



# -----THE MUSE-----

-----For AUGUST 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!

**GROTA A.M. Calling Frequency- 7.158MHz**

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.

**NEXT MEETING- Sunday August 11th at 1pm. Coffee and tea provided!**



Musick Point Memorial Radio Station on a recent foggy morning.

## From the Chair

What a wonderful couple of weekends we have had at Musick Point, the place humming with activity as more than a dozen members attended each weekend. I actually think it was 13 on Sunday the 21st and I know that it was 14 last Sunday. It has been very interesting each day, members getting on with numerous chores and activities, getting things tidied up in general, messing around with all sorts of antennas (Antennae to be correct), getting LED emergency lighting wired into the operating consoles, cleaning up a bad section of circuit board for the Harris receiver, and putting in some network cable trunking which is long overdue.

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My friend: "What do you call those things that you blow and make a wish?" Me: "Breathalyser!"  
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A couple of Sundays ago, Dave ZL1DL had been toiling away at scrubbing a section of PCB out of the Harris receiver. The small battery, which obviously keeps configurations and the like, was discovered by Dave to have leaked. This resulted in some pretty messy goo on both sides of the PCB which was duly cleaned up. The goo which had been removed had dissolved some of the solder mask in the area, and left patches of discoloured mask which would make it difficult to get a clean looking re-masked finish. I had nothing in particular to occupy me otherwise, so I took over from Dave and spent about an hour scrubbing away with a fibreglass propelling pencil. It left me wishing that I had not started but I managed to get the top of the board and most of the underside clean as well. Last Sunday, I saw the board which had received a coat of solder mask to the underside. A few more coats will be necessary.

This rig has a bit of history with Dave and I, since we decided a couple of years ago, that it would be a good 'subject' to assess to see if it was suitable to put up for sale. To cut a long story short, we opened it up for visual inspection, then when all seem to look in order, we switched it on the result was a loud 'crack' sound from a ceramic capacitor along with a red fireworks fountain and puff of pink smoke.

Dave has since sourced several replacement ceramic capacitors and fitted them, after similar displays as he progressed through repairs. From what I understand the radio now works but just needed tidying up.

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My phone just finished filming a three hour documentary about life inside my pocket.  
Rather boring film to watch.

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Last Sunday Martin ZL3CK suggested that we do some work in the repeater level. The idea was to install the PVC cable trunking which was acquired too long ago. It was bought as a 4 metre length I think so we got into position along the concrete beam above and marked it. During this process Graham ZL1TOF and Mark ZL1MRT had arrived, so it was four men toiling away with a piece of plastic weighing about 200 grammes. It was duly cut and had double-side tape attached to the back and was pressed into place on the beam. The CAT6 network cables were removed from the switch in the cabinet, run through the trunking then re connected to the switch.

Soon we will need to move the server into the network rack. Which is long overdue -we might even be able to get a fibre optic ONT moved soon then the repeater rack will be radio only and the network cabinet will be for: you guessed it-all things network related.

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Humans are deuterostomes, which means that when they developed in the womb, the anus develops before any other opening. Means that at one point, you were nothing but an \*\*\*\*\*. Some people never develop beyond this stage.

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I've been to a lot of places but I have never been in Cahoots. Apparently you can't go alone, you have to be in Cahoots with someone. I've also never been in Cognito either. I hear that no one recognises you there. I have however been in Sane. They don't have an airport, so you have to be driven there. I have made several trips.

That's it for this month. Take care, stay warm and safe.

Until next month, 73 and call CQ .  
David ZL1DRV

**Musick Point Radio Group News- Recent Distinguished Visitor- Mr. Ron Harrison, former Civil Aviation Radio Technician.**

Ron came accompanied by his family, and are seen here in the "Museum Room". Despite his 98 years, Ron walked all the way up and back to the chain gate, and was able to tell us something of his working life.



----Mr. Ron Harrison with Roz and Ray Olliff-----

I received this summary of Ron's life from Ray-

*'Ron began work in the Civil Aviation Telecommunications Department at Wellington Airport in 1948. He was transferred to Mechanics Bay in Auckland then to Nandi Airport before being transferred to the 'Aeradio' station at Musick Point in the early 1950's living in the single men's hostel. Once married he moved to one of the houses at the top of Musick Point, still in existence. In 1962 he was transferred back to Wellington Airport with his wife Moya and daughter Roz and then transferred to Mangere Airport when it opened in 1965 where he worked until compulsory retirement by the Government at age 60. Ron remained lifelong friends with work colleagues from those days including Doug Higham & Ray Chandler.'*

Ron managed to climb the stairs no problem- which are not at all the gentlest, and would probably have gone up the ladder to the roof if we'd given him the opportunity!

He brought a collection of newspaper cuttings and other information unfortunately we didn't get time to look over, hopefully we will be able to get some scans for the Musick Point Archives in due course.

We were able to show him the "Aeradio" desk which is now our "vintage AM" desk. Your editor recalls (2001) the lighted push button selectors for the various aviation HF frequencies that are still in use today. These were removed sometime in the 2000's .

It was a delight to meet with Ron, one of the few still living technicians who worked at the station in the old days. Thanks also to Roz and Ray for bringing him along.

## Other Happenings-

Over the last few weeks a team of members has been busy dealing with the old lead acid battery banks at the station. These were part of the telephone system and although still on the chargers were well past their use-by dates probably at least 40 years old. Some even had voltage! They were still powering the clock system (Sorry Graham!) and the 2 meter radio but nothing else. So a replacement average-sized 12V deep cycle battery was installed and the way was clear to pass the old batteries on to a new life with the recycler.

Here we see **Maurice “Robbie Burns’ ZL1MPU** addressing the last Haggis-er-Battery-before it goes on its final journey-



*‘Fair fa’ your honest, sensie face,  
Great Chieftain e the Puddin (Leaden?) Race,  
Abeen then a’ ye tak your place,  
Painch, tripe, er thairm.  
Weel are ye worthy o’grace,  
As lang’s my arm. ‘*

*(Robert Burns -abbreviated)  
To be followed by a “Wee Dram” or two..*

Before removal- what an ugly sight..



**Maurice with Dave and Martyn “supervising” (Maurice is in training for the Olympics weightlifting) with the last of the Really Big Ones.**

The “generator room” has been cleared of a mass of scrap metal and other unsaleable items, as has the garage, so there is now a presentable storage area for items for sale.

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**AREC- Rob ZL4ROB** has been busy testing his portable Winlink HF radio set up in the park, and we are advised there is now finally, (thank you Debby) Branch 86 on the list when you join up AREC via the NZART website- <https://www.nzart.org.nz/arec/join>

**Other Recent Musick Point Happenings-**



**David ZL1DRV and John ZL1OJ greeting Rosscoe ZL1AAF –(with the hand of ZL1DL..)**



**Rosscoe and Luke ZL1LNB admiring a new mobile H.F. whip..**



**ZL1DRV and Mark ZL1MRT installing trunking in the tower room**

...And Here Is The (GROTA) News for July...from Kelvin ZL3KB.

Despite the damp wintery weather, the team were determined to get out with the radios, so we setup in some parks around Christchurch. **Mike ZL3MWD, Peter ZL2AI, Ray ZL3RAM** and **Noel ZL4OW** with a mixture of ZC1s and WS48 sets spread out over Agricultural Park, whereas myself and Leo setup in a muddy Hagley park with his ZC1 and my WS58.



A newcomer to the GROTA stables- the W.S.108- CW only!

**Aidan ZL3APB** and **Braden ZL3BRK** used their WS108 and ZC1 around Westmorland, and **Des ZL3AK** and **Bryan ZL3BHS** were up on the Port Hills with a WS48. It was pleasing to have three of our participants under the age of thirty!



**Leo** making his ZC1 contacts..and winter shorts...they make 'em tough in Chch..

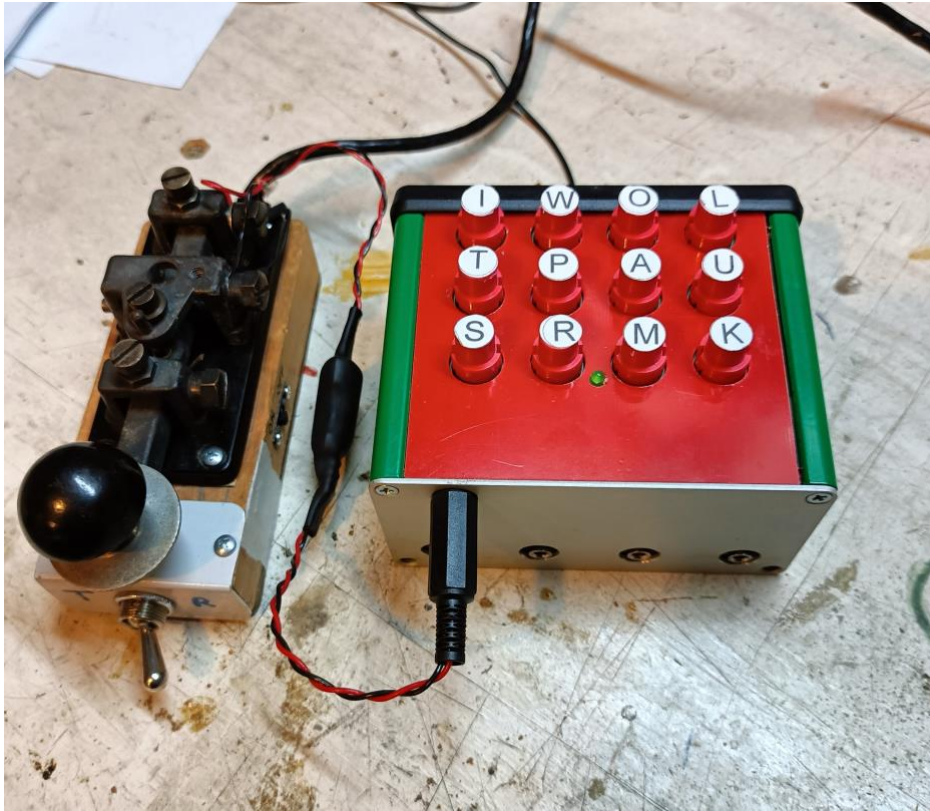
Ranges were not excessive, but the ground wave was predictively hampered by the concrete nature of the city. Unfortunately, my WS58 failed with a dodgy Net Switch. The object of the day was to get “first green contacts” for Leo and Ray, which we managed to do well, and a great post-exercise pub meeting succeeded in drying us out.

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Recently, at the Christchurch Radio Club, we held a “MorseCram” weekend to get people started on the long road of learning the code. Some of those victims were GROTA members keen to learn Morse for using on their green radios. To that end, we held a mini-GROTA to give Bryan ZL3BHS a taste of what morse sounds like on the WS.48 set.

To give Bryan the best quality morse, I connected my WS48 set to a MorseCram keypad which has just the letters needed for the Koch learning method.

Starting off with just a “short” five-mile trial between Des and Bryan on a WS48 at Spencerville and me at Kaiapoi, comms was good for AM phone, and very good for CW. The link was enhanced by the use of a counterpoise wire at Kaiapoi, but strangely, not at Spencerville. We then stretched the link to ten miles from McLeans island to Woodend Beach, where we expected only to achieve a CW contact. However, when tuning up, I heard a faint, but clear voice of Des! This must be a record distance for AM phone on the WS48 sets using ground wave (remember its around 10mW EIRP). The trial was a great success, Bryan was chuffed to be able to copy some “green morse”, and a happy trio met up for a café debrief.



The Morse keypad used for "Morsecram"



The Morse keypad connected to the trusty '48...(Shock! Horror! A Non-valve accessory!)

Do we call a GROTA exercise with morse a "GROTAM"?

## SPAM News-

The big news is that SPAM is now the happy owner of a brand new **Kiwi SDR**. This has been awaited for some time as they are produced only on occasions in small numbers-so you have to be quick to get one when they appear on the website. This time we were given prior warning, thanks are due to **John ZL2J** for his help in acquiring our "Kiwi".

We intend to install it at Musick Point initially, and it will have a "timeout" set on it, because it will take only up to 4 connected at a time, so we will have to see how it works out. We will continue to host our faithful "Softrock" SPAM WebSDR, which has managed up to 9 at once. This WebSDR is not on the world WebSDR list, so isn't often bothered by "visitors" who outstay their welcome!

There is a spare 80-40 trapped dipole, which while not ideal, in the meantime will be a convenient aerial for the first testing of our Kiwi at least. A 'patch' aerial may be the ultimate solution.

We hope that someone (preferably in the south) could host it as we really need a good SDR for those southerners in the AM group-especially the GROTarians of ZL3.



The new SPAM Kiwi SDR.

**Musick Point Radio Group (Inc.) Branch 86, NZART.**

**Minutes of General Meeting held at the Musick Memorial Radio Station on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2024.**

Meeting started at 1300.

**Present**-8 members as per attendance book.

**Apologies**- Luke ZL1LNB, John ZL1OJ

**Minutes for June**- Accept as distributed- Moved ZL2MOH Seconded ZL1TOF-Carried unanimously.

**Finance**- ZL1DL- Total funds \$12,434.90. Noted that Repeater fees (\$200) and Liability Insurance (?\$900- awaiting quote) yet to be paid. Ongoing scrap metal sales and new members helping. Spark increasing their charges again now \$80/Mth. Consider wireless as option.

Accept financial report- Moved ZL2MOH, seconded ZL1MRT- carried unanimously

**General Business**- Dave ZL1DL will ring Spark re. rent and security concerns. Noted the recent arson destroying the unoccupied Manukau Branch clubrooms.

**Correspondence**- Silent Key- Wallace ZL1WAL's recent passing noted with regret.

ZL3CK- Insurance reminder/request from AON for application to estimate new premium. Reply awaited  
ZL1DL- via Sara-Jayne at NZART- re rest home visit- considered not appropriate considering the building and the intended group's demographics. Agreed by all that **ZL1DRV** reply, declining the request.

**New License**- for recent successful MPRG candidate- now **ZL3NM**.

**AREC**- Branch 86 now on the AREC website as an AREC group. Members can/should join up via the website.

Letter to be written (CK? ROB?) to AREC requesting support for-

1. An AREC operating position (i.e. including non-amateur frequencies)
2. Emergency power supply

**New Constitution**- ZL3CK to put it together and present for approval at an SGM to be advised 14 days' notice as per our old (present) constitution

**Equipment sales**- Franklin Br. Tuesday night, Hamilton Br. Gordonton Saturday Aug 31.

**5775 Repeater**- New spare repeater in use at present.

**THE Raffle**- Toastie maker cluttering up the meeting room desk successfully 'raffled' to Rob ZL4ROB!

**Meeting finished** at 1340 Hrs

Minutes taken by ZL3CK.