



Darling Downs Radio Club Inc.

Newsletter



Toowoomba December 2023



CLUB INFORMATION

Postal address: PO Box 3257
Toowoomba QLD 4350

Email address

secretary@ddrci.org.au

Web Site: www.ddrci.org.au

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

President Dougal Johnston VK4EKA

Vice President: David Curry VK4SP

Secretary: Theo Moller VK4ESK

Treasurer: Wayne Richter VK4ARW

STEERING COMMITTEE:

Sam Pascoe VK4SAM;

Cameron Scarvell VK4CSS;

Robert Hosking VK4FRH;

Bruce Boardman VK4MQ.

REPEATER COMMITTEE

Chairman Bruce Boardman VK4MQ

Members: Paul Stevens VK4CPS;

Cameron Scarvell VK4CSS;

Rod Webb VK4ZJ

Station Manager Theo Moller
VK4ESK

2 Metre Net Convenor

Kevin Crandell VK4VKX

80 Metre Net Convenor

Theo Moller VK4ESK

CLUB MEETINGS:

2nd Monday of the month.

Start 7pm.

First half hour business matters, then
social meeting incl a lecture.

Meeting place:

Community Venues, Level 3 City
Library

Victoria St. Toowoomba

CLUB NETS:

80m on 3.650MHz, Saturday 7.30pm

2m on 146.750MHz Toowoomba

Repeater. Sunday 10am

Other Regular Nets in the
Toowoomba area:

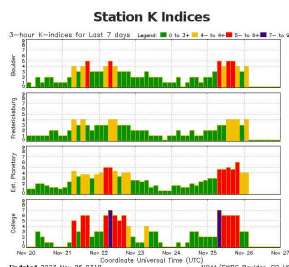
Monday: UHF Net on 438.025MHz
7.30pm

Tuesday: The new Horizons Net
on 147.050 MHz 7.30pm

Thursday: Scrub Turkey Net on
147.050MHz 7.30pm.

Friday: VK4 Friendship Net on
3.587MHz at 7.00pm

The last two days have had 10 metre conditions come very good only to drop out this morning from a magnetic storm. If anyone wants to use the higher frequencies they just have to try and take what comes. Regards, Dougal



80 metre net overview by Station Manager Theo VK4ESK

Perhaps it might have been better if I (we) had not voted for a Club News-Letter, for then this article would not have been necessary. However, to balance that view, this is for the DDRCI, and so it instantly becomes a pleasure instead of a burden.

Over the last month we have again been troubled by substantial static on the frequency of 3.650MHz. To compound its effect is the now rising level of QRM in the form of either the Over-The-Horizon-Radar, or the Korean weather Fax. Maybe I am being unjust in blaming the Koreans' weather fax, but that is what it sounds like to me. Any comments will be helpful. We have had varying numbers, even cancelling one night because of an overhead storm!

Here it may be well to relate a personal experience.

On Sunday 5th Nov. I received quite a belt across the fingers when unplugging my inverted vee antenna from my ATU. This was the second time! And, there was no storm nearby. (I used to repair electric fence energisers, so I am quite used to getting 'whacked!'). I can only assume that there might have been a build-up of static electricity.

Back to the report on the net. Numbers on the net vary from 8 last Saturday 25th Nov. to 18 on Saturday 18th Nov. Yet, this is not a numbers game. People call in from all over the country – well, the eastern seaboard in reality. They call from Ingham (VK4FUQ) in the north to Deepwater in the south VK2NNW; from Manly West in the east VK4SRS to Tara in the west VK4FABG. It is interesting to note the difference in signal strengths between the first round and the second round at times, all due to varying conditions. We generally have two rounds, separated by the regular news break, a service where we are able to keep those amateurs interested in club affairs and events to join in with us.

Quite a few have commented on how enjoyable the net is: that is because the participants in the net are respectful and considerate. Whenever I have difficulty hearing anyone, there is always someone to lend a helping hand.

If you are aware of anyone who has a licence and who would like to join in, especially having tuned in to 3.650MHz.

The Amateur Class Licence update from ACMA.

The proposed Amateur Class Licence, if made, will authorise the operation of amateur stations by amateurs that hold recognised qualifications at the Foundation, Standard and Advanced levels. It will replace the need for apparatus licences to be issued for such stations. Repeater and beacon stations will continue to be authorised under apparatus licences. The proposed Amateur Class Licence sets out the licence conditions that would apply to the operation of amateur stations. The conditions include frequency bands of operation, transmitter output power limits and amount of bandwidth that can be used, and transmission emission modes. Different conditions would apply to each level of amateur station, with advanced stations having the highest level of flexibility in how they may operate.

The class licence, and supporting policies and information that will underpin the class licence, are planned for release on our website in December 2023, ahead of the class licence commencement in February 2024.

acma.gov.au

CLUB REPEATERS.

Both VHF and UHF repeaters are co-sited and have the same call identifier: **VK4RDD** 146.750 Mhz, negative offset, no access tone required; **VK4RDD** 439.275 Mhz, negative offset, 91.5 Hz, access tone required. **VK4WID** is the club's call sign for all nets on HF, VHF and UHF, as well as all contests. Please note that during contests which conflict with our regular net times, the contest has priority over the net in so far as the club call sign is concerned. The nets will then be conducted under the convener's call sign instead of **VK4WID**.

Education

If you would like to register for a Foundation License Course, or contest any of the exam levels available, please contact Steven Dudley who may be contacted:
steve@vk4fi.net.au
Mobile 0403 910 087,
or you may also contact Philip Webb from the Border Ranges Club via email
philip01@scisat.com

Assistance

Assistance to those in need.
This radio club offers assistance to those in need of physical work involved in the maintenance of their antennas etc. If you require assistance, please contact the club secretary via email on secretary@ddrci.org.au and we will organise your assistance.

Garden City Award.

The DDRC also has an award worthy of adorning the walls of your shack. This is the Garden City Award.
Please check with the web page for details.

**JOIN THE WIA TODAY !
SUPPORT NATIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL
LOBBYING FOR THE HOBBY.
SUPPORT EMCOM SERVICES.
RECEIVE AMATEUR
RADIO MAGAZINE. UTILISE THE
QSL BUREAU.
MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR THE
HOBBY !**

[HTTP://WWW.WIA.ORG.AU](http://www.wia.org.au)
FOR MORE INFO

Please be reminded that if your annual member fees are not yet paid, you are currently deemed by club laws as unfinancial.

DDRCi Social Lunch
To be held on Saturday 9th December 2023
At the Southern Hotel
839 Ruthven Street, Toowoomba.
Let us know of the number that will come with your party, so that we can increase the number at the table in time for the Christmas rush, by emailing
secretary@ddrci.org.au

The ACMA

has announced changes to amateur access in the 50-52 MHz and 3400-3600 MHz bands.
Standard licensees are now permitted on 50-52 MHz, something the WIA has advocated for a decade. Amateurs travelling here with overseas equivalent licences also get to use 50-52 MHz. The Amateur Service here only has secondary access to this band, unlike many other countries across the globe.
Simultaneously Advanced licensees can no longer use 3.4—3.6 GHz in the 9cm band. Hence, most of the current activity, predominantly weak-signal operations, have moved from above 3400 MHz down to 3398 MHz. Some ATVers are also making other arrangements.

WIA REPORT

The 2024 WIA Annual General Meeting /Convention will be hosted by the Bundaberg Amateur Radio Club Inc. and held in Bundaberg Queensland on the 4th and 5th May 2024. Bundy Club will be running Ham Fest 2.0 as part of the event along with an Open Day / Show and Tell of Amateur Radio which will be open to the General Public and Convention attendees alike.

DDRCI Summary of November 2023 Management Meeting Minutes.

For the Management Committee the previous minutes with minor amendments were accepted and the Correspondence approved.
The Treasurers report showed still over \$6000 in the two accounts.
There was no information on the 2 metre repeater antenna, although reception reports indicated it has not been changed yet.
Bob Murton VK4ZOW and Andrew Chapman VK4QF have offered talks but none yet finalised for December.
David Toal VK4JPS has offered to talk on nanoVNA applications next year
Everyone agreed to a vote of thanks to Len for the Newsletter.
Rod has gone over the old Trio/Kenwood HF valve Receiver that came from Kurt and brought it in to the meeting in working condition.
He has agreed to look over the
Kenwood TS 520 from Kurt.
After discussion we decided not to proceed with the
November 25th VHF/UHF Spring Field -Day.



There was some discussion of the Gold Coast Amateur Radio Club Hamfest.
Next Lunch on the 9th December at the Southern Hotel.
Next management Meeting 7:00 pm on 11th December at Community Rooms, above the TRC Library.
Christmas Social BBQ to be at Federation Park, Drayton Connection Rd from 11:30 am on Saturday 16th December. BYO everything Sec VK4ESK

It is with a heavy heart we write this message to report that Neil Holmes, VK4NF, has become a silent key on the 24-11-2023. Neil had recently had a stroke and was in intensive care at the PA hospital in Brisbane.
May he rest in peace
From Jake Abbott VK4JRA Vice President. Bunya Mts & District AmCom Inc

Electronic Warfare!

To exploit, mislead or defend against cyberspace's computer systems, networks and electronic infrastructure, electronic warfare makes strategic use of the electromagnetic spectrum and electronics technology.
Techniques, including electronic signal jamming, spoofing and Signal Intelligence (Sigint) all play a role. In order to acquire insight into the opponent, spies can use spoofing to impersonate or falsify signals in order to manipulate their systems, while Sigint allows for the gathering and analysis of electronic signals.
Electronic signal jamming affects the transmission of electromagnetic signals, hampering an adversary's communication routes and coordination capabilities.
The nature of the threats we face changes in tandem with the rapid development of new technologies.
Protecting vital infrastructure, military systems and secret information through electronic warfare in the cyber realm, is essential in the face of these persistent and complex threats.

Items for Sale



I have for sale:

1 off Yaesu FT897 HF/VHF transceiver in fine condition.

Complete with an integrated LDG 897 auto antenna tuner. Why am I selling? I prefer my original radio. Both have similar performance and capabilities. \$850.

1 off MFJ 962D Versa Tuner III antenna tuner. Apparently it can handle up to 1.5kW! Capacity for two antennas as well as an unbalanced line. Roller tuner for fine tuning capability. \$450.

Both can be inspected and demonstrated upon request.

Enquiries by email to Sam via VK4SAM@BlinkyBill.net or catch me on-air!

2m & 6m Summer VK and Oceania WSPR challenge 2023-24

I would like to provide you information to share with your members about the upcoming 2m & 6m Summer VK and Oceania WSPR challenge, which will kick off on the 1st December. We have a bit of a shortage of QLD participants, especially from Central and Far North Queensland.

What is it?

The 2m & 6m Summer VK and Oceania WSPR challenge is an informal contest where you score points for someone hearing your WSPR transmission and vice versa you hear their WSPR transmission.

How is it scored?

On top of the usual rankings featuring the top 20 places for each category. Additionally, there is the overall station ranking, which is based on the total 2-way spots multiplied by the average distance per spot. This category aims recognize more remote stations that may have fewer 2-way spots but with longer average distances.

Categories: * TX Distance * RX Distance * 2-Way Distance * 2-Way Spots Total * 2-Way Spots Overall Station Rank

When is it on?

The summer challenge spans December and January, with tallies for each month compiled as the month progresses. The combined total for the overall summer will be announced in the first week of February. **The challenge officially starts on December 1st at 0000 UTC and concludes on February 1st at 0000 UTC.**

Where do I find more info?

To keep you updated, fortnightly progress scores will be published on the 'VHF/UHF WSPR' Facebook group, allowing you to track your position in the tables.

We hope that some of you will give this a try and join in with the growing group from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Pacific and even the west coast of California. I look forward to an exciting and competitive summer challenge!

Best 73, Ricky Chilcott VK4LW

Kurt Reinhardt Schirm 19-02-1943 to 21-08-2023

[This article is with the help of Patrick Therre, DJ9ZZA, Cham VK4SSB and Merv VK4EM]

Kurt Reinhardt Schirm was born in Straubnitz, Spreewald, Germany, on 19-02-1943. He was the son of Kurt and Marie Schirm (nee Losak).

Kurt had 2 siblings, Herbert Schirm (half-brother) and his full sister Renate von Kujawa VK4DLJ (married to Udo von Kujawa; call sign VK4DLA). Udo was president of the Caboolture Radio Club for many years.

Before coming to Australia, Kurt was engaged to be married. However, his fiancée must have left him just before the wedding. Out of heartbreak, he went to Australia where he met his wife, Loreen. Not much is known of the time he was first in Australia (Sydney), as he did not like to talk about this time, which included the divorce following the failure of his marriage.

When he came by ship to Sydney, he spoke a lot about what was probably one of the adventures of his life!

The last thing he should have seen (but didn't) was the semi-final Women's World Cup, but on Sunday 20-08-2023 (before the final), as he was about to go home from church, Kurt collapsed, and later died in hospital.

Kurt Schirm came to Australia in 1971 after being a successful Metalbauer (metal worker). He worked for a while as a motor racing coachbuilder, then trained as a driving instructor. After this training, he successfully took his amateur radio licence exam.

In Sydney, he drove a taxi for many years, and then worked in a sawmill in the Kilcoy area, having moved to Queensland because it was too cold in Sydney.

He retired to Toowoomba, where he spent the rest of his days.



From a local perspective, Kurt moved to a unit in Scott Street, Toowoomba, which he called his "Little Shoe Box".

Merv VK4EM writes: *Kurt was a very honest bloke and was always on the repeater VK4RDD willing to help anyone. I went to see Kurt in his "Little Shoe Box," and when it was time for me to go, he would say, "I will walk out with you, Merv. I need to check the letter box".*

Merv continues: *So, when I got home, I would call him back and ask him:*

Kurt, did you get any letters? He would always answer "No. Maybe next time!".

He then gave me a "Hoo Roo! Chat later Merv". I took that as meaning he just wanted to know I got home safely, since his answer to my question – did you get any letters? – was always NO!

Every day Kurt would put out a weather report over VK4RDD, and sign off with: **"This is VK4KRS at the top of the range".**

Being confined to indoor radio activity, all his antennas were inside, and this meant he used power outputs of 5 watts or less, so that he would not interfere with his neighbours in the same building. The antennas he used were mobile units with magnetic bases. He was so keen to have his equipment working, that he marked the table, and his PC, so that he could work different repeaters!

Merv finishes his article: **"Thank you Old Mate for the time we had! You are missed."**

VALE KURT SCHIRM (S/K) VK4KRS



Propagation by Refraction

Refraction occurs when the lower part of a wave travels slower than the top part of the wave because the wave is passing through two media. These media can be two layers of air at different temperatures or they can be air and a solid.

One form of refraction is caused by a radio wave passing over a hill or ridge being bent as it passes over the obstruction.

This is known as "knife edge refraction." Another form of refraction occurs when layers of air of different temperatures bend the radio waves around the horizon. This is called tropospheric ducting.

This mode of propagation makes long distance contacts possible at VHF frequencies.

Tropospheric ducting does occur on 10 meters and lower frequencies and is noticeable when other forms of propagation are absent. On high frequency bands, many hams mistakenly call tropospheric ducting and direct wave: "ground wave."

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO ALL MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES**



**Final meeting for the year 2023 is on the 11. December at 7.00 pm
in the community rooms Toowoomba Library**

First meeting in 2024 is on the 8. January 2024

