

THE MUSE



-----For JUNE 2024-----

The newsletter of the **MUSICK POINT RADIO GROUP (INC.) NZART BRANCH 86**
***Incorporating* The Society for the Preservation of Amplitude Modulation (SPAM)**
and *Green Radios On The Air (GROTA) News.*

Musick Point Memorial Radio Station, Bucklands Beach, Auckland. Call Sign-ZL1ZLD.
BRANCH 86 NZART NET- TUESDAYS, 7.30PM, 145.775 MHz, Musick Point Repeater. All welcome!

SPAM Remote Receiver - <http://spamnz.zapto.org:8901/>

Website- <https://musickpointradio.org> Webmaster-Neil ZL1NZ.

SPAM A.M. (ZL6AM or ZL1ZLD) Nets- Fridays 8.30PM, on 3.850MHz, and

Wednesdays at 11.30 Hrs, 7.125MHz. NOTE the CHANGE to 40 METERS

Editor- Martyn, ZL3CK.

Meeting- Second Sunday of the Month (Except May-Third Sunday, to avoid Mothers' Day)

NEXT MEETING- Sunday June 9th at 1pm. Coffee and tea provided!

MPRG Subscriptions for 2024/25 are now due!

There is a "writeable pdf" / downloadable form available at: [MPRG Subscription Form - Link](#)

You can fill in the form on screen then use the browser controls to print it to PDF, or you can download it.

Alternatively, a printable version is at the end of this newsletter.



Ah- the sweet smile of success! Harry ZL1BK completing the rejoining of the Vee Beam on the ZLD tower roof, on a recent beautiful autumn day.



Harry ZL1BK and Mark ZL1MRT contemplate the Vee beam matching box.
We still don't know what is in it!



Dave ZL1DL and Rob ZL4ROB discussing the replacement of the repeater aerial.

From the Chair

So we are having a clean-up and clear out. Not before time I think I hear, coming from the back of the room. Yes, perhaps it is overdue. We all seem to want to hang on to stuff in case we find a use for it in the future – which seldom comes. The old garage out in the West field is to be removed, along with the bunker next to it. The thing is that the garage is full of some of the most useful equipment which is no longer of any use to most of us. We will need to go through it in case there is anything that anyone really thinks they can use. In a few weeks' time, a large bin will be delivered to site, and Downer will have the contents of the garage safely emptied into it for delivery to somewhere else to be dealt with appropriately. UPDATE: On Sunday afternoon, several of us had a bit of rifle through the garage but we managed to restrain ourselves and leave plenty of treasures for others to go through, if they are quick.

Downer are also prepared to assist us with the removal of other *treasures* from inside the building so, last Sunday, Dave, ZL1DL and others had a good dig through piles of other treasures that we have kept stored safely inside the building. They put plenty of these out in the front passages from where they too will be transferred to aforementioned skip. Get in quick if you are a dedicated hoarder.

Somebody asked me what to do with left over bacon. I have never heard of that kind of bacon. Is it new?

Last month, on our General Meeting day, we had the pleasure of hosting a tour (actually tours) of the building. It was for a 'few' people from the "Howick Classic Cars ...Club" I tried counting the group, while we all gathered in front of the building for introductions by their Chairman, and think that there were 35 in total. Before we got to that point, it took us about half an hour to get all the cars into parking spots around the building. Special thanks go to Harry, ZL1BK who had worked out a parking plan and, assisted by Graham, ZL1TOF managed to get the job done with a minimum of fuss, but which facilitated a "Le Mans Start" setup for an easy exit at the end of it all. Dave and I managed to whisk three groups through in about an hour and, to top it all, the club received a very generous donation in thanks. Everyone seemed to enjoy the visit, and at least they all now know a bit more about the building's history and how it is being used at present.

I came, I saw, I forgot what I was doing, retraced my steps, got lost on the way back, now I have no idea what's going on.

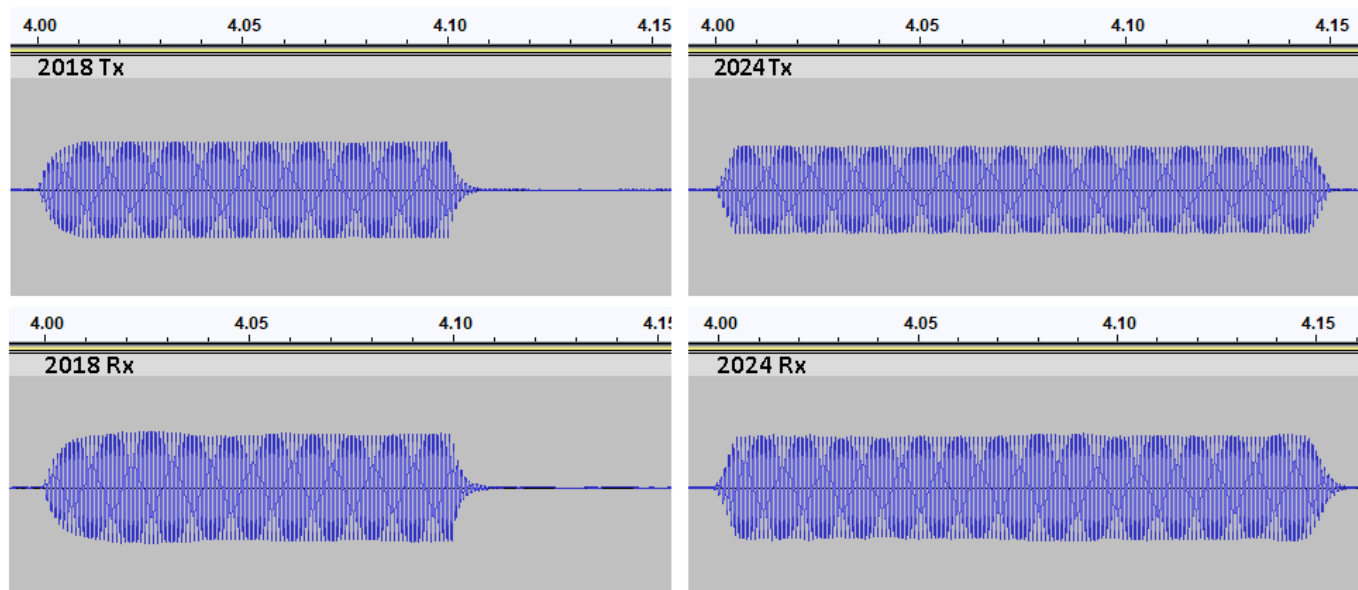
I halve a spelling checker
It came with my pea sea
It plainly marcs for my revue
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea.
Eye strike a quay and type a word
And weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong or write
It shows me strait a weigh.
As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee fore two long
And eye can put the error rite
Its rear lea ever wrong.
Eye have run this poem threw it
I am shore your pleased to no
Its letter perfect awl the weigh
My checker tolled me sew.

Do you remember that, before the internet, it was thought that the cause of collective stupidity was the lack of access to information? Well.....it wasn't that!

That will be all for this month. Take care and stay safe.
Until next month:

73, and call CQ
David, ZL1DRV

On Friday 12th April the RNZ pip clock was replaced and set to deliver accurate time pips with an analog FM receiver in New Zealand. The new format has 150 ms and 500 ms on the hour. The time is at the beginning of the pip. As can be seen in the image the beginning has been sharpened up. If you use a software defined radio (SDR) then the signal is delayed by the software in the receiver.



The short pips before the change (left) and after (right). At studio (top), and FM receiver (bottom).

The time pips were introduced in 1924, generated by the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, and broadcast on the BBC. In 1930 New Zealand had 2YA in Wellington broadcasting the time pips. They were used by ships at sea to set their chronometers for navigation. And later to synchronise the earthquake chart recorders around the country. That is done by other means today.

On Friday 20th September 2013 a large electrical storm took out a substation and closed down a lot of the time keeping equipment at the Measurement and Standards Laboratory (MSL). The pip clock didn't start up again. It had been running since the late 1980s. A back-up pip clock at RNZ was put into service and synchronised to the time standard at MSL. It was acknowledged at the time that the digital networks had variable propagation delay. Previously the country was linked by wires so the received pip timing was more accurate.

In 2018 the pips were changed from 150 ms and 300 ms to the BBC standard, 100 ms and 500 ms. The beginning of the pips was all over the place between 160 and 290 ms late.

Looking to buy, or sell a Radio Bargain or Treasure?



Then you should check out the ZLHam free amateur radio advertisement website!

<https://zlham.net.nz>

There are some rare and valuable items for sale, have a browse- you may be surprised!

MPRG MiniLink Radio Interface Project

Dave, ZL1DL

With the promotion of WinLink (a text-based communications platform) for emergency communications, it was proposed to produce as a club project, a small interface for connecting a laptop to a handheld radio, ostensibly to provide for portable use. The initial concept was for a device “around the size of a matchbox”.

While this format was easily achievable, it would comprise mainly surface mount componentry that could prove a challenge to many would be kit assemblers. Accordingly, the decision was made to “slightly enlarge” the size – to the current “around the size of a cigarette packet”. Warning: “The Surgeon General has deemed smoking may be injurious to your health”. I digress.

We are now on the 4th major PCB revision and samples should be produced soon for testing. A complete USB soundcard module is attached to the PCB, to avoid having to solder the LSI chip involved.

Other components are mostly through hole types.

The interface connects to a PC via USB from a USB-C socket. A radio specific interface cable connects via a 4 pole 3.5mm plug (TRRS type).

The interface offers a soundcard interface. While most laptops have an internal soundcard; having a dedicated one for the interface means audio level adjustments can be set and do not change with the laptop / PC audio controls. A PTT control for the radio is derived from a GPIO pin on the soundcard module.

While galvanic isolation is not likely required for a portable configuration, ground isolating audio transformers and PTT opto-isolator can be fitted as an option. This makes the interface useable for use with a grounded PC and grounded radio where potential for ground loops exist.

Jumpers are available to select flat or emphasised audio. Portable radios typically do not have a flat audio setting for data transmission. The pre-emphasis / de-emphasis such radios incorporate can be compensated for with the jumpers. From testing, this can significantly affect the data rates achieved with portable radios. How convenient!

Follow MiniLink’s progress at: <https://mprg.zlham.net.nz/projects/mprg-minilink/>



MiniLink Version 1 shown. The current version is 15mm wider.



Minutes for the General Meeting of the Musick Point Radio Group Inc

Held at Musick Memorial Radio Station on 19/05/25 at 13:04

Present: Quorum as per attendance book, ZL1DL standing in for the Secretary

Apologies were received from ZL3CK and ZL1LMB

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous general meeting and the minutes were accepted as published: ZL4ROB, ZL1FTH

Financial (as at end of April 2024)

Last years books were still with the reviewer. There was a surplus for the month, with annual subscriptions being received. Our total funds in the bank are \$10,995.39

General

After a recent presentation by Steve Main ZL2RI - Northern Regional Manager, AREC there is a keenness to establish an AREC Group within Br86. Rob ZL4ROB put a proposal that: “Branch 86 establish an AREC group”. The proposal was seconded by John, ZL1OJ and after a discussion, a unanimous vote in favour of the proposal was recorded.

The following applications for club membership were received:

Applicant	Nominated By
Andrew Quinn ZL1WJQ	ZL1MRT
Roscoe Walker ZL1AAF	ZL1DL
Keith Dix ZL1BQE	ZL1DL
Bryan Stevens ZL3BHS	ZL1DRV
Murray Freeth-Edwards	ZL4ROB

All the nominated applicants were accepted by show of hands.

Meeting closed at 14:34

SPAM News-

The **Wednesday 11.30 AM** net is now on **7.125MHz, ie 40 meters**. We have given up trying to use 80 Mt in the daytime for now. We have had 3-4 regulars on, and last week I had an email from a couple of listeners as well who we hope might be joining in soon. Last Wednesday 15th May we logged a record number for Wednesday morning with **Wally ZL1WE** (Waihi), **Lyell ZL1BJN** (Opotiki) **Steven ZL2UV** (New Plymouth) **Dave ZL3JE** (Pareora) **Bruce ZL1BLB** (Auckland) **Dave ZL2FD** (On the coast north of New Plymouth) and **John ZL2J** (Masterton). The Friday net continues to draw in 7-8 most nights too.

The Net Controller has had a few problems lately with patchy reception and intermittent internet connection loss to the remote receiver, very frustrating at times! Also new hearing aids which take a bit of tuning up!

And last Friday night we were able to try out our pass band filters on an interfering digital signal – it was 1 KHz high so it could be tuned out using the lower sideband. The Icom 7300 has a double passband filter which worked very well. It turned out that it was AREC testing their new digital HF network. There is a suite of HF frequencies they need for this purpose. With help from **Ross ZL1DRB** in Christchurch, **Rob ZL4ROB** and **Charles ZL1RKO**, AREC has kindly agreed to shift up to 3.875MHz for us. We are very grateful for this accommodation.

So far 7.125MHz has been clear on Wednesdays, but you will hear good strong AM Australian stations on this 40 meter frequency in the evenings, as it's their AM calling frequency too. They don't have access to 3.850MHz, so they use 3686MHz for their 80 meter net, regularly heard on Friday nights at 11.30PM our time (if you stay up that late!)

John ZL2TUD/ZL2J has established a couple of Kiwi SDR's in Masterton area, they work very well and are a great addition to the Kiwi SDR 'fleet' in NZ. John continues to provide the 'introduction' and the "good night" to the Friday nets, thanks John for your support of AM.

The Valves last month-

Simon ZL1SWW was the only one to reply, got the Klystron correct, but the other one is a bit of a rarity and is an Osram "Catkin" valve. It is from 1933 when small valves struggled to cope with more than a few hundred milliwatts power, so the anode was made larger and external, i.e. exposed metal. Hence the tin shield with cooling holes! This was one of the earliest use of metal-to-glass welding in a radio valve. The all-metal valves produced by RCA didn't appear until 1935, and the all-glass 'miniature' valve without a separate socket didn't appear until 1940. Just in time for the BC-611, AKA the "Handy Talkie" the world's first hand-held radio. (Reference- 70 Years of Radio Tubes and Valves by John Stokes, 1982)

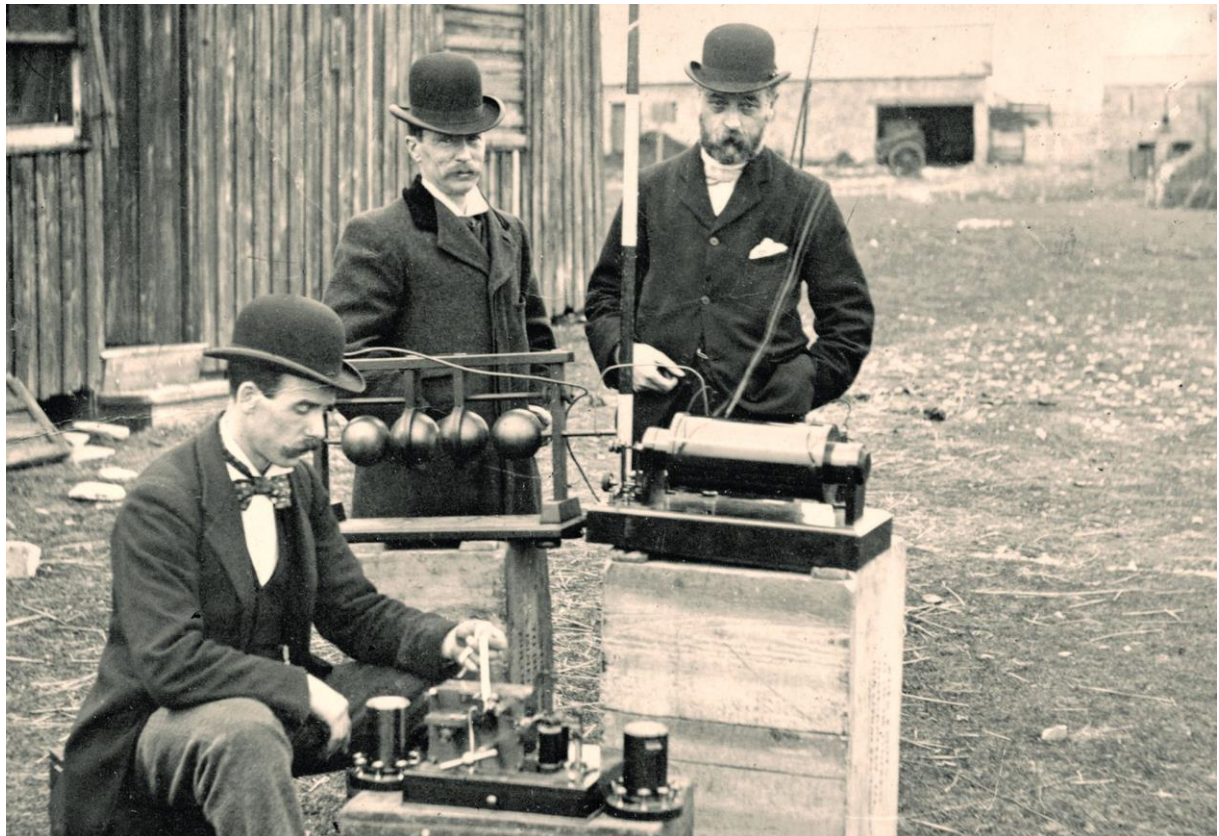


This month's quiz- Who is this man?

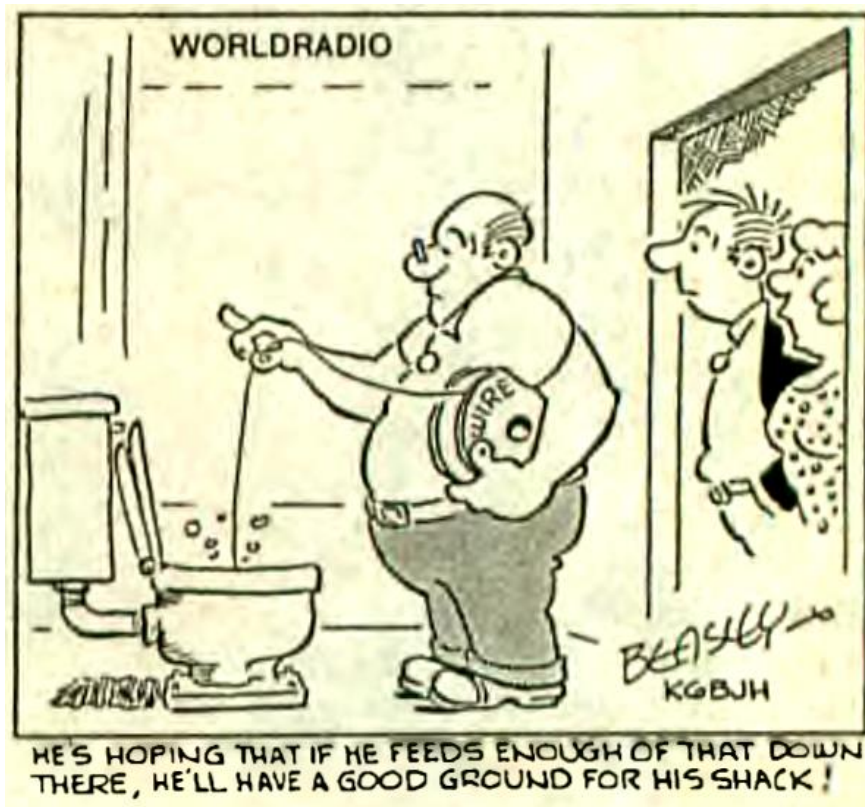


And for honours, what is he doing?

Some POTA activity in 1909.

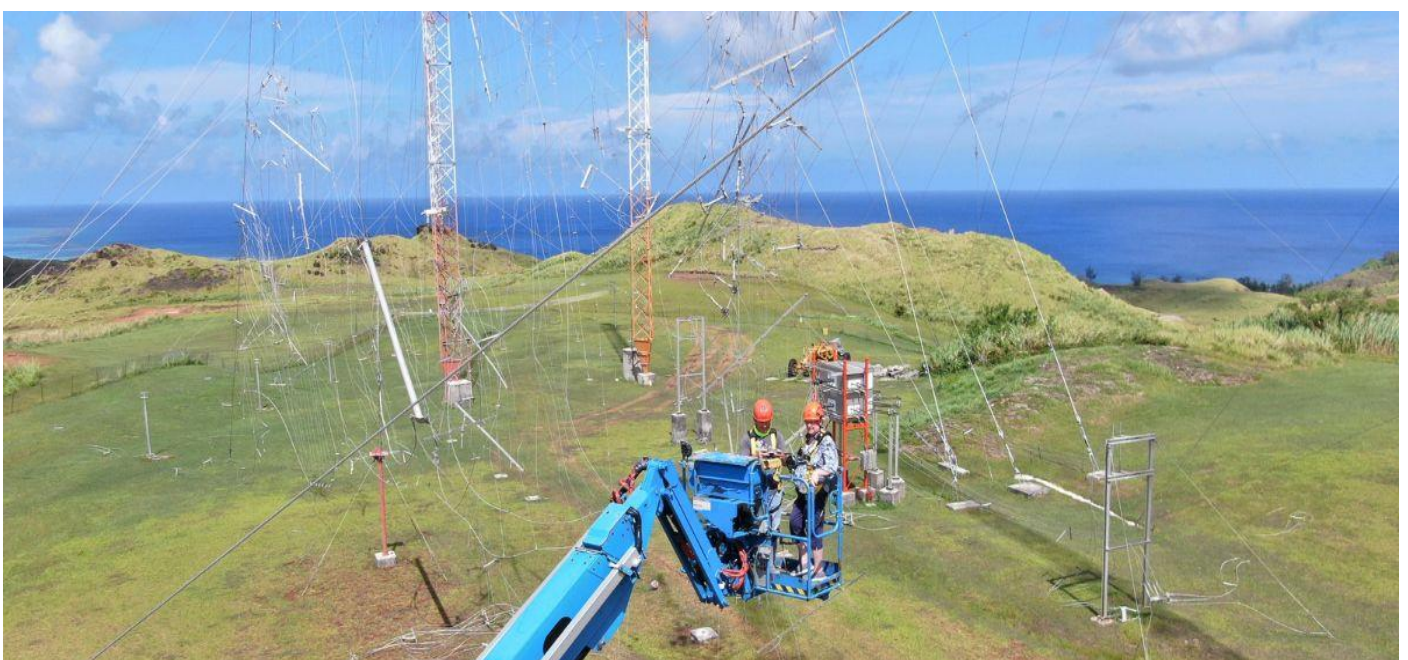


Aerial problems Department...



And- this is what happens if you have too much aerial and a cyclone comes through – what a mess!
-The Adventist KTWB 250KW SW BC station on Guam after a recent weather event. See-

<https://twr.org/story/ktwr-on-guam-turns-40>



MUSICK POINT RADIO GROUP INC., ZL1ZLD- Branch 86 NZART

(formerly Suburban Amateur Radio Club Inc.)

Membership Subscription form for Financial Year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025– Subscription \$40.00

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS AND RETURN THIS FORM WITH YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM TO –

MPRG SECRETARY MARTYN SEAY at martyn.seay@gmail.com

YOU MUST INCLUDE YOUR CALL SIGN AS PAYMENT REFERENCE.

BANK ACCOUNT FOR MPRG- (ANZ) 11-5373-0651319-11

Name- Callsign/s-.....

Address-

Phone/s-E-mail-

Financial Member NZART? Yes/no

Subscription- Cash/On line to above bank account (delete as necessary) \$.....

Donation- Cash/On line to above bank account (delete as necessary) \$.....

**Sponsored by-Callsign-.....
(New members only)**

Club use only:

Approved:

Not Approved:

Receipt no.....Date.....

Note- The information requested is for membership records required to be maintained under the Incorporated Societies Act, and having due regard to the provisions of the Privacy Act.