight:1.2kg
Rated wind velocity: 50m/sec.
Mast diameter accepted:30mm to 62mm
Type:2 x 5/8wave(144MHz),4 x 5/8wave(430MHz),FRP outershell



Ameritron's SDA-100 is without a doubt the best built, best looking, best performing HF Mobile Screwdriver Antenna in the world! When properly installed on your vehicle this antenna will provide continuous coverage from 10 Meters through 80 Meters with a 6 foot whip. Remove the whip to get 6 Meters through 40 Meters coverage.

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- Solar Panels, 10w @ **R298.00** each,
- 120W switch-mode inverters @ **R290.00** each,
- 12v energy saving lamps @ **R49.00** each,

Contact: - Shaun Rudling (ZR5S) on 082-676 1488 or
shaun@pmbnet.co.za

Bulletin Readers

10th August	Robin	ZS5MRS
17th August	Stanley	ZR5SEM
24th August	Wessel	ZS5BLY
31st August	Mickey	ZS5QB
7th September	Mike	ZS5BGV
14th September	Robin	ZS5MRS
21st September	Stanley	ZR5SEM

[If it is not possible for you to take your bulletin, please arrange with somebody else to do it]

On the Giggle-Hertz bands

When children do well at school, the parents declare the child clever. When they do bad, then of course they have a bad teacher. The following children must have had very bad teachers if their answers in exam papers are anything to go by.

1. Dew is formed on leaves when the sun shines down on them and makes them perspire.
2. A super-saturated solution is one that holds more than it can hold.
3. Water is composed of two gins, Oxygen and Hydrogin. Oxygen is pure gin. Hydrogin is gin and water.

They said it. (In this case it was Murphy, again)

1. No matter how you do it, it is going to take longer than you think.
2. If the number of a specific component required for a project is N, then there will be (N-1) in stock.
3. Anything is possible if you don't know what you are talking about.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Club will take place on Saturday, 16th August, 2008 at the usual venue starting at 13:00. Committee meeting will start at 12:00. There will be a talk and demonstration on APRS by Shaun, ZR5S (and question time!). Please remember that there will be a lot of activity at the Carbineers and that we have to use the bottom gate where parking will be available. We have also been requested not to drive or walk across the playing field.