



BRANCH 27 NEWSLETTER March-April 2025

Hi Everyone,

What a hectic few weeks we have had and continue to have with Americana, Te Matatini Festival and Womad early March. Thousands of people converged into Taranaki and the place was crazy with traffic. The weather has been amazing with Blue sky's and wall to wall sunshine and even our mountain showed itself to the visitors. On top of that many other activities were happening including Jock White Field Day weekend and our Fox Hunt so a very busy time for us all.

Presidents Report

Well 1/6th of the year has gone already. I don't know where time goes these days. The fox hunt was a bit of fun for the teams that participated by the sound of the laughter at the site of one of the beacon sites. I thought I had made it relative easy but the way I had to set it up. Apparently that was not so. It would be great if someone would set up the next one soon as I would like to have a go at fox-hunting as it has been a very long time since I have.

Thanks to Flinn for his presentation on Meshtastic for our February Club night.

Jock White Field Day was great last weekend with a nice spell of fine weather. Thanks to all members that attended to help and to others that came out to help set-up or just a visit.

Perhaps next year we could have a go with N1MM contest log that has a specific set up for JWFD (then I would have a good change of filling the log without mucking it up). A lot of clubs are using N1MM logging now.

This month I will do a presentation on Hamclock. Hamclock is software that has lot's of features, some are, showing the time at your home station, the DX station time in UTC, several map formats to chose from that will show lots of different information to chose from to display on the map. Three windows that can show things like VOCAP and the like. It will also control your Radio and Rotator via HamLib. It is for compiled for/on Linux but can be run on Windows via a Virtual machine or similar.

See the Calender below for April and May's club night.

73 for now, Terry ZL2TNB.

Next Meeting Tuesday March 18th at TEMO 7.30pm We will have a talk on HamCLOCK from Terry ZL2TNB



April Meeting Tuesday April 15th at TEMO 7.30pm Our talk will be from Phil ZL2RO who will be talking to us about DMR radio's

Phil is a North Island counsellor and well known for his DMR activities in addition to the great work that he does as a councillor for NZART

Fox Hunt Activity

On Saturday 1st Feb we held our Fox Hunt for Branch 27 Around 8 groups participated in the Hunt with their families. We had 3 Foxes to find and the first one proved to be quite a challenge, we personally struggled but when we got to a spot where things were difficult another participant turned up and was also struggling so we didn't feel so bad. We finally arrived at the 3rd Fox which was placed at Terry ZL2TNB's QTH (our President) who put on a BBQ for everyone to use. Our Thanks go to Terry for all his hard work in setting up the Foxes and instructions with Maps and also to Marie his wife for the lovely food supplied.



The Fox Hunt participants enjoying drinks & nibbles before the BBQ

Auckland Visit



On Monday 27th January I had a visit from Helen ZL1HOW from the Papakura Club who was down here in Taranaki visiting a very old friend of hers. She had previously caught up via email and we arranged the visit and subsequently through our catch up found out that we had known her Mum as a neighbour at our old property QTH many years ago and also that my OM Graeme and her were cousins.

Helen has had a fascinating life and is very involved with AREC Search & rescue etc, and is very involved with her local Papakura Club, having other YIs we both know in common. It is so good to catch up with like minded YIs and we have arranged to get together in the coming months when she gets down to Taranaki again.

WANGANUI VISIT



On Wednesday 29th January Graham ZL2AHR & Val ZL2FO came up to Taranaki from Wanganui to collect some radio equipment and for a catch up. Val ZL2FO and myself are regulars on the HF 80 metre Thursday evening Ladies net so it's always good to get together face to face.

We enjoyed lunch together and caught up on all the news from Wanganui as we now have a repeater which services the Western link to Wanganui which has been a real asset.

Graham has a fascinating museum which he has now added to as a result of their visit. It is well worth a visit and for the older hams it is a real trip down memory lane and for ordinary consumers too as most will have had one of his exhibits as a central feature of their household.

How it's going **SUNSPOT CYCLE**

The cycle started from a solar minimum, a quiet phase with fewer sunspots and solar flares

- Solar Cycle 25 is the current solar cycle, which . It's expected to continue until about 2030.
- The cycle has ramped up in activity over the last five years
- The cycle is expected to reach solar maximum in July 2025, with a peak of 115 sunspots
- The cycle will be fairly weak, similar in strength to cycle 24

What to expect

- The cycle will see an increase in solar flares, coronal mass ejections (CMEs), and geomagnetic storms
- These events can impact radio communications, electric power grids, and navigation signals
- They can also pose risks to spacecraft and astronauts

How it's observed

- Solar Cycle 25 is the most thoroughly observed solar cycle in history
- The official sunspot number is determined by the World Data Center - Sunspot Index and Long-Term Solar Observations (WDC-SILSO) and the Solar Influences Data Center (SIDC) at the Royal Observatory in Belgium



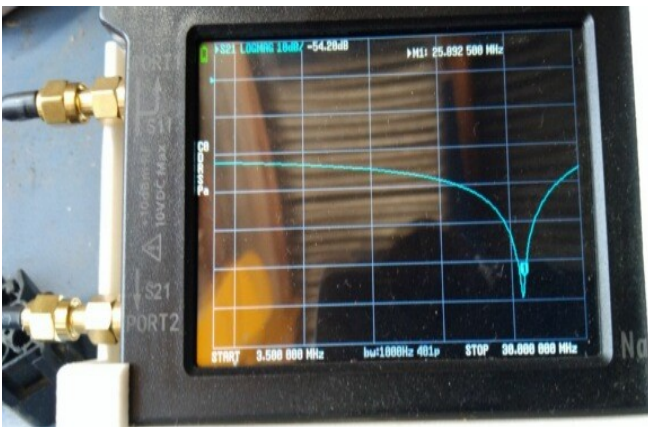
**The new Mobile Shack ready for field day...complete with all the extras!
Take a look at my new 2 meter beam...I sure am proud of it**

Back on the air



In Dec 24 Merle ZL2MIC

contacted one of our members asking about the progress on her 3 element beam, which had been taken down over a year prior for repairs and upgrades. As I had recently purchased the same antenna and had the same issues, I was confident I could help, Doug dropped off the traps to my place a week before xmas, upon dismantling them, I wondered if I had bitten more than I could chew, they were in very poor condition, the aluminium was badly corroded, the steel screws had rusted out and were a time consuming nightmare to remove, I persevered and after a few days all traps were clean and tested with new stainless screws. The day before Xmas day Jonny and I met at Myrles place to install the beam and new Yaesu rotator, Jonny wired up the rotator while I assembled the beam, after testing and aligning the rotator, it was fitted to the mast along with the beam. The mast was winched back into position and was now time for testing,



15M VNA sweep of antenna trap



Two pictures of the corrosion in the trap

These photos depict the task faced with restoring the traps for Myrle's beam – not for the faint of heart but brilliantly repaired.

Field Day Feb 2025

On 22nd February was Jock White Field Day which our Branch 27 ran at Onaero Bay Absolutely beautiful sunny day and quite a few members turned up to help sent up tents and equipment and also the aerial from the Norfolk Pine trees by the beach
Graeme ZL2TE was the main CW operator but Doug ZL3UG had a go which was great.
I was the only YL operator at our Field Day and enjoyed my time on air but would have loved another YL to have joined me for the day, although I think after so many years doing Field Day I'm just "One of the team."

Jonny ZL4DX set up a beam on his motor home and just for fun worked 20/15/ & 10 M
We grazed on BBQ sausages, onions & tomatoes and enjoyed the beautiful sea view.

Members families cam out to join us and enjoyed their time on the beach.

Visitors to the camp came over to check us out a few times and asked many questions, they were fascinated with the set up and what we represented.

On the Sunday afternoon the wind came up and we had to pack our awning away early before it blew away

We would have loved more members to have come out to join us even for a short time.

Really appreciated the Branch members partners coming out and joining in to our group.



Some snaps from our 2025 Jock White Field Day with our camping set up

Please support our club activities this is a great way to improve our Radio skills

Ngairé Z12UJT