

-----THE MUSE-----

-----For FEBRUARY 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- Wednesdays 11 AM, Fridays 8.30PM, on 3.850MHz.  
A.M. Calling frequencies- 3.850MHz, 7.125 MHz  
Editor- Martyn, ZL3CK.  
Meeting- Second Sunday of the Month (Except May-Third Sunday, to avoid Mothers' Day)

**NEXT MEETING- SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. Coffee and tea provided!**



Musick Point Radio Group Portable Day, January 1<sup>st</sup> 2024.  
Dave ZL1DL, Harry ZL1BK, Graham ZL1TOF, Phil ZL1FTH Relaxing in the shade..

## From the Chair

I tried to make an early start on this and managed to get a bit down in writing but the editor still managed to beat me to it by sending a draft Newsletter with a big blank page where this is to go. It's his way of hinting about something – not sure what, though. Here goes anyway.

Christmas and New Year are behind us and we are moving apace toward February. The NZART Portable Day on 1<sup>st</sup> January was, by all accounts a success. I was unable to attend because my XYL insisted that family comes first. After 45 years, I know better than to try and talk her around.

I've made some terrible life choices over the years. Just kidding, I'm married and not allowed to make decisions.

On the next Sunday, I was 'un'fortunate enough to have to 'ferry' over to Waiheke Island for a slap-up lunch to celebrate my daughter's birthday. It turned out to be a great day and a very good lunch, and I quite enjoyed the ferry ride in both directions. Thank you, Winston, for the Super Gold Card - the only good thing for which I can give you credit.

That brings us to the next Sunday, the 14<sup>th</sup> and the day of our January General Meeting. I arrived at the station at about my normal time to find all sorts of stuff going on in the West field. Lengths of wire had been pulled in all directions and there were bits of paracord being thrown over tree branches. It was quite a sight! I was informed that it was a preparation exercise for the following Sunday's "Day in the Field". Eventually, everything was packed away and we managed to start the meeting about 10 minutes late.

It was very pleasing to find that, not only did we have a quorum, but we achieved it with numbers to spare, plus three guests. As is usual, our meeting did not take very long, so we had time to have a very interesting talk by Ian Hutchings ZL2HUT. A bit more detail can be found at the end of the meeting minutes, later in the newsletter.

I accidentally swallowed a bunch of Scrabble tiles. My next trip to the bathroom could spell disaster

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January was, as mentioned above, another day in the West field for our own "Field Day". Surprisingly, it was another hot and humid day with temperatures reaching only into the very high 20s (didn't feel like it though). In all, there were four radios scattered about the field using a variety of aerials; some more successful than others but all aerials did their bit and enabled a few QSOs to take place, even a bit of DX here and there. It was a good, fun way for our members to try out ideas that can be useful and help towards preparedness for that unforeseen event.

My definition of an intellectual is someone who can listen to the William Tell Overture without thinking of the Lone Ranger. ~Billy Connolly

As I run out of space on the page, I am left thinking about the fun and enjoyment we have had, being involved in the activities at the club in the last few weeks, and how we could organize more club activities to help our members to learn and grow in the hobby and have fun whilst doing it. We would welcome ideas for all sorts of radio related activities. Please speak up if you have an idea for an activity. Even if you think it might be a silly idea, it might just spark the beginning of a great deal of fun for the membership.

Until next month:

73, and call CQ

David, ZL1DRV

## MPRG News-

### **NZART Portable Day**

The Portable/POTA/SOTA/GROTA (!) Day on New Year's day was a great success, despite overnight rain it had cleared for us. The gazebo, desks, chairs and the ex-Merv ZL1SK portable aerial was set up. A few items yet to be acquired include tent pegs for the guy ropes! This year it took only 10 minutes. The ZL3CK No. 48 set and Elecraft K2 were soon on the air with a portable wire dipole. The VNA was very useful to get the dipole correctly tuned. (Those ink marks on the wire have been put in the correct place now!)

However, conditions on '40 were not fantastic, a few local SOTA contacts made. But we could copy (just) the CW from the GROTA Team in Christchurch, enjoying a hot sunny day on the Port Hills once again. A sort of CW contact was made-with the help of the Marahau SDR.

New Year's resolution- work on CW..



"It should be here....no, over here...." Maurice ZL1MPU and Graham ZL1TOF on pole duty with Mark ZL1MRT and Dave ZL1DL discussing how to untangle the ropes!



Recent Tea room gathering-L to R- Rob ZL4ROB, Harry ZL1BK, Dave ZL1DL, new member Luke ZL1LMB, visitors Murray ZL1MBZ, Aurora (John's XYL) with John ZL1JDG on the right.

### T 98 40 Meter Transmitter

For a long time this vintage transmitter has had a less than satisfactory switching for T-R. Also the receiver seemed very deaf... Investigations by Graham ZL1TOF revealed somehow the relay T-R connections were reversed in the Tx! And the labels were wrong!!

However, Graham has designed and built, and now installed a sophisticated T-R switch with correct delay for the changeover so you don't get deafened with feedback. And unsurprisingly, the receive sensitivity is a lot better now it's actually connected to the aerial! How could this have happened? The editor couldn't possibly comment.....



Graham ZL1TOF with the new T-R switching box before installation in the T98.

The latest problem was that when repowered up to try it all out there was no drive to the final stage. This was simply dirty valve socket contacts on the oscillator buffer valve (6F6), readily corrected by Dave ZL1DL on Sunday last. So hopefully, we'll have better AM comms with the GROTArians in due course.

**Wanted-** GROTA operator/s for Musick Point!

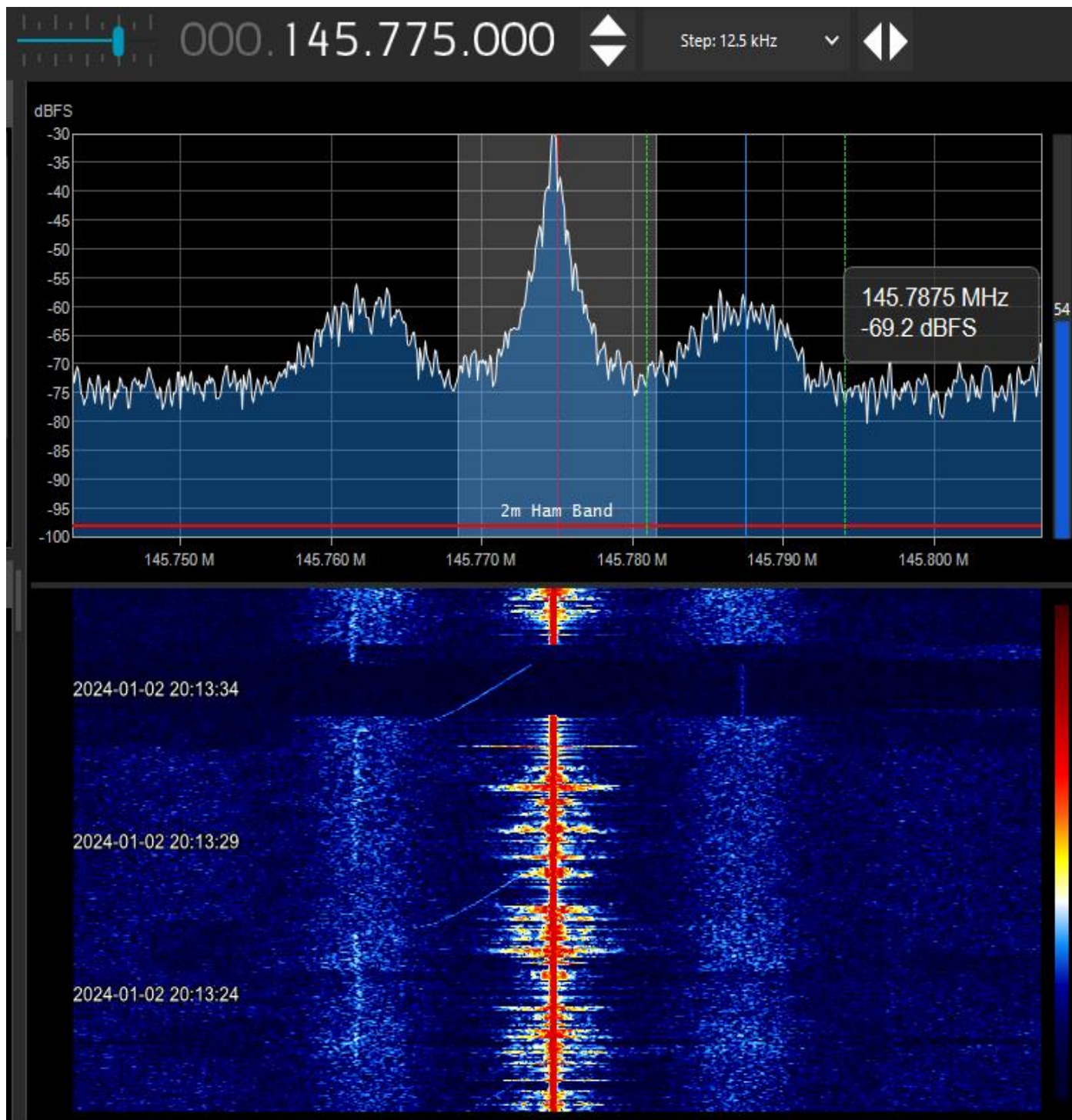
### QRM on the Musick Point ZL1HK Repeater.

Many have noticed over the years a little "swishing siren" which pops up now and then on the 145.775MHz frequency while QSO'ing on the repeater. This has continued with the newly installed repeater, so it's not due to the old Tait beginning to fail! (It hasn't, it's just on standby these days).

ZL3CK has now copied the interfering 'swishing' signal at good strength while mobile on the Southern motorway. It was loudest over the Pahurehure inlet bridge, breaking the squelch, and when 5775 was triggered it was there, loudly sweeping over the repeater tail.

Graham ZL1TOF has caught it on the waterfall below. You can see the diagonal sweeping signal in the breaks between and during the repeater transmissions.

The cause of this has yet to be determined.



### SPAM News

**WANTED-** a SPAM member to run the meeting at the NZART Annual Conference on Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. ZL3CK will be away overseas, and Kelvin ZL3KB likewise. The Conference organiser Ian ZL3TAO wants to know if we want a “SPAM” slot on the Sunday as per previous years. A “GROTA” working station will be in operation. If you are able to help, email Ian on- [ian@macpherson.gen.nz](mailto:ian@macpherson.gen.nz) or the editor, thankyou. ZL3CK has the minutes and club records in safe keeping, and will ensure the person who will chair the meeting has them in time for it.

## GROTA News with Kelvin ZL3KB-

The first big outing for the new year, we wanted to investigate 40m groundwave propagating a reasonable distance and climbing over a big hill. Therefore, Des with his trusty WS48 positioned in the Heathcote valley, north of the Port Hills, while Tony and myself setup at Allandale on the far side of Lyttelton Harbour, total distance around six miles. Propagation over this path turned out to be amazingly good, despite Des' radio being a little sick, and with very little fading we assume it was groundwave and not NVIS.

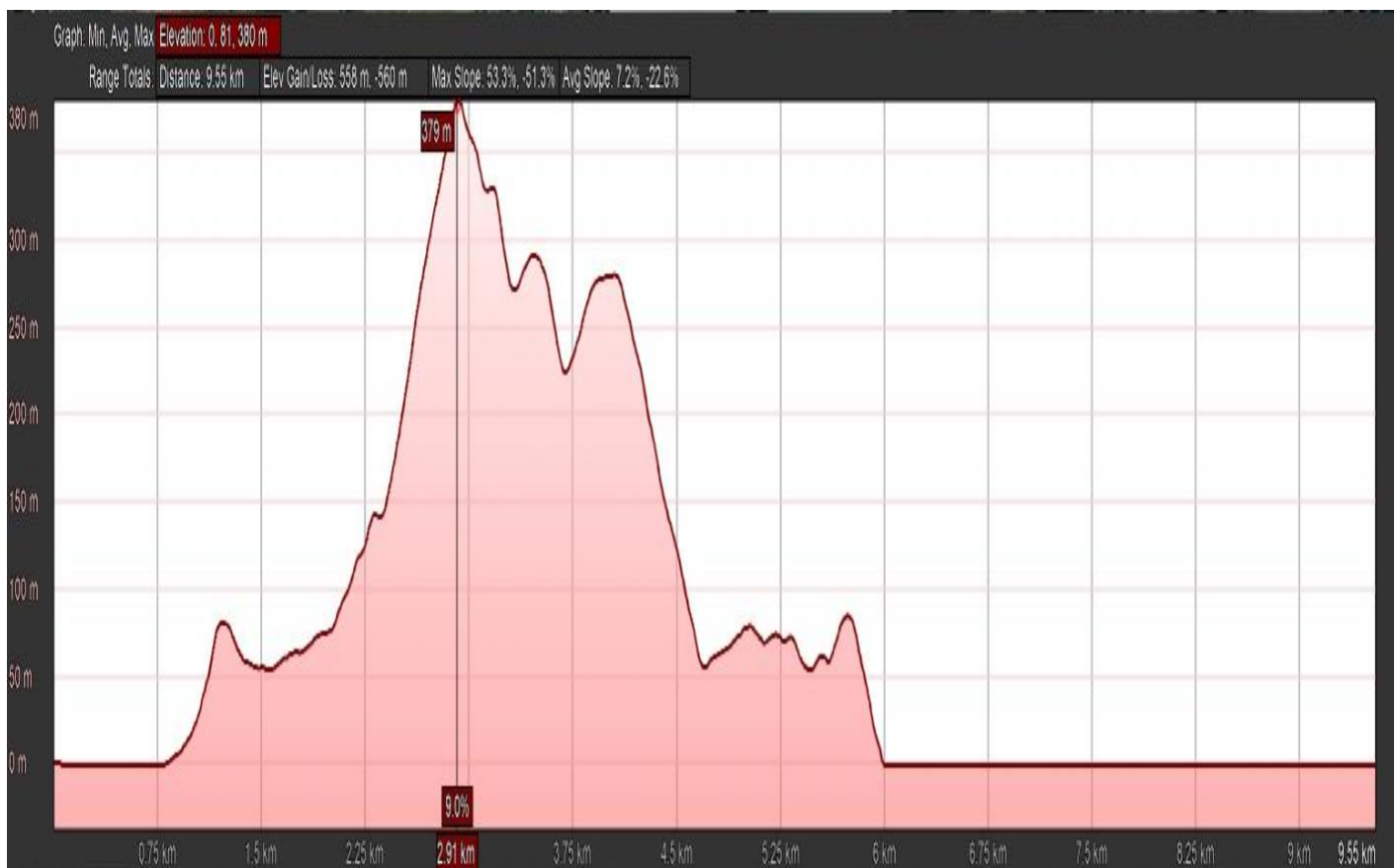
Four more stations were on the Port Hill tops, giving a total of nine operators with six WS48s, a WS21 and a ZC1. Noel ZL4OW with WS48 was the most challenging to copy, some five miles out near Godley Head on a COTA site, with lots of rocks in the way.

This day saw our fair share of "firsts", which were; first time on a green radio for Murray ZL3TAM , Braden ZL3BRK (he normally just carries it!) and Tony ZL3TVP on his WS21 Christmas present. In addition to my WS48, I took the GROTA A13 set, but its extra power was not needed on the day.

The weather was warm and sunny, albeit a little windy; my WS48 set blew off the chair and did a somersault, but the antenna didn't! Result- one very bent aerial section. (See below)

As usual, thanks to the crew: Des ZL3AK, Bryan ZL3BHS, Aidan ZL3APB, Ray ZL3RAM and the five others mentioned above. A great day, it 'don't get better than this'.

Kelvin ZL3KB



(Editor's note- the Port Hills aren't really this high, the vertical scale has been increased for effect- ah, actually to fill up the page)



Tony ZL3TVP and the hill we were conquering.



First-timer ZL1TAM relaxing with a ZC1



Braden ZL1BRK- More fun operating than carrying the '48



Ouch! Capsized '48 set on an obviously too-light-for-the-Nor'Wester chair



Just as well it wasn't a genuine aerial section. Would be a bit difficult to straighten up.

-And that's all for this month. 73, Martyn ZL3CK

**Musick Point Radio Group (Inc.)**

**Minutes of general meeting held at Musick Memorial Radio Station on 13 January 2024.**

Meeting started at 1310.

Present-As per attendance book.

Visitors- Martin ZL3WING, Murray ZL1MBZ, Ian ZL2HUT

Apology- ZL1MPU.

Minutes- accept as distributed (with correction -Rob ZL4ROB)- Moved ZL1EK  
Seconded ZL1DR Carried  
Unanimously

Business Arising- Correspondence- email to Darryl Grange ZL1TCI declining his request to establish a DMR repeater at the Club.

New Member- Luke Barber ZL1LMB- Proposer ZL1DL  
Secunder ZL4ROB,  
Accepted unanimously.

Finance- ZL1DL- \$295 reduction in funds this month occasioned partly by the Xmas BBQ expenses.  
Current A/c- \$2426.25 Serious Saver -\$7916.94 Repeater A/c -\$470.39  
Propose accept- ZL3CK.  
Seconded- ZL1EK.  
Carried Unanimously.

General Business-

LED Lights to replace long defunct mercury vapour security floodlights by ZL1DL and others progressing apace.

I.R .Illuminator for security cameras has failed, but may not be needed as new lights may do the job. Awaiting a dark night to assess.

Another POTA/Portable day next Sunday 21 January starting at 10AM planned.

Meeting finished at 1320Hrs.

Minutes taken by ZL3CK.

Meeting was followed by a short talk by Ian Hutchings ZL2HUT, initially introduced to ZL3CK by Paul Tolenaars. Ian had a long career in the NZPO radio section and other related positions, and has much knowledge about the GEC Link radio panel we have in the museum room. These were purchased by the PO in late 1950's to act as landline back up between (for example) Irirangi and Himatangi.