

Our antenna field weekend on October 12 and 13 at Drouin West is over and I have heard some great reviews from those who attended. About 42 people attended over the two days. I'd like to thank Mark VK3PKT and Ron VK3FRDL for helping to prepare for the event. They also helped to get the wood together for the massive campfire on the Saturday night. We got through about 1.5 ton of wood, which made a huge blaze of about 0.5 DVC in intensity \*.



*A wide shot of the Drouin West event site being set up mid-Saturday*

The series of lectures held over the two days featured Mike VK3KTO talking about the G5RV, Graem VK3BXG on portable masts, Jim VK3UFO on Email via HF Radio, Lee VK3HK on the Squid Pole vertical, Ian VK3BUF on Cubical-Quad antennas and a joint talk by Albert VK3BQO and Rob VK3BRS on Antenna Test Equipment.



*Graeme VK3BXG on portable masts*



*Jim VK3UFO on Email via HF radio*

A central pavilion was loaned from the Drouin Scout Group for a modest donation. It was a big help as it gave good shelter from the wind of early Saturday and the rain showers on Sunday morning. The event was largely self-catered, but that did not stop us for sending out for ten large pizza's on the first evening. The town of Drouin is just 5km away and has a wide selection of take-away food available.



*Paul VK3TGX at his HF station*



*Graeme VK3XTA set up his regular bush-camp config.*

Many of the group stayed overnight in caravans, tents and campers, which helped to make for a more relaxed timetable. It was a good opportunity for the Club members to organise themselves for battery powered field work.

The Club barbeque was used extensively, with free tea & coffee set up in the Pavilion through the event made catering simple. A purpose-built 'Field toilet' provided essential facilities for the group. It was well pegged down with star-pickets to prevent the wind from changing it from vertical to horizontal polarisation.



*Main pavilion & mobile 6M cubical quad*

For the Friday setup and entire Saturday the ground remained hard and dry. Nobody had any difficulty in getting their vehicles to and from the site. A solid burst of rain for one hour on the Sunday morning made the surface a bit slick, so that when visitors left in the afternoon, some had traction problems as they approached the top of the hill. A short tug with a nylon tow strap and the old Ford tractor got everyone out ok.



*Geoff VK3HGG set up his van at the top of the rise*



*Just add water- the sticky track after rain*

The souvenir 'Antennapalooza' T-shirts will be at the next meeting for those who ordered them. I believe that all who attended had a great time and there is much interest to do this again in late October of 2014. It is likely that an invitation will be extended to a couple of other nearby clubs, as there was plenty of room to expand the event. Keep an eye out for developments in Gateway around mid next year and we look forward to doing it all again with some fresh lecture topics.

\* The unit DVC is a measure of camp fire intensity. It is a very *large* unit of intensity, as One DVC is the size of bonfire required to cremate One Darth Vader. A typical small bush campfire for a couple of blokes to sit around is about 0.1DVC. This regular camp fire size can also be referred to as 1 Deci-Darth-Vader-Cremation or 1 DDVC. So at 0.5 DVC, the Antennapalooza camp fire was still a pretty big fire.