

# TREC—NEWS

Volume 4, Issue 2

February 2011

The Leading Amateur  
Radio Club in  
Far North Queensland.

**President:** Stu Dunk VK4SDD  
**Secretary:** Dale McCarthy VK4DMC  
**Treasurer:** Ron Goodhew VK4EMF

## Coming events

### February 2011

#### **Saturday 19th.**

Club Social get-together 1000hrs —  
Show and Tell at clubrooms, followed by  
a management committee meeting.

Guest speaker Howard VK4BS President  
Cairns Amateur Radio Club.

### March 2011

#### **Weekend 19/20th.**

John Moyle Field Day contest at Tepon  
Equestrian centre, Wondecla.

#### **Weekend 26/27th.**

FNERA communications support at  
Tepon Equestrian Centre Wondecla.  
John VK4TL coordinator.



## The Editor's Desk

G'day all,

Well TC Anthony has been and gone and we now await TC Yasi, a much bigger system, that has potential to cause a great amount of damage. I hope that TREC members and all others survive this cyclone safely and with minimum or nil damage. Ch.50, the VK4RTA , VK4RBK repeaters and 7.075MHz. will be monitored throughout.

73 & Travel Well - Dale VK4DMC.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT.

**Greetings fellow TRECers.**

Let's discuss something that I think is important to amateur radio operators.

The recent flood crisis that has affected so much of the east coast of the continent and the bush fires in WA , the ongoing threat of cyclones all should make us consider checking out our emergency preparedness !!!! We have all heard the experts telling us about the need for a personal , flood, fire, cyclone emergency kit The average person will have a basic first aid kit food water torch portable radio receiver spare batteries spare clothing, you all know what I'm talking about.

When it comes to amateur radio operators we need to add a few things to the list above, off grid power be it generators solar or batteries, vhf and hf transceivers portable multi band antennas and some way to hold them in the air, pencil and paper ( I need to write things down can't remember everything especially when the s&%t is hitting the fan so to speak) something water tight to hold all this stuff and a commitment to help out with communications where and when you are needed.

Most of us have all this type of gear but not all in a handy ready to go kit, I'm not suggesting we all go out and buy the extra gear for such but at least have the container to put gear in when needed. Also very important but not often said you have to look after your self, keep up the fluids (water not beer) food and rest, it's no good offering to help then becoming helpless!!!

Back to reality for a moment I would like to thank all those involved in the Summer VHF / UHF contest we did very well and a good time was had.

I'm looking forward to the next one, 70 will be improved with a new mast, antenna and possibly a mast head preamp.

That's all for this month catch you at the next meeting.

Keep those electrons flowing it helps keep the coax clean?????

**Cheers Stu VK4SDD — President**



## SUMMER VHF/UHF FIELD DAY

**T**REC members were on air again for the 2011 Summer VHF/UHF Field Day operating as **VK4WAT** from Hallorans Hill near Atherton. VK4WAT operators were Stu VK4SDD, John VK4TL, Jeff VK4BOF and Dale VK4DMC.

Club members who operated from other locations included Chris VK4YCG, Ian VK4AFC, Ron VK4EMF, Dave VK4DK and Les VK4FLJS. Many thanks to all the other stations who gave us contacts and helped to boost the tally. (continued on page 3)

**TABLELANDS RADIO AND ELECTRONICS CLUB INCORPORATED.**

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NETS  
THURSDAY .  
1900 –1930 VK4RTA repeater 146.675 - offset

THURSDAY  
1930 - 2030 Henry Fulford—Tom Debel Memorial net  
3.588MHz



**SMILE AWHILE**



PERTH - An SAS trooper collecting toys for children was stabbed when he helped stop a suspected shoplifter in east Perth.

The 'Toys-R-Us' Store Manager told 'The West Australian' that man was seen on surveillance cameras last Friday putting a laptop under his jacket at the store.

When confronted, the man became irate, knocked down an employee, pulled a knife and ran toward the door.

Outside were four SAS Troopers collecting toys for the "Toys For Tots" program. Smith said the Troopers stopped the man, but he stabbed one of them, in the back.

The cut did not appear to be severe.

The suspect was transported by ambulance to the Royal Perth Hospital with two broken arms, a broken leg, possible broken ribs, multiple contusions and assorted lacerations including a broken nose and jaw...

Injuries he apparently sustained when he tripped whilst trying to run after the stabbing.

**THE CLUMSY BASTARD !!!**

Thanks to Bryan VK4NMC for sharing this one.

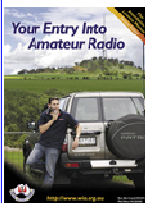
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And this one from Lyn VK4SWE/VK4EI

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Due to the current water shortage in Ireland, Dublin swimming baths have announced they are closing lanes 7 & 8.

Thank you



**Foundation Manuals.**  
**TREC has copies of the WIA Foundation Manuals on hand.**  
**\$20.00 ea.**  
**Contact VK4DMC**

**WIA News.**

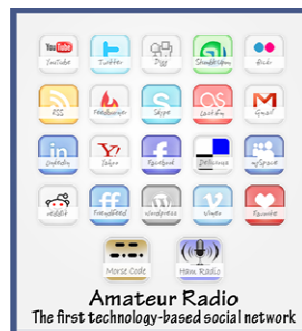
[www.wia.org.au](http://www.wia.org.au)



**Amateur Radio - The first technology-based social network**

Date : 05 / 01 / 2011  
Author : Philip Adams - VK3JNI

The WIA is pleased to announce details for the 2011 WIA National Field Day with this years event to be held on Sunday the 17th of April 2011



Feedback received from many operators participating in the 2010 event requested a change away from the October date. The WIA being mindful of selecting a date that did not clash with other major VK related contests and activities, considered several ideas put forward with the suggestion to have the event close to IARU World Amateur Radio Day, April 18th, seeming to provide a news worthy story. The IARU have announced the theme for the 2011 World Amateur Radio Day to be "Amateur Radio: The first technology-based social network"

Therefore aligning with the IARU celebration, the WIA has also adopted "Amateur Radio: The first technology-based social network" as the theme for the 2011 WIA national Field Day.

Rules and guidelines will be announced in early 2011. Clubs are encouraged to highlight the 17th of April on their calendars and to start considering eye-catching locations during the seasonal holiday period.

Remember this event is a Public Relations activity aimed at maximising public exposure for the hobby of Amateur Radio and for your club.

**SURF'N THE WEB**

Want to know more about APRS?

Click on the links below and all will be revealed.

<http://www.aprs.net.au/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Automatic\\_Packet\\_Reporting\\_System](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Automatic_Packet_Reporting_System)

[http://www.kenwood.com/i/products/info/amateur/pdf/TM-D710AE\\_IDM\\_R1.pdf](http://www.kenwood.com/i/products/info/amateur/pdf/TM-D710AE_IDM_R1.pdf)

**VHF—QUA**

**6 Metres.**

January saw increased activity on the band with H44DA being worked by VK4TL, VK4BOF and VK4SIX on the 12th. A7AA was worked by VK4BOF using a 80 metre dipole on the 11th. Also heard on the same day but not worked by VK4TL and VK4SIX.

**2 Metres/70cms. and 23cms.**

2 and 70 were active on some days during the month with Ian VK4AFC making quite a few contacts down the VK4 coast.

The usual early morning get together on 144.125 with 4FNQ, 4AFC, 4FLJS, VK4ME, VK4FBLU, VK4FMAG, VK4FRJG, VK44BEG, VK4ARQ, VK4FP and VK4DMC continues, Drop in and say G'day around 2130 UTC

## TREC and the VHF /UHF Summer Field Day

It was challenging this time around with many of our regular contacts to the south of us being affected by inclement weather or being flooded out. We also had a cyclone hovering off the coast up this way which added another dimension to our activities. Still we battled on and eventually made quite a few contacts. Given that we didn't have other stations setup on nearby hills and a large ham population just waiting to give us a contact like the vk2's 3's and 5's I believe we amassed a reasonable tally. 6 metre propagation was good and our operator on that band, Jeff VK4BOF, had a ball (23 grid squares worked). Our 10 GHz operation was fun using gear put together by John Roberts VK4TL. Total score this time around was 1896 points

An interesting aside for the weekend's event was that around 3am on Sunday three young local hooligans decided to pay a visit to our transmitting site on Hallorans Hill, near Atherton. The adventurous trio climbed onto the top of the observation building and jumped up and down on the roof causing damage to the roof cladding and also causing one of the large interior sodium lights to crash to the floor. What these idiots didn't realise was that Jeff VK4BOF was peacefully snoozing away inside (between contacts) when he was rudely awoken by the sounds of loud thumps on the roof followed by an even more resounding crash when the light fitting fell to the floor only metres from where he was sleeping. Luckily Jeff had his mobile phone with him and had the presence of mind to ring the police who arrived on the scene in quick time and apprehended the culprits and carted them off to the local lockup. The police obviously gave the hooligans a strongly worded lecture about the ramifications of their actions. When we went down to the Council offices on Monday morning to return the keys and report the night's events the girl behind the counter told me the three very sorry and apologetic lads had fronted to the office earlier on and had confessed their sins and offered to pay for any repairs. An expensive night for them and a rude awakening for Jeff. If we hadn't been there on the night they probably would have got away scot free. Well done Jeff!!

Fortunately they didn't touch any of the TREC antennas that were erected around the building including our mobile tower trailer.



Dave VK4DK working 10GHz.



Stu VK4SDD at the other end of the 10 GHz contact.



Chris VK4YCG aiming the 10GHz signal



John VK4TL supervising the 10 GHz activities.



View from Hallorans Hill early in the morning with rain to the East.

## TREC member Nick Watling - VK4YT



**Nick Watling—VK4YT**

Born in 1932 and raised in Sydney's northern suburbs during World War 2, I developed a keen interest in aircraft, which was to resurface many years later.

My introduction to radio was as a 14 year old when one of my close friends was given a receiver which had been removed from an aircraft. Interestingly, the aircraft was a Catalina Flying Boat, moored in Careel Bay north of Sydney and it was only some years later that I learned it was P.G. Taylor's "Frigate Bird 2". Of course such nuances were lost on a pair of teenagers and we proceeded to wreck the radio in our attempts to make it work!

However the seed had been sown and my interest in things radio could only increase. The usual early efforts with crystal sets and 1 and 2 valve radios followed. I recall one of my early "masterpieces" was the Radio and Hobbies "Springtime" portable of 1946. Further encouragement came with my school's cadet corps where I was platoon sergeant with the signals group and crossed paths with Don 5 Field Telephone and 108 Mk.3 wireless set.

I commenced work with CSR group in 1950 and studying chemical engineering at Sydney Technical College 5 nights a week. The interest in radio continued to grow and in late 1952 I sat for the A.O.C.P. exams at the famous Mrs Macs Radio School rooms. In those days there was only one licence level and it required theory/morse code/regulations exams. I failed the CW receiving first time up but passed it three months later and was issued the call sign VK2AWT in February 1953.

The CSR bosses decided to send me to the North Queensland sugar mills at Ingham and I arrived there in May of 1953. My radio equipment (all WW2 Military surplus as was common in those days) arrived in June via the CSR sugar ship "SS Fiona" and I was issued with the call sign VK4WT which I held for the 3 years spent in the Ingham area.

At the opening of the Ingham airport in 1955 my interest in aircraft was revived by watching an Australian built Mustang fighter from RAAF Townsville put on a display. I applied for pilot training and commenced my air force career in January 1956 at Uranquinty, about 16 km south of Wagga Wagga. At the time my call sign reverted to VK2AWT. In late February 1957 I graduated as a brand new sergeant pilot at Point Cook and was posted back to North Queensland at Townsville to fly Avro Lincoln Maritime reconnaissance aircraft. Another call sign change and I was back with VK4WT.

After five years in Townsville I was posted to RAAF Richmond in NSW to fly Dakota and then C-130 Hercules transport aircraft. My call sign reverted to VK4AWT – Yet Again!

## TREC member Nick Watling - VK4TL (cont.)

For the last two years of my C-130 period we lived at Kurrajong Heights to the west of Richmond and nearly 2000 ft above sea level. There was a beautiful and unobstructed view to the east, which made for an ideal VHF location. This was back in the days on AM. So with a SCR-522, the transmitter section was a BC-625 with all of 8 watts output and a 2M valve converter into a Halicrafters SX 28 receiver, (6CW7, 6BL8 and 6JB for those old enough to remember) the antenna was a homebrew 4 el yagi, I had a ball. On one memorable day I worked across the Tasman Sea to ZL-land on 144.650 (ZL1TAE). I think I held the 2 metre DX record at the time, but not for long.

In 1966 the RAAF decided that I could be more useful flying Caribou Transport aircraft and so it was that I joined 38 SQN, also at Richmond. Flying Caribou aircraft in those days inevitably meant Vietnam, so it came to pass that in June 1967 I joined 35 SQN. in Vung Tau in South Vietnam.

Amateur radio was not permitted in Vietnam, although I did try a couple of clandestine calls on the Collins 618T unit fitted to the aircraft. I did not receive any replies! However we did receive a signal from Saigon HQ reminding all personal that Amateur Radio activity was prohibited. I guess somebody did hear me.

June 1968 saw my year of operational flying come to an end and I returned to OZ to be posted to "Fort Fog" (Department of Air) in Canberra. VK4AWT was given up for VK1NW and my time in the ACT saw the construction of my first SSB transmitter; the G2DAF exciter/Tx from the RSGB handbook. This was mated up with a Collins R-388a (SIJ4) Rx. Together they eased me into the world of sideband. Brought back from Vietnam was a then state-of-the-art PRC-74B portable USB/CW radio (2 – 18 MHz) which generated much interest at the local radio club activities.

In October 1969 I resigned my commission in the RAAF and took up civilian flying with the Cairns Aerial Ambulance (OATB in those days) home was at Holloway Beach and with VK4WT having been reallocated I was given VK4YT, a call sign I have had until the present day.

In 1981 the homebrew G2DAF Tx and the Collins R388 gave way to a Kenwood TS-820. I joined the Royal Flying Doctor Service in 1979 and remained with them until my retirement at age 65 in July 1997.

A final move in 1989 saw VK4YT installed at my present QTH (QTHR) in Smithfield near Cairns. The long serving TS-820 became unreliable after 13 years of sterling work and was replaced by an "all singing-all dancing" JST-245 (Japan Radio Company Tx/Rx) in 2001.

My interest in old radios (boat anchors) developed during the 1990's and is now my main activity. The Shack is a veritable obstacle course of old domestic/commercial/military radios most of which have been restored to working order. My latest centre of activity is Korean War US Army radios, latest examples being a VRC-10 and a VRC-7, both vehicle mounted VHF FM radios (covering 6 metres)

My electronic development became stunted in the 1980's when I resisted the siren call of computers and mobile phones and to this day I do not own a computer or a mobile phone. This results in much good natured banter from my amateur radio peers! An aside: If I could find a mobile phone that was only a phone and not a camera among many other features I might be persuaded to buy one, I probably would not be able to understand the mandatory contract.

Another of my radio related pursuits is my involvement with the NO Warbirds where we have an extensive display of RFDS radios from the 1930's to the end of the radio era in 1994. Also a working display of WW2 aircraft equipment (including interestingly enough, a VHF SCR-522 referred to earlier in my story.

73 Nick.

*Editors note:*

*I worked in Emergency Services in Weipa in 1978.*

*I remember transferring patients from the ambulance onto the Aerial Ambulance Beechcraft Baron piloted by Nick. We had to slide patients sometimes weighing around 150kg. up over the wing and through the starboard door of the aircraft with Nick straddling the stretcher and then sliding it back into the passenger compartment. That was fun wasn't it Nick?*

*"How's your back?"*

*I also had the pleasure of flying with Nick in a RFDS Queen Air on a clinic run around Cape York.*

*Nick was often heard aeronautical mobile on the bands whilst he was flying in FNQ.*



Ulf VK4TUL checking out part of Nick's amazing collection of radio spares, valves and other memorabilia