



GATEWAY

September 2010

NEXT MEETING Friday September 17 2010 at 8 pm

WHERE : Cranbourne Girl Guide Hall, Grant St off Sladen St.

THE LIGHTHOUSE TEAM SANS RADIO GEAR



From left to right Phil Pavey, Ian Jackson, Peter Morrison VK3NPI [guest and bush walking adviser], Brendon Vowles team leader, Graeme Brown , Pat Pavey (representing herself as well as ALARA) and Phil Cardomone VK3HPC. *See story page 5.*

GATEWAY MAGAZINE IS THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE GIPPSLAND GATE RADIO AND ELECTRONICS CLUB inc.

A-nony-nony-mus

I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.

A small boy swallowed some coins and was taken to a hospital. When his grandmother telephoned to ask how he was, a nurse said, 'No change yet'.

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

The short fortune-teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.

The man who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.

A backward poet writes inverse.

In democracy it's your vote that counts. In feudalism it's your Count that votes.

Don't join dangerous cults: Practice safe sects!

Coming up soon

The next club dinner is September 25. The venue is Kelly's hotel, High Street, Cranbourne from 6.30 pm.

Nev Kidson VK3ADG

Repeaters and Beacons

Notice from Bruno Tonizzo VK3BFT

A few meetings ago, we discussed the repeaters and beacons owned and managed by GGREC.

The 6m repeater VK3RDD located at Cockatoo, the Clubs 70cm repeater in the Club rooms and 1.2 & 2.4 GHz beacons located at Frankston. Both the 70cm repeater and the 2 beacons are licensed as VK3RLP.

Why do we have Repeaters and Beacons?

Repeaters are primarily used for mobile operation and to extend the coverage beyond simplex line of sight communications. In addition to this, VK3RLP, as the name implies was a GGREC project to provide members with access to the then new Internet Repeater Linking Project (IRLP). IRLP provides a gateway to repeaters all over the world for voice communication. Remote IRLP repeaters are accessed by dialling DTMF tone addresses into our local IRLP repeater. Access to IRLP is provided for all amateur operators not just for GGREC members.

The 1.2 & 2.4 GHz beacons were erected at the Frankston water tower site by Club members interested in these bands. Beacons provide amateurs with an indication that propagation between two locations is favourable for successful QSOs. This means that you are more likely to be heard in the remote location if you call CQ when you can hear the beacons near that location.

The Repeaters and Beacons are GGREC's contribution to the hobby of/for the enjoyment of all amateurs.

At the next General Meeting I will be looking for feedback from members about our repeater use. Times have changed since VH3RLP was commissioned and I am looking forward to hearing your views on repeater operation and IRLP. If you look like missing the meeting, drop me an email via secretary@ggrec.org.au

GIPPSLAND GATE RADIO & ELECTRONICS CLUB

Club meetings are held on the third Friday of each month at the Cranbourne Girl Guide Hall in Grant Street. Prac nights are held on the first Friday night in the Peter Pavey clubrooms. Both nights commence at 8:00 PM. **Visitors will be made welcome.** Committee meetings are also held in the clubrooms.

President Chris Chapman VK3QB (9708 8320)
Secretary Stephen Harding VK3EGD (9791 3182)
Treasurer Brenton Vowles VK3CBV (5944 4258)
Committee Members: Nev VK3ADG and Bruno VK3BFT

Magazine Editor : Susan Coleman VK3UMM
Magazine Photographer : Paul VK3TGX www.paulstubbs.pozzie.net
Magazine Printer : David Wright VK3FW
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Club Station VK3BJA located in the clubrooms.

6M Repeater **VK3RDD** : Freq. In 52.575, out 53.575 MHz
70cm Repeater **VK3RLP** Freq. In 434.475, out 439.475MHz
CTCSS 123Hz IRLP Node Number- **6794** (Using **VK3RLP**)
Call in Frequencies : HF on 28.325 MHz, USB, VHF 145.450 MHz, FM
and UHF on 438.850 MHz,

Visit our internet site at: **www.ggrec.org.au**
Current GGREC Inc. Membership Fee Schedule
Full Member \$37.00, Pensioner Member \$22.00
Junior Member \$22.00, Extra Family Member \$17.00
Fees due after each April Annual General Meeting.

The deadline for magazine items is the third day of each month.

Please direct magazine articles to:
Susan Coleman email editor@ggrec.org.au

All other Club correspondence to P.O. Box 1098, Cranbourne 3977
or Email : secretary@ggrec.org.au

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Incorporation Number A0016893M

THE GREAT LIGHTHOUSE ADVENTURE

By Graeme Brown VK3BXG

In telling you of our experiences I hope for those who were there it will bring back memories of a great weekend. To those who like history there is history, to the architects there are fine well constructed buildings and to the naturalists there are sights to behold.

To activate Wilsons Promontory for the International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend for 2010 as a club project for Gippsland Gate and Electronics Club was discussed over a year ago and from there the planning took place.

The Lighthouse had not been activated before on such a large scale and although there was four star accommodation at the end of each day, access required an 18Km backpack-carrying hike for the station equipment, clothes, and food for three days, as all other modes of transport, even a pack-horse is not allowed!

Participants were, Brendon VK3CBV our team leader, Phil VK3YB, Pat VK3OZ (ALARA), Ian VK3BUF, Phil VK3HPC, Peter VK3NPI and Graeme VK3BXG.

Chris VK3QB and Neville VK3ADG had planned to go but pulled out at the last moment not feeling too well.

Plan was to depart from the car-park at Telegraph Saddle at 0800 on Friday 20th August but there was a slight delay waiting for the Parks Victoria office at Tidal



LIGHTHOUSE cont'd

River to open, nevertheless we seven participants were underway by 0900. The weather was atrocious with gale force wind but fortunately the rain held off. We arrived at Halfway Hut before 1130, rested and then on to Roaring Meg where we had lunch before deciding to take an alternative "shorter" walking track which turned out more difficult than we had anticipated before reaching the better vehicle-grade track again. However this vehicle grade track soon abruptly stops; there is no vehicular access at all to the lighthouse at all and even staff have to negotiate the last 3.7 Km of walking track in which without a doubt the most difficult is the last 500 meters of concrete paved up to the lighthouse rising from sea level to 90 meters (300 feet).

Our accommodation was the much renovated 150 year old light keeper's home – 4 bedrooms with bunk beds and enough to bed-down 12 people. The main walls are 400mm thick granite blocks rendered on the inside to a smooth plaster finish and the roof slate tiled. The lounge room is small but comfortable with a gas heater in what was the former fire place and the kitchen dining area is large and modernised with a microwave and a large gas stove. All cooking facilities, cutlery and crockery are provided. . There are two bath rooms – or rather showers and two toilets both very well appointed. The whole house is wired with 240 volt AC and it would have to be a 4 star accommodation.

Arriving around 1430 it started to rain, almost horizontal with gale force winds so we settled in and unpacked. Along the northern edge of the house is a narrow sunroom – looks like a converted veranda and it was decided to set up our station at the eastern end of that long narrow room. This gave us immediate

Cont'd page 8



From the president ... *Chris Chapman VK3QB*

Photo by Paul VK3TGX

Welcome to Spring... and maybe a second bite at some winter rain – but at least it's a little warmer. Brenton VK3CBV and I (along with Luke VK3HJ and Allan VK2CA) have just returned from Vanuatu where we had a fantastic time working YJ0VK – and some far more pleasant temperatures, ranging from 22c overnight to about 29c during the day. Radio wise the trip was a great success, with the team working 69 DXCC entities and almost 4,000 QSOs. It was really good to work some club members, including Pat VK3OZ, Mike VK3KTO, Phil VK3YB and Graeme VK3BXG – very nice to hear familiar callsigns amongst the wall of DX stations chasing a new one. Brenton and I will present on our adventures at the November general meeting.



Speaking of general meetings, we have a full schedule through to the end of the year; Mike VK3KTO will give us a talk on the Old Timers Club (OTN) at the September meeting, and Ian VK3BUF will also talk briefly about the possibility of another ARV Course in 2011. In October Brenton will lead a presentation and talk on the club's hike and operation at Wilsons Prom Lighthouse as a part of the ILLW weekend. As I have already mentioned, Brenton and I will present on our trip to Vanuatu as YJ0VK at the November meeting, and then, as is tradition, we won't have a general meeting in December.

August was a busy month with the RD contest and the ILLW weekend. I heard quite a few members operating VK3BJA over the course of

Cont'd page 12

LIGHTHOUSE *cont'd from page 6*

access to a power point and a window which opened out and through which we could run the coax feeders. We delayed putting up the mast and antenna whilst waiting for a break in the rain. To make the most of the delay, we invited ourselves and were shown over the power plant by Parks Victoria staff member, Chris. The power station consists of 55 very high capacity 2-volt sealed cells driving a 110 volt DC to 240 volt AC inverter. These cells are charged for four hours each evening by one of three 37 KVA diesel powered generators. The 240 AC is on all the time and powers all the lighting, house accessories and power points and was suitable to run our switch mode power supplies for the transceivers.

We were told by Chris, that all the domestic 45Kgm gas bottles and diesel are helicoptered in to the helipad which we saw on the way in, 500 meters down the hill! They do have a 4 wheel drive utility which was also helicoptered in bits and assembled on site, but this vehicle is to collect the deliveries and transport staff up and down the hill at change of shift.

Equipment we had backpacked in were two transceivers – an IC706Mk11G and an IC7000, two ATUs and two switch mode 240 volt ac to 12 volt dc power supplies. Although it was envisaged to run only one HF station, the time and expense would have all been for nothing if there had been a failure with even one item from this one set of equipment. But the extra transceiver later proved its worth for 2 meters SSB use.

Meanwhile, Peter VK3NPI was getting anxious for us to get the antenna installed. For the mast, we chose to take and use a ten meter squid pole with the top three sections removed bringing it back to a sturdier type of seven; bearing in mind it too had to be backpacked in and out.

The mast was nylon cord guyed in the middle and top to keep it straight, and the antenna, a coax and balun fed inverted vee dipole for 80, 40 and 20 meters was then hoisted up the mast.

We had no sooner finished taking our fingers off the ends of the antenna when Peter was already on air to his mates with a prearranged contact. It was during a contact to colleagues at Point Hicks Lighthouse that a gust picked up the mast and dumped it all on the ground. It cracked in one section and telescoped down two sections losing two meters in height "You just went from a 9 to a 5" was the report, with the antenna ends laying on the ground and the mast now only five meters high. But we gathered it all up again and in the last light made sure this time it stayed up.

The howling gale lasted all night. Peter was already up trying for predawn contacts Saturday and we assembled the 2 meter beam for our experiments. With the beam mounted low down on the mast we made contact again with Point Hicks some 300 Km over water to east north east. They were the only 2 meter contact we made and although we felt this was quite an achievement, no other stations were heard .



Later Saturday afternoon, Andrea, a Parks Victoria staff member, showed us over the lighthouse and museum but the wind was too strong to go out onto the lighthouse outside balcony. The lighthouse itself is built of granite stone blocks with a central column. It was brought into service in 1859 and is still in service although its method of illumination has changed over the past 150 years. Although it is only 19 meters high its base sits at 90 meters above sea level and its light can be seen 40 Km out to sea.

During WW11, the RAAF set up a radar station near the lighthouse to monitor sea and air traffic traversing Bass Strait. Remnants of their occupation are still evident although the barracks burnt down in bushfires in 1951. The museum holds testament to their time at the lighthouse grounds.

But back to the job at hand; over the weekend we made contact with and logged for the club, 30 other lighthouses around Australia and New Zealand and over 180 home stations – well worth the effort. By early Sunday morning the wind had dropped significantly,
Cont'd over

LIGHTHOUSE Cont'd *from previous page*

the sky was clear and the sun shining. It was a good opportunity for another excursion into the lighthouse and out onto its balcony this time for photographs and to make the most of the view this time.

We had planned to depart at 0900 but it was more like 1000 before we had finally packed and tidied the house up to what we had found it.

As had happened on the trip in, we tended to string out a bit but we remained in contact with our 2 meter handhelds. First main break again was at Roaring Meg but this time we chose the main "road" which although longer is certainly a lot easier. We again stopped at Halfway Hut for a bite to eat and it was here we caught up with the other guests from the other house who had left at 0900; they were soon underway however.

We continued on after about 30 minutes and again soon strung out.

The next stop was at a small wooden bridge over a stream - a 40 minute stop where we all cooled our feet in the stream and rested again before the 3Km climb up to the car park at Telegraph Saddle.

We had done it - arrived at the car park about 16:00, average age 54 years; backpacked 18 Km there, 18Km back and no casualties (except for the squid pole) and all in good time! We celebrated and toasted, each with a cup of "red" before departing for home and making plans for next year.

There was no doubt that the regular long practice walks each of us made during the years helped to get us into condition for this event. In hindsight we all agreed that extra unnecessary weight carried was an issue. For some it was heavy type of food, others it was too many clothes, others it was excessive unused accessories that we might have needed. But there is no getting around the fact that electronic equipment adds to the weight so we need more operators to share the load and the adventure to make it a more comfortable trip next time.

Graeme VK3BXG

Editor's Footnote Pat VK3OZ told me she had a great time and did not mind at all when the OMs bagged both the two-person rooms so the sole YL had to share!!! And even though the packs weighed so heavy — hers was 12 kilos which was onerous enough up hill and down dale to that lighthouse— the oms carried over 22kg each because being two persons down they each had to carry more radio gear - so much so Phil VK3YB had to have his knee strapped—luckily someone had had the foresight to bring a first aid kit.

Pat told me she'll definitely be fronting up next year! *Susan VK3UMM*



From the president ... *Chris Chapman VK3QB*

the contest weekend; HF was very well represented but I am told that VHF/UHF was a bit more of a struggle to find stations to exchange numbers with. Low band conditions were quite good and the numbers were getting up into the 700s from some of the more well known contesters. It will be interesting to see the scores when they are published.

I spoke with the members who made the hike (marathon?) over 18kms to the Wilsons Prom lighthouse on a couple of occasions during their operation – they were putting out a great signal; and I understand that after the 18km walk down to the lighthouse there were some sore muscles and tired feet. We'll look forward to hearing more about the event at the October General Meeting.

It is this time of year that we kick-off our annual Christmas hamper. Nev, VK3ADG will be looking after the hamper this year, so please bring along a contribution if you are able. Nev will start selling tickets at the September General Meeting. As always, the hamper promises to be a good catch for one lucky member, and they say, you gotta be in it to win it.

Geoff VK3ZGW and Albert VK3BQQ have given some brief demonstrations of the latest developments with the new VK3RDD controller; and I understand that they are getting close to plugging it into the RF components of the device; if you are interested in helping out with this phase of the project, please give the guys a yell.

October holds a new event for the WIA and amateur radio; the WIA National Field Day to be held on 23rd October. I have read Michael Owen's (President, WIA) comments on this initiative and I think it has great potential. Unfortunately, due to our many other activities in recent times, the committee has not had the time or bandwidth to consider a club operation for this event. Having said that, it's not too late. If any member/s are interested in proposing a local "field day" style of the operation, please drop me an email. It could be another good opportunity to promote not only GGREC, but also amateur radio in general.

Well, that's it from me for this month. As always, please refer to the Club's website for the most up-to-date calendar of events and news. I'll be away holidaying for the September general meeting, so I hope to hear you around the bands and catch up at the October general meeting.

A RATHER QUIET AFFAIRE *by Paul Stubbs VK3TGX*

August a rather quiet meeting, as several members were off at the ILLW weekend at Wilsons Promontory, while others stayed at home to avoid the foul weather.

I had originally planned to go to

the Tidal River caravan park (Wilson's Promontory) and operate from there, but after seeing the weather I was glad I skipped it!



Half the meeting was taken up trying to get a netbook laptop to play a video, then after many attempts and a BSOD (blue screen of death) crash we had a picture - but no sound! I was amazed that those members not attacking the laptop didn't fall asleep.

Paul VK3TGX

Upcoming Events

Fri Sep 3rd	8:00pm	Prac Night	Club Shack
Thu Sep 9th	8:00pm	Morsecodeians	Club Shack
Fri Sep 17th	8:00pm	General Meeting	Guide Hall
Sat Sep 25th	6:30pm	Pub Night	Kelly's Hotel Cranbourne
Mon Sep 27th	7:30pm	Committee Meeting	Club Shack
Fri Oct 15th	8:00pm	General Meeting	Guide Hall
Sat Oct 16th	2:00pm	JOTA / JOTI	Club Shack
Mon Oct 25th	7:30pm	Committee Meeting	Club Shack
Sat Nov 27th	6:30pm	Pub Night	TBA
Sat Dec 11th		Christmas breakup	TBA

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 2010 *cont'd from opposite***New Business Cont'd**

ID Card – Idea has been referred to the committee for discussion.

JOTA – Bruno VK3BFT reported that WWC cards are not required.

Long weekend – Bruno VK3BFT asked for suggestions - Eildon - Bonnie Doon – Bruno will manage the organisation.

Naree suggested Hastings Marina for a Sunday lunch.

Pub night – Kelly's has been booked for the 25th.

Meeting closed : 8:29 pm

Next Committee Meeting : Tuesday 24th August

Next Prac Night : Friday 3rd September

Next General Meeting : Friday 17th September

**AUGUST A RATHER
QUIET AFFAIRE AND
ONLY 2 [HATLESS] MUS-
KETEERS**



Photos and words Paul Stubbs VK3TGX

Finally, onto the radios and try and catch Chris VK3QB and the rest of the ILLW crew at Wilsons Prom.

Oooh, what's that, Chris is at home (under doctors orders) full of cold,



GENERAL MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 2010**Date :** 20 August 2010**Start time :** 8:07 pm.**Location :** Guide Hall.**Chairperson :** Bruno VK3BFT**Minute Taker :** Steve VK3EGD**Guest Speaker:** nil – Bruno showed a movie after the meeting**Present :** Attendance sheet**Visitors and guests :** nil**Apologies :** Pat VK3OZ, Ivan VK3ARV, Ron VK3EXJ, Reg VK3UK and Jenny, Russell VK3MWR, Max VK3TMK, Chris VK3QB, Brenton VK3CBV, Ian VK3BUF, Graeme VK3BXG,

Grahame VK3XK, Geoff VK3ZGW, Maria.

Correspondence received : listed and tabled**Correspondence sent :** listed and tabled**Treasurer's report :** No treasurer's report – held over until next meeting.**New Call signs :** VK3UMM (to be ratified) and VK3GC.**Previous Minutes :****Read :** as per magazine **Moved :** Steve VK3EGD **Seconded :** Mike VK3KTO **Approved.****Business arising from the previous minutes :***VK3RDD* – is still off the air.*Flagpoles* – Albert VK3BQO reported that they are not free as previously indicated but are \$600 ea.*RD Contest* – Albert VK3BQO reported that those who attended had a ball. It was very quiet on VHF - mainly 5 other operators. There was not much club activity. The contest is recommended for novices. HF was quite busy sometimes. GGREC obtained around 560 points.*AVR course* – Bruno VK3BFT reported that the course could run for 10 weeks from February 2011, but is only in planning at this stage.**New business :***VK100WIA* – A laminated poster has been done for the rooms. Mike VK3KTO still has the plaque. Michael VK3GHM needs it to take an image. *Cont'd opposite*

Mr Secretary? Or the evil professor?

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