

NZ QRPERS NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER NO.20 - JUNE 2020

COPY FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER IN BY 25TH OF MONTH.



FROM the EDITOR:

Well here we are back in 'normal' mode, and some things have changed for better, and hopefully will stay changed, for the better.

Winter has definitely arrived and we here in D'Vegas have had a few really good frosts, which hopefully will kill off the whitefly, and a few other pests, like the large two legged one that insists on snipping the guy line that raises and lowers my long wire at home. A strategic shift away from the fence post is in the pipeline!

GQN Logs: See my piece below. My thanks to those who sent logs in. I note we are generating some interest from around ZL, and I've had a couple of emails expressing an interest in what it's all about. Potential members there.

QRP Frequency – 3.690

Two or three members have recently commented on a net that has appeared on 3.690 in the evenings. Its members are of course QRO which makes any QRP activity virtually impossible. It has meant difficult comms on week nights for those going Portable.

We chose this frequency in 2017 to align it with the European Band plan of 3.690 as a dedicated QRP frequency, as there is no allocation on the NZ Band plan for QRP. I have written to NZART in the hope that this anomaly can be corrected. I await their reply. ***It would be helpful if other members wrote in as well.***

GO QRP NIGHT 27th June

A little disappointing to hear a bit of un-ethical etiquette during the night. Again, as I have said elsewhere – We may be **LOW** in power, but we Aspire to **HIGH** in Standards of operation.

Members active on the GO QRP NIGHT were: ZL4NVW, ZL4RMF, ZL3TK, ZL2ATH and ZL2OZ, well, that's according to my log. Apologies if I missed anyone. My thanks to members and non-members who came up.

MISSION STATEMENT: To encourage and share the use of QRP (low power) operation, equipment, antenna ideas and information.

QRP NET: Thursday Nights @ **7.30 pm NZST** on 3.690MHz LSB. **NB time change. Any stations** welcome to join in so long as you're 10w or less. **SAVE YOUR FINALS – GO QRP!**
Contact Info: waynezl2oz@gmail.com

The **JULY GO QRP NIGHT** will be on **Saturday 25th, starting at 8.00 pm NZST**. Would be nice to hear a few more members enjoying the night. Don't worry about the points – pop up **QRP or QRO**, for a bit of fun and hand out points to the desperadoes and others.

NZ QRPers Web Site of all matters QRP:
<https://qrp.nz> Have you signed in?
For all the GQN Files see:
<https://www.qsl.net/n/nzqrpers/gqn/>

CAUGHT in the NET:

NEWS RE ZL2HQ

Lawrie is back on the air and is generally on the Home Brew Net each evening in fact he runs it from time to time. (3760). Very occasionally he pops up on 3730 normally in the weekends, I believe he is also quite active on the national system.

Obviously, the fire was a major setback for Lawrie but they both seem very happy with life at the beach, which Lawrie says is actually about 1km away. Thanks **John ZL2BH**.

Bob ZL2ASO sadly a SK. Bob was a member of NZ QRPers, and took an interest in things QRP.

HELP Wanted: Kevin Hand **ZL4QD** is having problems getting on the net with his present antenna. If there is anyone in the Dunedin area who can help Kevin out, it would be much appreciated.

Eric ZL2BMI had a great signal from Rocks Hut on Tuesday 9th. A solid 58-9 with one of his little QRP rigs. Tnx Eric.

SITES of INTEREST:

- This is my latest research project, powering QRP radios with consumer-grade USB power banks. I decided to just finalize my findings and get it out there, so others can try it. I've been using it to power my various QRP rigs, and it seems to work well.
<https://www.ng3p.com/2020/05/a-different-power-source-for-field-ham.html> Gwen, NG3P
Editor: An interesting topic especially for us Portable QRPers.
- These tutorials may interest some of the constructor/programmers amongst us, by Anthony Good K3NG. [Arduino Multitasking 1](#) - Don't use delay (!) [Arduino Multitasking 2](#) - Serial I/O [Arduino Memory](#) - Dynamic, SRAM, and EEPROM memory; compilation messages.
- This may interest some experimenters, "Coilcraft Magnetics Designers free kits" There is sure to be a "Hook" in here somewhere but I did not see it:
<https://www.coilcraft.com/kitsmisc.cfm#smfilt> Available as SMD or leaded styles in a variety of types. Ian VK3LA
- Hardly a problem while we are still in lock down but the hassle of multi segmented poles dropping down unexpectedly can be corrected with this solution. From the GQRP Club Digest #184 this morning, this from Nigel G4ZAL - <https://q4zal.blogspot.com/2020/05/fibreglass-pole-vertical.html> Ian VK3LA
- Here is another Ham site with a project or two to follow in your spare time.
<https://www.qsl.net/kx4om/index.html> and he suggests a few more of interest as well. Ian VK3LA
- Common Mode Currents are explained and may be improved by this article from the QRP-L Digest this morning. https://www.w8ji.com/common_mode_current.htm It may help some who struggle with this issue. Ian VK3LA
- The GQRP Club Digest # 172 today offers a link to the On Line version of the notable book "Crystal Sets to Side band" <http://www.wa0itp.com/crystalsetsssb.html> it can be down loaded in chapter segments or as a whole volume. I am assured that most of us may even learn something from the reading of it. Ian VK3LA
- This one may be familiar to some but for the rest of us it maybe unknown.
<http://on5au.be/Cebik%20documents.html> From someone who was considered something of an authority on many things radio and electronics in general, and now a silent key unfortunately. You could spend many hours trying to understand and absorb all these subjects. Ian VK3LA
- Although this YouTube is designed for a wood worker, its style may suit a PCB/cabinet builder with some modification to the physical construction. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjdXpp77MdU> Banggood has the bearings, acme screws, aluminium rails and motors etc. Ebay can provide the rest of the bits, power supplies etc. Ian VK3LA
- The NanoVNA appears to be very popular but the various clones (supposedly by the original designer/builder) frequently are not up to scratch. Hugen has suggested that to avoid disappointment use the supplier Alibaba, here is the detail that will get his genuine model.
https://www.alibaba.com/product-detail/Hugen-NanoVNA-H-New-item-Original_62342877955.html I have no experience with the supplier or the device so YMMV. There are other models with larger screens and touch panels, but significantly higher prices. A variety of software and applications to suit your needs also, some use the Mobile phone to provide a larger screen with touch facility instead of the smaller screen on the device. Lots of alternatives to consider. Ian VK3LA
- An improved DSB transceiver with a high pass filter for BCB, improved t/r switching, and an option for a plug in Si5351A VFO. <<https://qrpguys.com/qrpguys-dsb-digital-transceiver2>> VK3LA
- Those looking for a source of wire for antenna, baluns, guy rope/cord, etc. – here's an NZ site:
info@thewireman.com ZL2OZ



SPANIARD GRASS –

Spear grass. A Warning!

Trampers beware! Some bigger plants are obvious as they stick out above the tussock and snow grass, but smaller plants are a real menace. The sharp spines will penetrate the thickest trousers and gaiters. Often the spear tips will break off leaving a small piece in one's leg, or elsewhere, which then becomes infected. If in tussock or snowgrass country, choose your 'sit-down' site carefully, or results can be especially painful and difficult to treat! Commonly found over wide areas of eastern facing slopes above 900 meters and up to 1500 meters, like Taranaki, Ruahine, Kaweka and Raukumara Ranges, and buried in snow during winter, when they are especially troublesome. I'm reliably told the Maori would dig for the roots, but the pain ain't worth the effort unless you're starving. I note that even the deer avoid the mature plants!

Older plants give themselves away with their 1 to 2-meter-high flower stems, which is the only good feature about this plant – they make excellent tie points for an antenna.

I've had a number of 'confrontations' with these 'anti-squatters'. One occasion required urgent, and embarrassing, medical attention on arriving home! The spines

go in really quick, but take considerable effort, and pain, to remove – so beware!

ZL2OZ

NOTHING to do with QRP, but interesting:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rurbSvRMXDU&feature=emb_logo

Good Nature A24 self setting gas operated traps are now a major tool in the attempt to make NZ predator free. Their use has certainly resulted in a dramatic increase in numbers of bird, lizard and skink populations in targeted areas throughout NZ and on off shore islands. Hugely time and labour saving. Once installed they only need to be checked 2, 3, or 4 times a year, depending on the density of pests.

The traps reset and can re-kill 24 times per gas cartridge. Non-toxic, humane, and allow for accurate kill rate data. Light, compact allowing for many to be carried to remote locations, unlike the box traps, of which two was my maximum load. A great invention. ZL2OZ

SUBJ: SWS HF RADIO COMMUNICATIONS WARNING 20/03
ISSUED AT 0000UT/30 MAY 2020
BY THE AUSTRALIAN SPACE FORECAST CENTRE.

An active region rotating around the NE limb produced one M-class flare (M1.1 at 29/0724 UT) and two C-class flares on UT day 29 May. It is expected to produce more C-class flares with a chance of isolated M-class flares. HF fadeout alerts will follow if significant flare activity actually occurs.

DEGRADED HF PROPAGATION CONDITIONS EXPECTED
FROM 30 MAY 2020 TO 01 JUNE 2020

IF COMMS DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED TRY A HIGHER FREQUENCY BAND **De John ZL2BH**



GO QRP NIGHT. A few comments/reminders about.

1. On the GQN nights - please leave 3.690 free for those calling CQ QRP. QSY to another frequency once contact established and leave 3.690 free.
2. Please leave 3.690 free about 2-3 minutes **before** QRP Night starts. There may be callers wanting help or information. Take your 'rag-chew' to another frequency.
3. **LOGS:** You only have to fill in the '**Declaration of Compliance**' the **A4 sheet, once** and send it to me. **BUT**, make sure you fill in the little signature and date boxes on the bottom of the Log sheets each time you send them in, i.e.; each month.
4. **By now everyone** should be sending in ONLY the **Official Log sheets** from the Web Site. IF you can't find these, or can't download them - send me an email and I'll shoot a copy of which ever Log sheet you need.
5. **Rules, Requirements**, and all similar relevant information **IS** on the Web Site.

See: <https://www.qsl.net/n/nzqrpers/gqn/>

then: [Logistics/](#) where you will find:

- Fundamentals for all Stations.
- Rules of Engagement.
- **AND**, but certainly not least;
- **Declaration of Compliance** . . . Which is what I want to clarify and emphasize! You only have to fill this in **ONCE** and send it in. Its an A4 page.
By rights, as of the GQN of April, everyone who was/is points collecting should have filled in and sent to me. You've had 2 months grace. As of **27th June 2020**, any GQN log that I do not have a Declaration of Compliance from, or isn't signed/dated at the bottom, will be returned to sender! To date I have DoC (Declarations of Compliance), from the following: **ZL3TK, ZL4RMF, ZL2ATH, ZL2WR, and ZL2OZ.**
- **ALSO** - if you look at the **very bottom** of each Log sheet, you will spot a couple of boxes that look like this:

Declaration of Compliance.		I have submitted my copy of the GQN Declaration of Compliance to the manager and confirm my continuing compliance.	
Signed:	 ZL2OZ	Licensee	Date 

A quick initials or name or call sign typed in or written in, plus the date is all that's needed each time you send in a log.

- Sorry, but this is in the rules, and ensures that although we operate with **LOW** power, we aspire to **HIGH** standards.
- **To Summarise:**
 1. If you haven't - fill in a **Declaration of Compliance** and send it in. (I will keep it on record, so you only have to **do it once!**) Here is a printable link: **Not sure? Do it anyway!**

https://www.qsl.net/n/nzqrpers/gqn/2_Logistics/3-GQN_Declaration_of_Compliance_v1-0.pdf

2. Each time you fill in anyone of the GQN Log sheets, fill in the compliance boxes at the bottom of the sheet. There endith the lecture! - But wait! There's more...

A Summary of GO QRP NIGHT LOGS RX

2019: Remembering that GQN was only held every **second** month.

FEB	APR	JUN	AUG	??
ZL2ATH	ZL3OCT	ZL3OCT	ZL2BH	What happened after August?
ZL1RCA	ZL4RMF	ZL2JML	ZL4HSV	
ZL2FC	ZL2ATH	ZL2JU	ZL3OCT	
ZL2GD	ZL2GD	ZL1RCA	ZL2OZ 4	
ZL2PO	ZL2BH	ZL2GD		
ZL3OCT	ZL2JML	ZL2BH		
ZL2OZ 7	ZL2WR	ZL2XRF		
	ZL2OZ 8	ZL2FC		
		ZL4RMF		
		ZL2ATH		
		ZL2OZ 11		

2020: GQN held each month.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE (to Date)
ZL3TK	ZL1BWG	ZL1BWG	ZL4RMF	ZL4NVW	ZL3TK
ZL4NVW	ZL2ATH	ZL2ATH	ZL3TK	ZL2ATH	ZL2OZ
ZL2OZ 3	ZL3TK 3	ZL3TK	ZL4NVW	ZL3TK	ZL2HOPE for more 3
		ZL4RMF	ZL1RCA	ZL1RCA	
		ZL1RCA	ZL1BWG	ZL2OZ	
		ZL2OZ 6	ZL2OZ 6	ZL1JA	
				ZL2WR 7	

E&OE. Above data is based on Logs received. Makes interesting reading, and makes one wonder about the future? Yes? No? Have a look at the link: <https://qrp.nz/topics/21-nz-qrpers-group-code-of-conduct> - especially number one!

Another Question; Have you signed up to the Web Site? I will be relying on it more and more, rather than sending out emails. E.g.; I will no longer send out emails for 'Going Portable'! Now it'll be posted on the Web by those who go portable. Also, **urgent Notices**, (Under the TOPIC '**A MESSAGE**', will be posted on the Web – which, if you wish, can be automatically emailed to you, if you so choose. You'll find the emailing options when you sign up. Again, a BIG THANKS to **Matt ZL4NVW**

The DOWN to EARTH on ANTENNAS

Now here's an article after my own heart. I think we can 'over read' and analyse all the theory about antennas. Over the years I have arrived at my antennas by good old fashioned, 'Trial and Error' methods. I'm a great believer in 'modification', or not throwing the baby out with the bath water. Modify it, improve it, don't chuck the whole thing in the bin. I really love the expression "Klutz around". It's the inverse of ZL3RP, Morrie's "Don't Muck with it!" ZL2OZ

Do I **really** NEED and antenna analyser? By WB0SNF

"I've been a ham since 1963 and have built all my own antennas. Yagi beams—wire beams—loops - verts, etc. Back in those days all you had was a SWR bridge and maybe a grid dip meter. The most important thing, I think, is a booklet or some kind of articles on antenna design. They will give you accurate lengths and feed line info that should get you up and running in no time.

There's plenty of info on the internet, although my personal favourite source is Bill Orr, W6SAI; his antenna books and very entertaining antenna articles in CQ magazine circa 1970's are great.

My first antenna was made of electric fence wire and a second hand hunk of RG-58 in an inverted vee configuration. It is supremely simple to build. One support pole, one hunk of 50-ohm coax, balun or not, 120 degree spread between the legs, gives you 50 ohms. Make it about three feet longer than formula and trim it to resonance using an el cheapo SWR bridge. A used grid dip meter (\$30.00) will let you get the resonant frequency—not necessary here—and a used (\$30.00) noise bridge will let you deal with impedance issues, but is not necessary with simple antennas like this.

Simple antennas are easy to build and work well. Height is a big plus. Just get in there and klutz around until it works. You can build anything easily with the three pieces of test gear mentioned here and they will do a lot more things than help set up antennas.

Simplicity is bliss. WB0SNF

AND...

A different approach;

Here's an old-fashioned way to tune an antenna; you might have seen previously in "Parasets", or Chas. Rockey's W9SCH small "soup loop lamp" to indicate RF current? Well, there is a way you can "modernise" this approach, yet maintain the functional efficiency and ease of construction a lamp RF indicator offers: build an RF ammeter with a difference, it barely loads or wastes power (as a directly inserted panel lamp does).

First, find a ferrite toroid core. I use a salvaged ring from an ex-PC power supply - then wind on it about 5 - 10 turns of enamelled copper wire, stiff enough to hold its shape. On the end of the winding, solder a 4-volt 25mA pee-wee incandescent bulb, or similar: the voltage isn't critical but it must be low current (check Jaycar NZ: they have plenty). You can use an ordinary LED here if you wish, polarity doesn't matter, but go easy on the transmitter power when you key! 5 - 10w max. You might like to look at this video at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjHyXi1SrZs>

or, a similar idea, but clip-on style by AC2RJ at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltZLxdEteBY>

ZL2OZ/QRP



IAN'S MORNING VIEW from RAKIURA – STEWART ISLAND. Doesn't it make you green with envy? Little wind, sunny day, crystal clear water. Think I'll sell up and move. Tnx Ian ZL1RCA

COMING EVENTS: 25th July –
Next GO QRP NIGHT. Start time
is 8.00 pm. Finish 9.30 pm.
Closing date for copy for **Nx1 22.**
Is 25th August

CONTRIBUTORS to this **NEWSLETTER:**

With Thanks from the Editor
VK3LA, WB0SNF, ZL2BH, ZL1RCA, NG3P,
K3NG