



Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

Propagator April 2022

Upcoming Meeting on the 12th April 2022

If the COVID19 conditions and restrictions for NSW do not change

The next meeting **will be at the** Blue Scope Steel visitors centre **7.30pm.**

Blue Scope Northgate entrance off Springhill road



THE  FOLLOWS A COVID19 SAFE PLAN

Our last meeting 8th March 2022

Unfortunately, due to the flooding of some major roads, the meeting last month had a low attendance and the DMR presentation become a preview instead. Mal VK2DXM presented to a few of us, showing the ins and outs with the software. This has only wet our appetite for the next meeting as we have postponed the full DMR presentation to April's meeting.

We still managed to get some nice cake and had a few cuppas with everyone that could make it on the evening.



Diet out the window



Sneak preview of the equipment on display ☺

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Snowball raffle was not actioned at the last meeting, it will start again at the 12th April meeting

NEXT MEETING 12th April 2022

SDR

Mal VK2DXM and Shane VK2HCO will be presenting this interesting aspect of amateur radio.

Unless we have another freak storm or Covid 19 Variant



Shane and Mal will be sharing their experience and will advise which dongles are worth their money or which ones you can run away from 😊

If the preview I saw at the last meeting is anything to go by, make sure you don't miss the presentation it will be awesome.

Pop along to the Blue Scope Visitors centre at 7.30pm on the 12th April 2022 for a great evening.

There will be refreshments like tea and coffee with biscuits and cake.

AND your mates you haven't seen in a while 😊

IC-9700
VHF/UHF/1200MHz
SDR Transceiver



IC-7300
HF/50/70MHz
SDR Transceiver



IC-7610
HF/50MHz Dual Rx SDR Transceiver



SEE YOU THERE!!!!!!!

SNOWBALL

Will be back 😊, for \$5 you can earn some good cash and all monies go to your society, win-win.

As usual see Simon VK2KU, the fella with the coloured balls and big smile



Don't forget the two weekly IARS nets as below



to the IARS NETS



IARS Tuesday evening weekly 80m NET on 3.666MHz at 8.30pm hosted by Mal VK2DXM and Rob VK2MT

Don't forget to join us every Tuesday evening, expect the second Tuesday of the month for a great get together on 80m. Signal reports, news and general discussions are the agenda.

There have been some really good conversations so if you are bored on Tuesday evenings, pop in for a chat.

Saturday Morning EAST COAST NET hosted by Steve VK2BGL

You are invited to join Steve every **Saturday at 9.30am** on our **146.850MHz** repeater (linked to 146.675MHz) or **VK2BGL-R** on Echo-link for a very enjoyable morning of general discussions from amateurs who log in from all over the world.

This NET is linked to multiple repeater systems including VK2RFS south coast. Join Steve and everyone for a very enjoyable 2 hours on Saturday morning



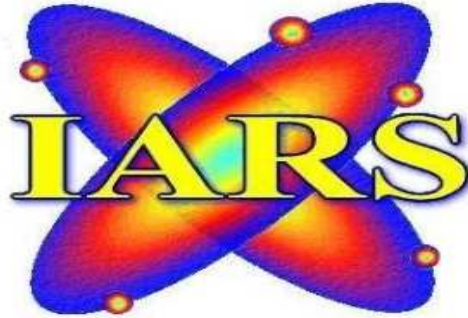
Looking to Upgrade to Standard or advanced and even obtaining your Foundation license during Covid lockdowns we have remote assessing available.

The IARS **can help** with obtaining your Foundation, upgrading to Standard or Advanced from *the comfort of your own home*. We have approved AMC accessors that can offer remote assessments for the AMC. Please contact Keith VK2KQB at iars.keithb@gamil.com for further information. Your society supports further learning, please find out more on how we can help you. AMC website is [Australian Maritime College - Australian Maritime College | University of Tasmania \(amc.edu.au\)](http://AustralianMaritimeCollege-AustralianMaritimeCollege.UniversityofTasmania.amc.edu.au)

REPEATERS



VK2RUW (Knights Hill)



VK2RMP (Maddens Plains)

STATUS

- 438.225 with a - 5MHz offset. **Back on air OK**
- 146.975 with a -600kHz offset NO CTCSS, **C4FM** enabled **OK**
- 146.850 with a – 600kHz offset (linked to 146.675) NO CTCSS **OK**
- 146.675 with a – 600kHz offset (linked to 146.850) NO CTCSS **OK, Back on air** (faulty chip replacement ordered from the UK arrived sooner than anticipated. Unit repaired OK)
- 53.650Mhz with a – 1Mhz offset 123Hz CTCSS (or key PTT 5 times to open squelch) **OK**
- 438.725Mhz with a -5mHZ offset DMR only **Ready to roll**
- 1296.850Mhz Beacon with simplex repeater function – **OK**

The IARS welcomes any feedback on our repeater systems.

Please send all your feedback to iars.keithb@gmail.com and it will be passed on to our repeater team.

Any donations to help us maintain our great repeater system will be greatly appreciated. Please check our banking details on our website at www.iars.org.au under the Contact details page.

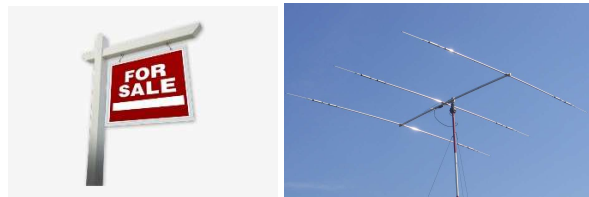
As reference of the donation please add your Call sign and the words “Repeater Donation”



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING to SWAP, BUY, SELL, an OLD PART

Parts you may need for repairs or some radio gear you no longer need that could go to a new home.....?

Email iars.keithb@gmail.com



HyGain TH3-Mk3

Looking for a new home is this HyGain antenna in good working condition.

Contact Les 0438422888 to discuss



Kenwood TS-520

Les VK2ALK wants to send his TS-520 to a good home. This rig has been well looked after and has the original box and manuals. This rig is in very good condition. You can contact Les on 0438422888 or

iars.keithb@gmail.com



Coils, capacitors and tubes for free to a good home. Les VK2ALK has a huge collection of old coils, capacitors and tubes to giveaway. Please contact Les on 0438422888 or iars.keithb@gmail.com

to discuss.

Disposables Donation Table

Each meeting we have the disposables table with items donated to the club.

Please keep the support for this going and bring oddities in and take some home for a small donation to the IARS. With the next meeting please bring along and donate those old items that you no longer use and may even have thought about throwing it in the bin, someone else may be looking for that very part. Wire, pieces of coax, old parts, plug packs, power supplies, capacitors, resistors, coils, tubes, knobs, anything that someone can use.



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Share it with us, this could be suggestions, technical ideas, circuit diagrams, IARS community projects, pictures of your latest shack project, in fact ANYTHING of interest

Let us know by return email or secretary@iars.org.au

Also, if you have some IARS related pictures or information that we can put on the **IARS website**, please let us know and we can get that happening.

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Meet the 23cm "Polly the Parrot"



Ted Thrift VK2ARA and a few other high frequency experimenters are having some fun using the 23cm beacon/simplex repeater located at Maddens Plains

Ted has worked with fellow operators to come up with a “user friendly” operators sheet below, which should assist with easy operation of Polly

Operating the Parrot Repeater

These notes are meant as an aid to get the best out of the simplex Parrot repeater. First of all, it IS simplex and it cannot receive / record / replay (TX)) at the same time. There are some facilities to help you and tell you what it is doing now. You can check to see if you can hear Polly by listening to 1296.850. Every 10 to 15 minutes after the mute on Polly has closed there is a beacon transmission in MCW. This is a reliable indicator of how well Polly will hear and record you. If it is broken with breaks in the audio, it is very likely that what it records from you, will be very much the same. If you hear clear unbroken audio your input should be similar. Any transmission that opens the mute on Polly will start the recorder until the mute closes again. What ever is recorded is then replayed after a pause of about 10 seconds. If you are trying to talk to another station it is best if you close your transmission by saying “ Wait for the BEEP! Before you transmit. This tells the other station that you have ceased talking and they can TX after hearing the BEEP from Polly.

If you start talking before you hear the BEEP you will almost certainly end up talking over one another. It is so easy to get over if you say “ Wait for the BEEP, before you transmit” and you DO WAIT! For the Beep.

If one of you fail to wait for the beep you will lose parts of the QSO or lose the contact completely by getting out of step.

Polly is typical of all FM receivers, it locks on to the strongest signal and records that one. When input signals are near equal it tries to record both and replay both.

Polly has a maximum record time of about 120 seconds so please avoid long overs.

If you time out it will drop both of you and take a long time to reset.

Polly is a dumb animal and cannot think for you or guess what you want it to do so let us lay by Polly's rules.

One and only one brief TX to see if Polly can hear you.

Listen through one Beacon cycle to check for in use traffic.

If there is no traffic, make a call like this:

CQ, CQ, CQ, This is VK2XYZ calling CQ on VK2RMP parrot repeater, listening and please wait for the beep before you transmit.

The turn around time is about 10 to 15 seconds so please be patient and wait for either Polly to replay your call and then up to one minute for another station to record a reply, then 10 to 15 seconds before Polly sends the replay.

If you can hear a complete transmission with NO BEEP at the end, you are hearing an INPUT signal.

Now you can call the other station and try to make contact without the repeater unless you have to use the repeater it is best to leave it free for other users.

You have made a CQ call input to POLLY and waiting for a response. POLLY will replay your call (if it was able to record it) then you need to allow 30 or 40 seconds for another station to record a reply to your call.

PLEASE pay attention to when there are and are not BEEPS from Polly.

Thank you Ted and all those involved

Please send your ideas and tech stories to iars.keithb@gmail.com so that we can publish them in upcoming editions.

Repeater 146.675MHz Knights Hill repair

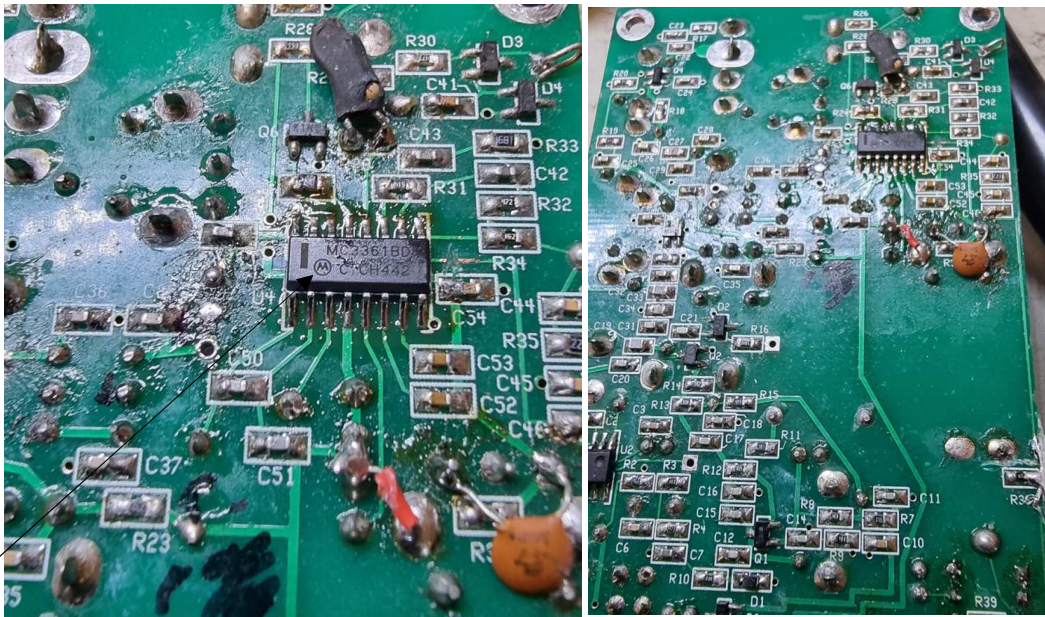
A big thank you to John VK2AAL for fixing the repeater at Knights Hill this month.

The repeater has been playing up for some time now and the noise mute level has been creeping up all the time until it finally gave in. After some testing it was found that the receiver boards main IF chip was faulty. Unfortunately, there were no spare chips locally available. I managed to find some in the UK but the delivery was end of March, having no other choice we ordered them (extra for spares 😊).

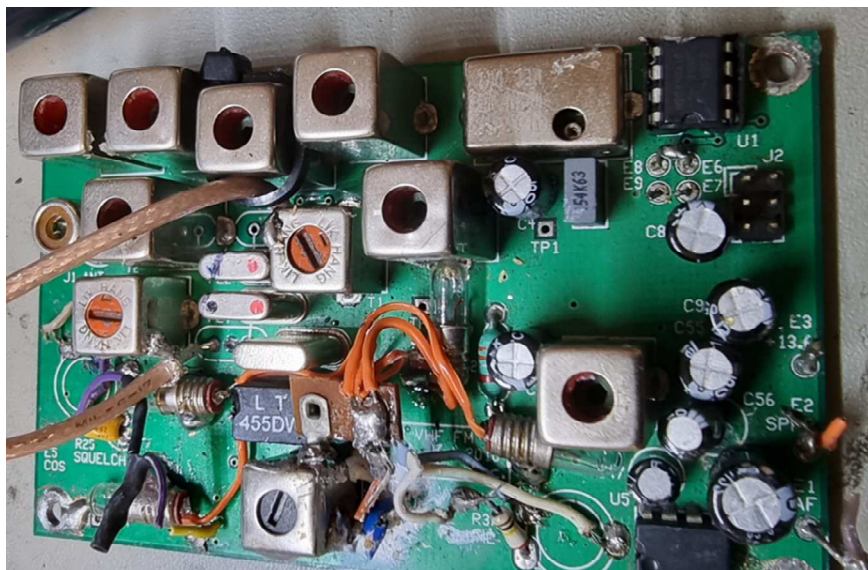
With some good luck we managed to get them last week, long before month end which was awesome. John VK2AAL came over to our workshops in Unanderra where we used the SMD workstation to remove and replace the faulty chip.

After the repair was completed, John re-installed the PCB, did some setups and testing.

The good news is that 146.675 is back on the air 😊



Faulty Chip



Top side of the IF/receiver board

Recent IARS club events



John Moyle Memorial Field Day weekend

The recently held Field Day weekend was a great success with many IARS members attending the remote IARS Penrose site and participating in the annual contest.

From luxury caravans, tents, cars and utes used for accommodation, it was a great weekend around the campfire and the radio setup in the remote shack.



Ready to start the day !



The Boys discussing antennas again ☺



Happy Dan VK2FDSD with Wazza VK2MWK and Rob VK2XIC

Keith VK2KQB & Vin VK2VIN (or should I say Laurel and Hardy ☺)



Phil VK2CPH and Shane VK2HCO & the kids ☺



Simon VK2FO, Vin VK2VIN, Phil VK2CPH and Vaughn VK2KBI



APRS & VHF ANTENNA



SIMON VK2FO

and

Arthur VK2BBI



Shane VK2HCO thumbs up and Rob VK2MT showing how it's done!



24hour coffee, tea and refreshments section



We even have our own Paradise Falls ☺ (Nice roof boys)

A great weekend had by all, if you missed out this year, no problem, same time and place next year, see you there!!!

Upcoming events



The ANZAC Centenary

Commemorating the centenary of the First World War

Please go to the WIA on this link for more information <https://www.wia.org.au/newsevents/anzaccentenary/about/>



IARU R3 50th Celebrations

IARU Region III celebrates 50 years with a special call sign!

Please go to the WIA on this link for more information <https://www.wia.org.au/newsevents/iaru50/about/>



MAYDAY MAYHEM

The CCARC have kept the date for the Wyong field day as the 1st May 2022

This is always a great outing with plenty of goodies to be purchased on the day, also, great for those that want to lighten the load in the overcrowded shack, bring along your unused goodies for sale, even the stuff you bought at the Mayhem field day last year 😊

For more information please visit the CCARC website at <https://www.ccarc.org.au/mayham-2/>

Upcoming meeting presentations

- May 2022 : Paul VK2PAD to give a presentation on his Antarctic Experience, Paul had a very successful remote HF station setup and many QSO's into VK.
- June 2022 : Homebrew telescopes, making your own \$10000 telescope, for much less, Ned VK2AGV
- July 2022 : Microcontrollers for amateur radio projects, Simon VK2KU and Keith VK2KQB. How to select, configure and program those micros that can make your next project easy.
- August 2022 : IARS AGM , Show and Tell
- September 2022 : SMD soldering and de-soldering workshop II. Due to the success of workshop I, members have asked if we could have number II
- October 2022 : Trivia IARS with great prizes
- November 2022 : IARS annual auction with auctioneer Simon VK2XQX
- December 2022 : Christmas dinner with show and tell

Fun Corner

Please send in your funnies to iars.keithb@gmail.com



NICKNAMES FOR WORKMATES IN AUSTRALIA

- Wicket keeper** - puts on gloves and stands back
- Harvey Norman** - 3 years no interest
- Sensor light** - only works if someone walks past
- Noodles** - thinks all jobs take 2 minutes
- Blister** - appears when the hard work is done
- Showbag** - full of shit
- Lantern** - not very bright and has to be carried
- Deck chair** - always folds under pressure
- Perth** - 3 hours behind everyone else
- G-spot** - you can never find him
- Bushranger** - holds everyone up
- Wheelbarrow** - only works when he's pushed
- Limo** - carries about 8 people
- Cordless** - charges all night but only works for 2 hours



That's all for now, hopefully catch you all at the **Blue Scope visitors centre on the 12th of April 2022**

Stay Safe

73's

Keith VK2KQB

IARS Secretary

IARS, Amateur Radio in the Illawarra since 1948