



NERG NEWS

North East Radio Group Inc
PO Box 270, Greensborough, VIC 3088
www.nerg.asn.au ABN - 19 340 249 865
Incorporated 1985 Victoria Reg No A0006776V
Affiliated with the WIA

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

Monthly meeting

Thursday 8th June 2017 Regular club meeting 8:00 pm till late at the club rooms.

HF Antenna Modelling – Paul VK3DIP will show us how to model HF antennas, including Tony VK3CAB's "Linked Dipole" from April 2017 NERG News

Coffee Club

Thursday 22nd June 2017 7:30 pm till around 10:00 at the club rooms.

Gainfully Unemployed Lunch Group

Tuesday 27th June 2017 - AT The Greensborough RSL Coffee at 11:00 and lunch around 12:30 in the Bistro.

Radio Café Every Thursday afternoon

Come along and have a chat, operate the club station or show off your latest construction project. And of course have a cuppa.

June 2017

Learning CW (Morse Code)

Strange as it may seem there are still many CW QSO's happening on the bands. As a matter of fact there were 280 DXCC entities active on CW in 2016 (*Source "2016 DXCC Year End Review – by Joe Reisert, W1JR"*) For the rare DXpeditions on the air in 2016 more CW contacts were made than any other mode (*Same source*) Therefore if you want to get your DXCC total up learning CW can be a great advantage.

A number of people will tell you that using CW decoding software is just as good as actually learning the code. When conditions are good and signals are in the clear then software like MRP40 can be fantastic, but introduce weak, fading signals and some QEM and the decoder can let you down at the critical instant that the rare DX station is sending your call!

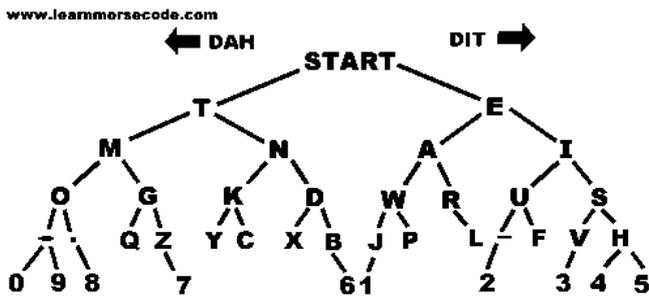
Once you have decided to learn CW the next question is how do I learn it?

First concentrate on receiving the code as sending is relatively easy in comparison and these days sending is really easy as almost all of us do is use macros in our logging program for sending. I use a paddle very occasionally when I want to add something that is not in a macro. I think receiving is a completely different skill to sending. The other really important thing is to learn the code as sounds rather than dots and dashes. So as dits and dahs and a B would be dahdididit and a C dahdidahdit The standard timing of CW is based on the length of a dit. A dah is three dits long, spacing between elements within a character is one dit long. A character space is three dits and a word space 7 dits. That means at correct spacing you have

3 dits time to decode the character before the next one starts. Practice reduces the time it takes for us to convert what we have heard to a character.

I found this chart on <http://www.learnmorsecode.com/>

and I think this could be a great way to learn to receive. Mind you that's just what I think it may not help at all but it does give a structure to listening that I never considered when I was learning.



This is a code listening tool. Print it on your printer. Place your pencil where it says START and listen to morse code.

Move down and to the right every time you hear a DIT (a dot).

Move down and to the left every time you hear a DAH (a dash).

Here's an example: You hear DAH DIT DIT which is a dash then dot then dot.

You start at START and hear a DAH then move down and left to the T and then you hear a DIT so you move down and RIGHT to the N and then you hear another DIT so you move DOWN and RIGHT again and land on the D

You then write down the letter D on your code copy paper and jump back to START waiting for your next letter.

The key to learning the code is hearing it and comprehending it while you hear it.

The only way to get there is to practice 10 minutes a day.

Listen to code tapes or computer practice code while tracing out this chart and you will find yourself writing down the letters in no time at all without the aid of the chart.

The chart brings repetition together with recognition, which you don't get from any other type of code practice aid.

As I said I am not sure this is the best way to learn the code. When I learnt I started at the beginning of the alphabet and learnt all the characters through to the end and then starting listening to 5 WPM tapes. Once I could copy most of those I moved up to faster and faster tapes.

The current thinking on learning the code seems to be the "Koch" method, combined with the Farnsworth method., The Koch method is where you learn two characters, practice them and when you are receiving them at 90% accuracy add another letter and practice them till 90% then add another and so on until you have all the character learnt and copying them at 90%. The characters seem to be added in a particular order, to assist in learning and differentiating between similar characters.

The Farnsworth method involves playing the characters at a fast speed, say 25 WPM and spacing them out so the overall speed is low, say 5 WPM. Evidently this helps in getting your speed up quickly and stops "plateaus" where you get stuck at a particular speed and cannot get past it for several days. I and many others suffered this.

There are several sites with downloads that can help you, I suggest having a look at the following:

<http://aa9pw.com/morsecode/> - has online practice facility, no need to download anything he also has an article on learning the code including a description of the Koch method. See <http://aa9pw.com/morsecode/so-you-want-to-learn-morse-code/>

<http://www.justlearnmorsecode.com/> - This site has a downloadable trainer that will take a bit of time to get used to but should be good, uses the Koch method. I had a play and it seemed OK but could not work out how to get it to play a txt file as CW.

<http://lcwo.net/> Is another online site for teaching and practice, requires a log-on but you can use any unique name and don't need to put in any details.

I hope this helps you along the way to learning CW, If you are too impatient and want to get on the air and work those rare stations then get MRP40 decoder and give it a go. Ask some of the regular DXing crew about setting up macros in your logging program, or MRP40 and get going. One thing I think everyone should do is learn to hear your own call sign coming back, and what a question-mark sounds like; that way you can tell when the DX station comes back to

you and also if he sends part of your call and a question mark.

Also study the Q code as these will be used and recognise if he is trying to work someone else and don't just keep sending your call.

If your decoder is not getting anything then STOP SENDING – no point in just adding to the QRM while not knowing what the DX is sending.

Remember that CW is not like other digital modes and that the guy at the other end may be sending using a straight key, a paddle, a bug or a computer and so your software may never decode him/her.

That should be about it, all it takes is practice, practice and more practice. In my case it took 6 months of 1 hour per day in two 30min stints to get up to about 15 WPM. But I have no musical talent, if you are musical then you will pick it up much quicker. !!

ARDF NEWS

Amateur Radio Direction Finding is a part of our hobby which is flourishing around Melbourne. This is probably due to the Victorian ARDF Group and their tireless workers.

There are no ARDF events planned for June.

FOXHUNT NEWS

There was no regular 2M hunt in May as teams were preparing for the annual Australian Fox Hunting Championships (AFHC) held in Mount Gambier on the Queen's Birthday Weekend. Instead the Victorian Foxhunting Championships were held on Saturday 20th May.

Roger VK3HRL, Mark VK3MD, Geoff VK3VR and Ian VK3MZ from the regular VK3MZ/VR/HRL/MD team plus a group of eager helpers including Jack VK3WWW organised the event. Starting from Roger's home in Newport we headed out for a number of hunts on the Championship bands of 80M 10M, 6M 70CM, and 23CM. As we all hunt regularly on 2M there were no hunts held there. Several multi-legged hunts were held during

the afternoon and following an excellent dinner at a local pub the teams took off for the Night Hunt that involved hunting 5 legs (in order) - 70CM - 10M - 6M - 70CM and finally, - 10M.

Four teams took part with the results as follows, in order:

VK3CI VK3FOX VK3BLN & VK3OW

Regular Monthly hunts are held on 2 metres on the third Friday of the month and new hounds are always welcome. If you would like to get into fox hunting or give it a try contact Greg VK3VT and he will try to get you a seat in a hound vehicle and show you the ropes. Due to the closeness of the AFHC there will be no June hunt so the next hunt is scheduled for the 21st July 2017.

Discounts from Suppliers

Club members can get discounts from two suppliers:

Altronics. (Australia Wide), Mention you are from the North East Radio Group or give our customer no - 64429. Discount will be minus 10% up to 45% off depending on the item. (Actual discounts depend on the product type and quantity purchased). There is No Minimum Spend in store to receive the discount. For on-line or phone Sales there **IS** a Minimum spend of \$25.00 inc GST but **NOT** including Freight. In the comments section put "64429" to receive the discount. <http://www.altronics.com.au>

Having used this recently I discovered that David VK3UQ gets emails detailing delivery of your order, that you may not get. So pop him an email when you order and he will be able to track which email belongs to you. We hope to have a method of dealing with this soon.

Jaycar Electronics stores by mentioning you are from the "North East Radio Group" You need to spend a min \$25.00 to receive a 10% discount. <http://www.jaycar.com.au/>

June 2017
PLANNED DXPEDITIONS

<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Entity</i>	<i>Callsign</i>
May 23	Jun 18	Zimbabwe	Z25DX
May 25	Jun 04	Congo	TN5E
May 28	Jun 05	Br Virgin Is	VP2V
May 29	Jun 04	Saba & St Eustatius	PJ5
Jun 01	Jun 06	Liechtenstein	HB0
Jun 04	Jun 16	Reunion	FR
Jun 07	Jun 12	Malta	9H3XG
Jun 07	Jun 16	Bahamas	C6A
Jun 09	Jun 18	Palau	T8CW
Jun 10	Jun 20	Albania	ZA
Jun 11	Jun 19	French Polynesia	TX5EG
Jun 13	Jun 26	Faroe Is	OY
Jun 14	Jun 20	Sint Maarten	PJ7
Jun 15	Jun 25	Cyprus	5B
Jun 16	Jun 23	Palau	T8
Jun 18	Jun 28	Montenegro	4O7GD
Jun 24	Jul 01	Christmas I	VK9AA
Jun 28	Jul 02	Palau	T88TJ
Jun 29	Jul 17	French Polynesia	TX5EG
Jul 01	Jul 07	Market Reef	OJ0V
Jul 01	Jul 09	St Kitts & Nevis	V4
Jul 04	Jul 18	St Pierre & Miquelon	FP

Thanks to <http://www.ng3k.com/misc/adxo.html>

June 2017
CONTESTS

Looks like June 10 and 11 will be a good time for those chasing Australian Shires. Details of the contest and a list of Shires and their abbreviations can be found at <http://www.wia.org.au/members/contests/wavks/> If you use VKCL for logging a new updated version has just been released.

The All Asian DX CW contest on the 17th and 18th is a good chance to catch up with some rare Asian countries.

Contest	Dates & Times
DRCG WW RTTY Contest	0000Z-0759Z, Jun 10 and 1600Z-2359Z, Jun 10 and 0800Z-1559Z, Jun 11
VK Shires Contest	0600Z, Jun 10 to 0600Z, Jun 11
Asia-Pacific Sprint, SSB	1100Z-1300Z, Jun 10
Portugal Day Contest	1200Z, Jun 10 to 1200Z, Jun 11
GACW WWSA CW DX Contest	1500Z, Jun 10 to 1500Z, Jun 11
All Asian DX Contest, CW	0000Z, Jun 17 to 2400Z, Jun 18
Ukrainian DX Classic RTTY Contest	1200Z, Jun 17 to 1159Z, Jun 18
ARR BPSK63 Contest	1200Z, Jun 17 to 1200Z, Jun 18
Stew Perry Topband Challenge	1500Z, Jun 17 to 1500Z, Jun 18
Battle of Carabobo International Contest	0000Z, Jun 24 to 2400Z, Jun 25
His Maj. King of Spain Contest, SSB	1200Z, Jun 24 to 1200Z, Jun 25
Ukrainian DX DIGI Contest	1200Z, Jun 24 to 1200Z, Jun 25
ARRL Field Day	1800Z, Jun 24 to 2100Z, Jun 25

RAC Canada Day Contest	0000Z-2359Z, Jul 1
Venezuelan Ind. Day Contest	0000Z-2359Z, Jul 1
DL-DX RTTY Contest	1100Z, Jul 1 to 1059Z, Jul 2
Marconi Memorial HF Contest	1400Z, Jul 1 to 1400Z, Jul 2

Many thanks to

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

WIA DXCC Leaderboard. Simon VK3SIM won this for 2015 and came second overall in DXCCs confirmed for 2016 (results recently announced) He also won the Digital class and came second in CW and open classes. Great effort Simon. First for 2016 was Graham VK3GA, also a NERG Member.

This award requires confirmations for DXCC QSOs and in a year where the sunspots have been less that helpful Graham confirmed 257 DXCC entities and Simon 212. Who says the bands are dead?

NEWS Items

ARRL Get it wrong! Recently the ARRL deleted two entities from the DXCC program claiming that they had changed management jurisdictions and so failed the test for a DXCC entity. One of the old hands put forward a very well argued counter opinion to the ARRL's and magically Kure and Midway Islands were returned to the DXCC list!! In reading his opinion it was obvious that the ARRL had failed to follow their own rules!

REMOTE STATION



UPGRADE COURSE

Thank you to those that indicated an interest in this course. It will now be commencing later this month and details will be out shortly. If you are interested and have not let Greg know please do it soon at vk3vt (at) nerg.asn.au The class will run for about 14 weeks and will be held on a week night (possibly not Thursdays this time) cost will be \$100 for members. The course is aimed at Advanced Licence but covers all of the Standard syllabus as well.

CONGRATULATIONS

JMMFD A number of club members scored places in their respective categories in the JMMFD including Steve VK3MEG (1st) Simon VK3SIM (2nd), Bernard VK3AV (2nd), and Paul VK3DIP (2nd). As a matter of interest I noted VK2ND also received a 2nd place!!

This is now available to members, you will need:

- A Standard or Advanced Licence. (Foundation Licensees can receive only.)
- A windows computer with sound card connected to a speaker and a microphone. A PC headset is ideal.
- OR an android tablet or phone and are prepared to pay for the app (less than \$20)
- Download the client from RemoteHams.com install it on your machine and register with RemoteHams.com using your callsign. The android app is called RCForb and is available on google play.
- The NERG station is currently known as "VK3GG test" Connect to it and request "club" membership and TX capability. Then wait until your membership is approved and away you go!
- Transmit Usage privileges will only be available to financial NERG members with VK callsigns.

EDITORIAL

This looks like being a busy Month as I will be off to the Australian Foxhunting Championships in Mount Gambier over the Queens Birthday Weekend.

For those who chase Shires the same weekend will see the VK Shires Contest, a chance to increase your count very quickly. Remember to check your Shire's (or City's) code, they are not obvious!!

Our regular Radio Cafe on Thursday afternoons has become quite popular with 5 to 6 regulars each week. If you are free come along and have a chat and a cuppa.

Our AGM is coming up in August, this includes the election of office bearers and committee. So have a think about who you would like to see on the committee,

73

Greg VK3VT
Editor



Margherita Pizza ph 9434 4980
89 Main Road, Lower Plenty, Vic 3093
web www.margherita.com.au

Margherita's Still Sponsor the NERG and provide the excellent suppers that we have come to enjoy. Order your next Pizza dinner from them and tell them you appreciate their support of the club.

NERG NEWS ARTICLES

The NERG is always happy to receive news, articles, and member's wanted or for sale advertisements for inclusion in the newsletter. Please contact the editor at news@nerg.asn.au

THE NERG

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

WEB SITES

The NERG is on Facebook – A group has been established and can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/nergamateurl/> Members are encouraged to join this group

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

MEMBERSHIP FEES

(Due in August): Full: \$30 Family: \$40
Concession: \$20 Send to: NERG Treasurer,
PO box 270, Greensborough, Vic., 3088

COMMITTEE

President	David VK3UQ
Vice President	Greg VK3VT
Secretary	John VK3XD
Treasurer	Margie VK3VOJ
Committee Members	
Colin VK3VGB	Chris VK3AWG
Matthew VK3BKT	Grant VK3GWS
Ethan VK3ETC	Mark VK3BYY
Don VK3KDT	

MEETINGS

Main Meeting: 2nd Thursday of each month at 7.45 PM (not Dec & Jan) Coffee Shop nights: 4th Thursday each month. Briar Hill Community Hall, 126 Mountain View Road, Briar Hill (Near Sherbourne Road intersection) Melway map ref 21-C3

NETS

NERG NETS run on 146.575 MHz FM Simplex (8.30 – 9.30 pm Thursdays). Please join the discussions. Also used as a general Net frequency.