



# NERG NEWS

Incorporated 1985 in Victoria  
Reg No A0006776V - <http://nerg.asn.au>

May 2004

NERG Inc.  
PO Box 270  
Greensborough  
Victoria 3088

## WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH -

This month we are getting back to amateur radio with a demonstration of packet radio and discussion on using packet repeaters, including our own club packet node, VK3CNE (on 144.700 MHz). David VK3THY will say a few words about packet radio and it's uses. Several members have offered to bring their portable packet stations along for a live demonstration.

As usual, visitors a very welcome and hot drinks and bickies will be supplied for a small gold coin donation.

## APRIL MEETING SUMMARY

Our April meeting was held one week later than normal (April 15) due to our regular date of the second Thursday of the month falling on the eve of Easter and that it was not a convenient date for many. I am please to report that although with the change in date and it being a school holiday period, many members were still able to attend.

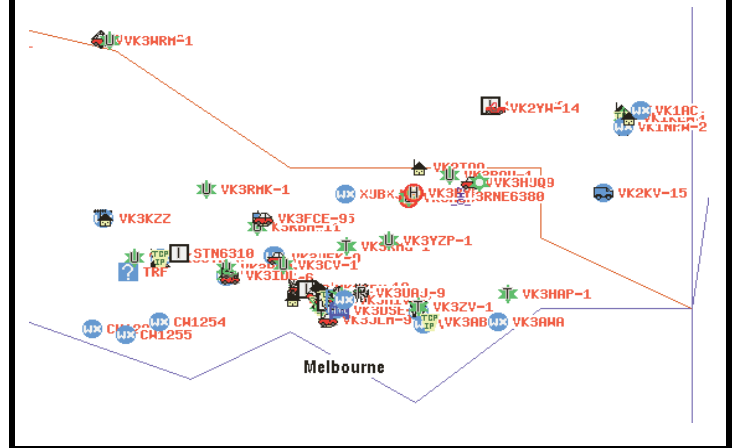
The guest speaker this month was Roy Gilmour, Lead Auditor with SAI-Global who spoke not of his current work in auditing companies wishing ISO Accreditation but rather on some of his many earlier exploits. Roy's early career started in Metallurgy in Scotland but quickly progressed into investigative and experimental work with BHP then over to the Victorian Government via the CRB etc. Due to his extensive knowledge in Non Destructive Testing (NDT) especially in checking of metal welding of high pressure boilers and heat exchangers used in nuclear power plants, he was approached by the International Atomic Energy Agency affiliated with (but not under direct control of) the United Nations. Roy told of how he went for one year that actually became five years, travelling and training throughout S.E. Asia on construction and safety in building components used in nuclear power plants and other nuclear devices. From this his discussion drifted back to the investigative work he carried out on the failures of the Kings then West Gate bridges. One comment by a NERG overheard later was that he may use other routes now Hi, Hi.

We thank Roy for his most interesting talk.

Our Secretary, Mark VK3XXX advised that due to his imminent QTH change to Hamilton, that he must relinquish the position and hand over our IRLP Internet connection to VK3ZRV & VK3HFT).

All NERG's do thank Mark for his tremendous drive and input both with our radio and our computer projects, we will

## 7.45 pm, Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2004 Briar Hill Primary Packet Radio Demo



miss his input but I am glad to say that we will not lose Mark completely as he will remain a valued member.

I do believe that Mark has arranged for both a new home for the IRLP node and for the filling of the role of secretary, more on this later but thankyou to Mark and to all concerned.

One more item of good news was that Russel Ward, VK3DRW, the weekly news broadcaster for the Astronomical Society of Victoria as VK3EKH on 80m, has joined the NERG as a member. Russel came to the NERG October 2002 and gave us an eye-opener of a talk on Astronomy, we welcome Russel.

The NERG do offer an invitation to any person interested in Amateur Radio to visit us on any club night.

Don, VK3KDT

## NEXT MONTH

We hope to have a talk and video about the recent DX-pedition by Peter VK3QI, Jack VK3WWW, Keith VK3FT, and Tony VK3TZ to Baudin Rocks, 8 kms off the port of Robe, South.Aust., with 7,700 QSO averaging 1.2 QSOs/minute!

## TUESDAY MORNING TEA GROUP

The April NERG mid week morning tea come lunch come ar'vo tea was held that the home of our President Greg, VK3VT for the first time and what a spread he provided! We were unable to leave until 4.00 pm as there was still delicious food to be eaten. We had the pleasure of two first time attendees: John, VK3ZRV, and Ernie, VK3CEW, a well know local DX'er and soon to be a NERG.

Apologies were noted from Steve VK3JSE and Ian VK3BGE. Other attending were Alan VK3JPK, Dave VK3JMB, Gerhard VK3EWM and Jim VK3DBQ.

Next months meeting will be at 10 am Tuesday 25th May at the QTH of Dave VK3JMB. (Listen out for Jim VK3DBQ on the NERG net 146.575 MHz for details or call on 9467 1253).

## ARDF EVENTS FOR 2004

The next big event on the Foxhunt/ARDF calendar is the Mount Gambier Convention held at Mt Gambier (where else?) on the **June 12<sup>th</sup> long weekend**.

All Enquiries: Vic ARDF, Bruce 9888 7509

## NERG NET GOES HF!

Our far flung members, Mark VK3LI near Portland, and Mark VK3XXX in Hamilton have started a HF net on 3.605 MHz +/- QRM after our normal 2m Thursday NERG Net (around 9:30pm). Both would appreciate a chat to keep up with happenings in the big smoke. If they don't respond immediately then sending them a SMS message should get them on the air!

## 80M VK-TRANS-TASMAN CONTEST

The VK/TransTasman 80m Phone contest runs on Saturday night - May 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 0800-1400 UTC (6 pm-midnight local time!). The contest is designed to encourage activity between all Australian and New Zealand stations without a big commitment in time. Rules and scoring are to complex to list here, but contest manager, Bruce Renn, VK3JWZ, has a web page with them all at: [home.iprimus.com.au/vktasman](http://home.iprimus.com.au/vktasman) There is also a 80m CW contest in the series on Sat 5th June, followed by a 160m Phone/CW contest on Sat 17<sup>th</sup> July.

## NERG IRLP NODE BACK ON AIR

The VK3RMH IRLP and Echolink node is up and running again! The node is now run by John and Andrew Weir (VK3ZRV and VK3HFT) after previous sponsor Mark VK3XXX shifted to Hamilton.

IRLP users and the NERG thank Mark for his efforts getting the IRLP node up and running in the first place, and for providing the many Gigabytes of Internet bandwidth over the years at no cost to the club or it's users.

## WHY PACKET?

Mention the words AMATEUR PACKET RADIO and many will argue it's pointless in the modern world of mobile phones and WiFi-"hot points". However there are still many places where you can't get mobile coverage and probably never will. Even satellite services won't work in heavy forest, down mine shafts, or even in thick bushfire smoke.

Amateur packet radio may be slow but is often called upon to work where nothing else will (and at a much cheaper rate than any other service!).

Some popular applications for Packet Radio include:

- Emergency text messaging - WICEN and Red Cross both have text messaging systems for emergency use.
- Email - worldwide coverage via HF and VHF radio between amateurs.
- APRS - Amateur Positioning Radio Service - track amateurs on their voyages around the world or suburbs.
- DX-Cluster - reports DX conditions and where to find rare station.
- Automatic Weather Stations - often used with APRS.
- QSO's - text conversations either simplex or via the international packet repeater networks.

Getting on packet is simple and doesn't require special hardware these days. In fact, it requires little more than a transceiver, a basic computer or laptop containing a sound card, and a very simple interface to key up the transmitter. Software is freely available that enables computers to modulate and demodulate messages from the audio signals which pass to and from the radio. The interface to key up the transmitter from the computer usually consists of only 3 or 4 discrete components.

Most amateurs have all they need in the shack already - so give it a go - you've nothing to loose!

## WELCOME NEW NERG SECRETARY

John Weir VK3ZRV has offered to take over as NERG Secretary until elections in August. Mark VK3XXX, vacated this position last month due to taking up employment in Hamilton. John joined the NERG committee member last year and brings with him extensive experience in various leadership roles including working as Federal WIA WICEN coordinator.

## ECHOLINK NODES IN VK

Here is a quick guide to Echolink nodes around Australia that been active recently

CALL	LOCATION	FREQ.	Node #
VK2RCH	Coffs Harbour	146.850	150073
VK2RNC	Newcastle NSW	146.975	126558
VK2RTZ	Newcastle NSW	146.775	172107
VK2TRD	Lismore NSW		169815
VK2RBMS	Sydney via VK2U	147.050	162478
VK3JED	Niddrie		62214
VK3RFY	Hillside, NW Melb.		3037
VK3RMH	NE Melbourne	438.325	140587
VK3RTL	Melbourne		1046
VK4RAI	Ipswich QLD		158872
VK4RBN	Brisbane QLD	147.000	27620
VK4RFT	Goldcoast QLD		130897
VK4RKP	MT Crosby QLD	146.725	7878
VK5RNE	ADELAIDE		41479
VK6ISP	R & D Link		141470
VK6RLM	Lesmurdie W.A.		57801
VK8AR	Alice Springs		51294

## MELBOURNE FOXHUNT REPORT APRIL 2004

*from Greg Williams, VK3VT*

(Hidden transmitter hunts are run on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month in and around the suburbs of Melbourne.)

The April foxhunt was run by the VK3VT team in cool dry conditions. Meeting spot was the car park in Olympic Park in Preston. The first hunt was a 3-legged hunt.

The First leg was a woman pushing a trolley around the car park of Northland shopping centre. The best way in for the hounds would have been to head off on foot from the start but all chose to drive into Northland. After a few minutes of confusion the hounds worked out that this was not an innocent shopper and started attacking her load of goods to find the transmitter and ticket for the

next leg. Organisers were left to hold discussions with the hoard of security personnel that descended on the area.

The second leg was located in Bundoora Park with the easiest entry from the north, and the hounds coming from the south! The final leg was to be found on a bicycle being ridden around a horseshoe shaped section of the Merri Creek bike park north of the Coburg Lake. First in on this hunt was VK3BLN who along with some of the fox team were treated to some impromptu entertainment by a carload of young ladies - their bonnet and roof dancing was impressive but the same could not be said for their panel beating skills! Next in was VK3TVB the VK3YDF; VK3BQZ and VK3OW ran out of time on this one.

Hunt 2 was a four-legged affair. Leg 1 was in the sports grounds near Latrobe University and had a number of people guessing.

The second leg was located in a loop of the Yarra in Banksia Park that was accessed from the northern side of the river, while the third leg was just a short distance away in another loop in the Yarra but accessed from the South. VK3YDF was first in as Adam had managed to find a way to wade across the river - he came close to losing points for casting doubts on the parentage of one of the fox persons, but was let off with a warning. Other teams took some time to come around and find the third leg.

The fourth leg was located in View bank on the Plenty River bike path. Winner of this hunt was VK3YDF with VK3BQZ Second, many thanks to them for assisting the fox in providing signal; for this selfless act of mercy on other teams they received a bonus point. VK3TVB was third, VK3BLN and VK3OW both ran out of time.

Hunt 3 was a single legged hunt to supper in Greensborough, the fox was located in a brand new housing development - use these while you can! YDF, TVB, BQZ, BLN, OW was the order of finishing.

Supper was held at the home of Chris VK3CHR and after all had eaten their fill the following placing's were announced. Note that VK3BLN received a bonus point for bringing the WIA fox all charged up - many thanks to them!

Scores look like this:

Team	Hunt 1	Hunt 2	Hunt 3	TotalScore	Place
VK3YDF	3	5	5	13	First
VK3TVB	4	3	4	11	Second
VK3BLN	5	1.5	2	9.5*	Third
VK3BQZ	1.5	4	3	9.5*	Third
VK3OW	1.5	1.5	1	4	Fourth

\* Includes bonus points as outlined above. 73, Greg VK3VT

P.S. all scores can be found at [www.nerg.asn.au/foxbunt](http://www.nerg.asn.au/foxbunt)

You can subscribe to the foxhunt newsgroup and receive all the latest news from the Melbourne foxhunt group by sending an email to [majordomo@mars.planet.net.au](mailto:majordomo@mars.planet.net.au) containing in the body of the message the line "subscribe melb-fox"

## '@' ADDED TO MORSE CODE

The @ symbol officially becomes the first character to be added to 150 year old International Morse Code in more than 60 years. The code for '@' will be dit-dah-dah-dit-dah-dit, like running A & C together (A & T together is already used!).

The International Telecommunication Union, the arm of the United Nations that oversees such standards, made it on May 3rd. The need for an '@' symbol has been driven mainly by the now common use of email addresses.

Some diehard operators claim it's not necessary and will continue to use the letters 'AT', which can be sent quicker.

In another radical move, the ITU decided to shift Morse from their wired standards group to the radio communications committee after the ARRL pointed out that not many telegrams are sent by wires these days!

## EMDRC RADIO CLASSES

In the interests of helping others join the amateur radio ranks, the Eastern and Mountain District Radio Club are running amateur licence courses starting 1 May. The course runs on Saturday afternoons at its Burwood clubrooms, 1:30-5.00 pm. For inquires or booking please contact Peter McDonald VK3DI on 9720 8874 or [petermac@alphalink.com.au](mailto:petermac@alphalink.com.au)

## ATV MODULES

ZL4ATO manufactures a range of ATV Rx & Tx modules and antennas for 23 and 13 cm, which could interest VK3 hams. <http://www.acreselectronics.co.nz/> (from David, VK3THY)

## 2004 EVENTS

Updated May:

- May 13<sup>th</sup>** NERG Meeting - Packet Radio
- May 15<sup>th</sup>** QRP Day (Revised rules) - CW/SSB
- May 22<sup>nd</sup>** VK/trans-Tasman Contest - SSB  
See Bruce Renn, VK3JWZ, Info: [home.iprimus.com.au/vktasman](http://home.iprimus.com.au/vktasman)
- June 5<sup>th</sup>** VK/trans-Tasman Contest - CW (see above)
- June 10<sup>th</sup>** NERG Meeting
- June 12<sup>th</sup>** ARDF/Foxhunt at SERG convention, Mt. Gambier
- July 3-4<sup>th</sup>** GippsTech 2004, Churchill  
The technical conference of the WIA Eastern Zone Amateur Radio Club.  
Informal dinner Friday evening July 2.  
Conference dinner Saturday July 3.
- July 3<sup>rd</sup>** ZL Memorial Contest - 80 Metres
- July 17<sup>th</sup>** Gippsland Gate Radio & Electronics Club Hamfest  
Cranbourne Public Hall, cnr. High & Clarendon Streets, Cranbourne
- July 17<sup>th</sup>** VK/ZL Trans-Tasman 160 Metres Phone/CW Contest, rules: [home.iprimus.com.au/vktasman](http://home.iprimus.com.au/vktasman)
- July 17<sup>th</sup>** Gippsland Gate Radio & Electronics Club Hamfest - Cranbourne Public Hall, cnr. High & Clarendon Streets, Cranbourne
- August 14-15** Remembrance Day Contest
- October 2-3** Oceania DX Contest - SSB
- October 9-10** Oceania DX Contest - CW
- October 8-11** World Wide YL Meet  
hosted by the Korea Ladies' Amateur Radio Club in Seoul, Korea. Info: Chae Do Sook HL2KDW [hl2kdw@hotmail.com](mailto:hl2kdw@hotmail.com)
- November 13<sup>th</sup>** VHF/UHF Spring Field Day
- December 26<sup>th</sup>** Ross Hull Memorial VHF Contest  
(runs until January 10, 2005)

For more international contests see: [www.arrl.org/contests](http://www.arrl.org/contests)

**Dates should be independently confirmed.**

Collected from AR magazine, WIA Vic, VKham website, Vic ARDF Group, & NERG. For more info:

<http://www.vkham.com/contest>, & <http://www.wiavic.org.au>

**The NERG Inc.** Reg No A0006776V <http://nerg.asn.au>

The North Eastern Radio Group, Inc. is an amateur radio club devoted to encouraging members and others to enjoy the hobby of amateur radio. It tries not to hang on ceremony and endless reporting but rather participate in the fun aspects of this fascinating hobby.

**Membership Fees (due each August):**

**Full: \$30 Family: \$40 Concession: \$20**

**Send to: NERG Treasurer, PO box 270, Greensborough, Vic., 3088**

**Committee**

President	Greg Williams	VK3VT	9432 0563
Secretary	John Weir	VK3ZRV	9431 0667
Treasurer	Marg Baxter	VK3VOJ	9467 1253
Committee	Betsy King	VK3HBK	
	Peter Cosway	VK3DU	9379 3626
	Mark Beacham	VK3XXX	0417-597399
Social Sec.	Don Haslam	VK3KDT	0409 024597
Repeaters	Mark Harrison	VK3BYY	9435 3043

**Meetings**

2nd Thursday of each month at 7.45 PM (excepting Dec. & Jan.)  
Briar Hill Primary School, Gladstone Rd, Briar Hill (off Sherbourne)  
(Melway map ref 21-B1)

**Classes**

NERG occasionally runs classes and exams for Amateur license candidates.

**Callsigns and Repeaters (25km North East of Melbourne)**

Club call - VK3CNE <http://www.qsl.net/vk3cne>

6m rpt VK3RMH FM 52.550 MHz in 53.550 MHz out

70cm rpt VK3RMH FM 433.325 MHz in 438.325 MHz out

IRLP node 6350, EchoLink node 140587

6m beacon VK3RMH CW 10 Watts 50.295 MHz – Intermittent

10m bec'n VK3RMH CW 20Watts 28.2565 MHz

Occasionally home to the Scout Radio & Electronics Group repeater:

2m VK3RSR FM 146.375 MHz in 146.975 MHz out

**NETS**

NERG NETS run on 146.575 MHz FM Simplex (8.30 – 9.30 pm Thursdays).

Please join the discussions. NERGs often monitor this frequency and the 70cm VK3RMH repeater.

**WEB Sites:** <http://nerg.asn.au> and <http://www.qsl.net/vk3rmh>

**NERG NEWS submissions and comments invited:**

*editor:* Mark Harrison VK3BYY

*ph:* 9435-3043 hm (between 7.30-9.30 p.m. please)

*post:* 266 Nell Street West, Watsonia, 3087

*email:* [vk3byy@nerg.asn.au](mailto:vk3byy@nerg.asn.au)



**NERG**

North–East Radio Group VK3CNE  
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BOX 270 GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088

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## NEXT MEETING:

**7:30 PM Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2004 - PACKET RADIO DEMONSTRATION**

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**2004 CALENDAR (NERG ACTIVITIES IN BOLD)**

**May 13<sup>th</sup>**

**NERG MEETING - Packet Radio demo.**

May 22nd

VK/trans-Tasman Contest - 80m SSB. See Bruce Renn, VK3JWZ, Info:  
[home.iprimus.com.au/vktasman](http://home.iprimus.com.au/vktasman)

June 5th

VK/trans-Tasman Contest - 80m CW (details - see above)

**June 10<sup>th</sup>**

**NERG MEETING - The V15BR DX-pedition with Jack VK3WWW & Peter VK3QI**

**June 12<sup>th</sup>**

**ARDF/Foxhunt at SERG Convention, Mt. Gambier, S.A.**

**July 8<sup>th</sup>**

**NERG MEETING**

July 17<sup>th</sup>

Gippsland Gate Radio & Electronics Club Hamfest - Cranbourne Public Hall