

# NZ QRP GROUP NEWSLETTER

**Thursday Night QRP Net** is on **3.690Mhz +/- QRM** at **07.30 UTC** during NZ Daylight Saving time. All and any Check Ins welcome. We operate **QRP**, i.e.: **5w** or less, but are OK with rigs that can only drop to **10w**.

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

*From the Editor:*

Welcome to the first, hopefully of many, QRP Group Newsletters. I am hoping to produce this newsletter bi-monthly, even if in a very limited form. A lot will depend on what you can forward to be included.

I would prefer Word files and jpg photos but I'll have a go (?) at any other format as well. (No guarantees!)

At this time, I can only forward this newsletter to those I have an Email AD. If you know of any other Hams who may be interested they will need to forward Email AD to the Editor: [waynezl2oz@gmail.com](mailto:waynezl2oz@gmail.com) **NB:** Your Email AD will not be used for any other purpose other than this Newsletter, and will not be released to any other source.  
Cheers ZL2OZ

## **60 METER BAND SURVEY:**

Hopefully those who are registered to use this Band have completed the Survey which is now closed. Hopefully the outcome is an increase in Band space, and it would be nice to have allocated a small section (even 10-15Khz) **specifically for QRP**. Certainly, if this were to happen, we would make full use of it as QRP enthusiasts.

I note via NZART that a 6-month extension has been granted to those with licences until July 24<sup>th</sup> 2019 which is good news – as long as we make the most of this band.

**For Next Month:** Send me a photo (jpg), of your station and/or self, and a paragraph or two (Word) about your equipment and activities on QRP. I'll include a "Featured Ham" in each Newsletter. ZL2OZ

No.1. 15 December 2018



*Best wishes to all for the festive season  
and a healthy 2019 !*

## **GROUP MEMBERS NEWS:**

Any news about group members or their XYLS, send me a Txt (021843778) or Email to include a piece in this column.

### The Micro UBitx Revolution

Thanks to John ZL2BH and some others the poor old FT817s are being over run by MicroBitx rigs on the net, and boy do they sound great. I'm also impressed by their quality of design and flexibility. From what I'm hearing, adding on to these little rigs is made easy and we are hearing about all manner of changes and modifications. Well done to those who have one, they sure sound good on the air !!

**FROM the WIA WEBSITE:** Although it is not in the **VK** band plan, **7.090 MHz** is recognised around the world as a centre of activity frequency for QRP voice operators. Locally, it has become the centre of activity frequency for SOTA; so, on weekends there are often QRP and SOTA (usually QRP) operators calling on that frequency or nearby. It can become crowded in the segment 7.080-7.100 MHz, especially if there are several SOTA activators out at a given time. Show consideration to the QRP users.

**EMTECH** site which has interesting QRP equipment (including the ZM-2) and links:

<http://emtech.steadynet.com>



## NEW CALL BOOK 2019

By now all NZART members should have received their copy of the 2019 Callbook with their November/December "Break In".

**QRP NET 6 DECEMBER:** Must have been something really good on the One-Eyed Monster this night - only 4 on the net and an apology from ZL2BH John. After the net a few of us QSY to 60M and found the Band working well. ZL2WR Mike, ZL3OCT Graham and ZL2OZ Wayne had 5 x 9 QSO with very little QRM or N. Shows this band can go well even later in the evening. Graham was holding the 9+ on my FT817 constantly on his last few overs!

**NB:** A good check to see how well this band is going is to tune to WWV Maui, Hawaii, on 5.000Mhz.

**LIST of EMAIL Ads:** These are the Email addresses I have - if you know of any others who may be interested, please ask them to forward their Email AD to me.  
Tnx. ZL2OZ

[johnelvy@gmail.com](mailto:johnelvy@gmail.com)

[mikekan@farmside.co.nz](mailto:mikekan@farmside.co.nz)

[bravopapa7173@gmail.com](mailto:bravopapa7173@gmail.com)

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[zl1bwg@gmail.com](mailto:zl1bwg@gmail.com)

Tnx and hopefully I got them right!

## **Some QRP Clubs and Organisations**

- [Adventure Radio Society](#)
- [American QRP Club](#)
- [AthensORPnet](#)
- [Colorado QRP Club](#)
- [Flying Pigs QRP Club](#)
- [Four State QRP Club](#)
- [Hi-QRP Club](#)
- [Knightlites QRP Club](#)
- [New England QRP Club](#)
- [New Jersey QRP Club](#)
- [NorCal QRP Club](#)
- [Nortex QRP Club](#)
- [North American QRP CW Club](#)
- [North Georgia North Georgia QRP Club](#)
- [QRP ARCI](#)

## **QRP NET Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December.**

Great to see a good number on the net and a welcome back to ZL2TUD John, ZL2FH Peter and ZL2ACA Bill. A group of us again tried 60M and found conditions good but the QRN became almost constant later making copy a little difficult. Not surprising seeing the Wx report of so many thousands of lightning strikes in the North Island that day. Keep trying folks, the weather won't always be like that.

## **WANTED !**

Any photos, comments, articles, QRP stories, etc for the next newsletter.

## The Editor's FT817 Story.

My interest in QRP started as a result of needing comms when out tramping and an interest in the Awards Net giving out oddball and rare locations from National Parks, Forest Parks, grid squares, and lakes, etc, and later as comms when doing volunteer work for DoC. Up until this point I had relied on VHF but quickly found it had its limitations.

Shortly after the first FT 817s came on the market (not the later ND series) I purchased one at the price of \$1600! I quickly found that whilst it filled my needs on 80 metres using a single band dipole cut to the Awards frequency, the antenna was a pain to erect in some locations, especially in thick bush, and limited effective operation to about 40Khz. On the Awards net it worked well with the dipole in some very weird configurations, and often no more than 2 or 3 feet off the ground. I could work all ZL, and VK when conditions were reasonable, usually on 1 watt.

Hunting around on the internet I found "**Emtech**" who specialise in QRP kits and ordered their **ZM-2 kit**, a QRP Z-match ATU with a clever LED SWR indicator. At first the prospect of putting the thing together for a very non-technical ham was a little daunting and I put the thing aside for a few days. Plucking up courage, and reading the assembly instructions carefully, I launched into it. The trickiest part was winding the two toroidal coils, but the rest was a doddle. Tested on the home antenna I worked 4 VKs in a few minutes with good reports back.



**Top Gorge Bivvy.** In spite of the finger, great for Stateside DX. This Hut was going to be demolished but "People Power" prevailed and it is now under private maintenance and has been considerably renovated. Still controlled by DoC.

The whole thing fitted inside a plastic box measuring 120mm by 40mm, didn't require any power, weighed less than 140 grams, great for tramping. 10 AA 2400mAh nickel metal hydrides ran the rig for several hours if you kept the power at 2.5 watts or less. Most of the time I found ½ or 1 watt fine if conditions were OK, only going up to 2.5 watts under trying circumstances. A 3.2 Ah gel cell didn't give much extra for the weight, and a 7 Ah was great, went forever, (almost), but a little heavier.



I modified the antenna to a clip on 40M/80M dipole which worked really well, but again was tricky to erect in thick bush. I did however begin to make contacts Stateside and a few into Europe. Exciting stuff on 1 and 2.5 watts! An old Bakelite fishing reel served as storage for a 27m long wire. Easy to erect and covered 80, 40, and 20m with and without the tuner, although not as efficient as the dipole. Now the fun really began. The first QSO with a G resulted in my being told I was 56 and there was no way I could be operating 2 watts and the station signed off! Slightly frustrating! Then another G called me and after a quick QSO more started to line up. Parks Peak Hut, altitude 1300m in the Ruahine Ranges in the middle of July suddenly became a great QRP DX location!

**The ZM-2 NB:** there are 4 versions with different antenna fittings. It

continues to surprise me what it'll match up. Beware, however, the null SWR point can be so narrow that it is easy to miss when tuning.

ZL2OZ

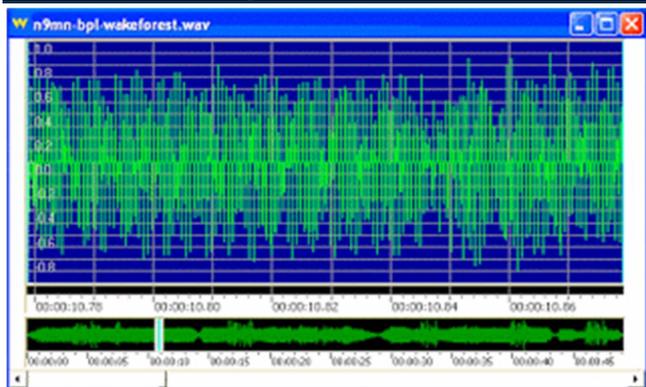


**Parks Peak Hut.** 1300m Ruahine Ranges. Site of first G Contacts.

On the **7<sup>th</sup> of October 2014**, I worked **GB2NZ** commemorating the first NZ/G Ham QSO on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1924.

I used the 817 running 2w and a 21.64m long wire antenna pointing NW. Took quite a while to be heard in the pile-up.

## RFI ... Radio Spectrum's Global Warming?



courtesy: <http://www.arrl.org/utilities>

### Article Thanks to VE7SL.

The FCC's recent publication of an Order and Consent Decree ([DA-17-471](#)) has me wondering if this action signals new interest in cracking-down on those who manufacture and distribute unapproved spectrum polluting noise-generating devices **or**, is it just a once-in-awhile muscle flex with little change in overall policy ... hopefully it's the former!

Highlights of the agreed upon notice:

**Section 302 of the Act authorizes the Commission to promulgate reasonable regulations to minimize harmful**

**interference by equipment that emits radio frequency energy....Specifically....that "[n]o person shall manufacture, import, sell, offer for sale, or ship devices or home electronic equipment and systems, or use devices, which fail to comply with regulations....**

**.... the Commission establishes technical requirements for transmitters and other equipment to minimize their potential for causing interference to authorized radio services ... the Commission administers an equipment authorization program to ensure that equipment reaching the market in the United States complies with the technical and administrative requirements set forth in the Commission's rules. The equipment authorization program requires, among other things, that radio frequency devices must be tested for compliance with the applicable technical requirements in accordance with one of three authorization procedures—i.e., certification, Declaration of Conformity, or verification—prior to marketing.**

**... the Rules prohibits the marketing of radio frequency devices unless the device has first been properly authorized, identified, and labelled in accordance with the Rules ...**

**... a privately-held company that manufactures and distributes lighting fixtures that are used in residential and commercial properties ... under-cabinet LED light fixtures were reportedly causing interference to AM/FM radio transmissions.**

**During the course of the investigation, the evidence revealed that ... the LED light fixtures were not tested and authorized under the Commission's equipment authorization rules prior to marketing.**

**... the Bureau's Spectrum Enforcement Division issued a Letter of Inquiry (LOI) ... directing to submit a sworn written response to a series of questions relating to ... the marketing of its LED lighting fixtures in the United States.**

**... continued to market the light fixtures at issue for certain times during an approximately five-month period after receipt of the LOI.**

Other highlights indicate that the company in question acknowledged their violation and agreed to appoint a Compliance Officer in charge of implementing new company protocols, including the retraining and education of employees dealing with compliance issues. As well, a **\$90,000** civil penalty was imposed on the company for the violation.

As a point of interest, I can't ever recall seeing similar notifications being released or reported in Canada by FCC equivalent, the **ISED**. Hopefully they also take similar actions, but if so, they don't seem to be reporting it ... perhaps I'm just not looking in the proper places.

As I've mentioned previously, for too many radio amateurs, the growing noise floor throughout the radio spectrum has become a global threat for the healthy pursuit of our hobby. Even if we saw the immediate implementation of rigorous new tight standards, crackdowns and prosecutions of offenders, it may already be too late to reverse the damage we are now seeing ... in many respects, it's the 'global warming' of the RF spectrum and there may be no turning back without immediate action. **VE7SL**

**Editors Note:** *No wonder I have to go bush to escape the QRM and crud, and even then I get hit by OHR across some frequencies! I wonder if there is an agency in ZL that carries out the role of the **FCC** or the **ISED**.*

**Another Note:** *On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December at 7pm I was listening to a QSO on 40M when at 7.05pm we had a power break. It was apparently wide spread through Southern and Central Hawkes Bay. I switched to battery power. The noise threshold dropped from **S.5** to **nothing**. Amazingly many DX stations appeared out of the ether, Gs, ONs, Oks, and Stateside. 40M was alive! At 7.14pm power came back on and the noise threshold shot back up to **S.5-6** and all the DX disappeared! Food for thought?? **ZL2OZ***

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**Well, that's all for this issue. Remember; if you have any little items of interest, articles, photos, news that could be included – email them to me for future newsletters. Next issue 15<sup>th</sup> January all going well. Have a good week and hopefully we'll catch everyone on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> on the QRP Net.**

**Again, Season's Greetings to all. Take care over the Christmas New Years break.**

**Cheers ZL2OZ**