

# THE WORLD BELOW

## 400 GHz

The Periodical Newsletter of the  
WAIKATO VHF GROUP Inc.,  
ZL1IS,  
PO BOX 606,  
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Hamilton 3240.



NZART  
BRANCH 81

[www.zl1is.info](http://www.zl1is.info)

**JUNE 2024 ISSUE**

### WAIKATO VHF GROUP EXECUTIVE

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Committee	David McMillan	ZL1TLQ	027 477 0854
Editor	David King	ZL1DGK	07 884 9590

## General Meeting June 2024

The General Meeting of the Waikato VHF Group will be held on

Sunday, 30th June 2024, 1:30pm

at the Silver Fern Farms Event Centre, (aka Te Aroha Events Centre),  
44 Stanley Ave, Te Aroha

Our program will be normal business then Ian Brown ZL1TAT will tell us about "**Origins of Hewlett Packard, and how 'The HP Way' led to the creation of Silicon Valley**"

A sub renewal/joining form can be found [HERE](#).

## Repeaters/Beacons

The Waikato VHF Group owns and maintains several repeaters and beacons in the greater Waikato and Bay of Plenty area. These are available for sponsorship for a period of 1 year. Please see <http://zl1is.info/sites.html> for a list of repeaters, beacons & links that are currently available for sponsorship. If you are interested in sponsoring one of them, please contact our Secretary (ZL1GWP) or Treasurer (ZL1TAT).

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## Waikato VHF Group newsletter delivery

Our next (September) and future **newsletters will be delivered via email only (there will be no more posted newsletters)**. So long as we have your current email address, you'll receive our quarterly newsletter (March, June, September and November). To confirm or update your email address in our records, simply send an email to [branch.81@nzart.org.nz](mailto:branch.81@nzart.org.nz) with your callsign in the subject line.

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## WAIHI NORTH '5475 RESTORED

Further to our last newsletter, our Waihi North repeater was restored to service on 25 March using a substitute radio module. After the faulty module was brought back to Hamilton, it was repaired (RF Power Amplifier module was replaced) to become our spare.

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## NATIONAL SYSTEM KAIMAI ISSUES

Our Kaimai 434.850MHz repeater has presented several issues requiring site visits. The aging repeater equipment there has intermittently locked out (controller issue), and Trustee Neill ZL1TAJ made several visits to restore it before eventually replacing that repeater with a loan repeater on 1 April. However that developed a fault too, transmitting noise with the input signal buried in that (its receiver later being diagnosed as having a very noisy VCO.) Eventually, a second loan repeater was obtained, and installed on May 25<sup>th</sup> by ZL1TAT and ZL1UET, restoring linking between Rotorua, Taupo, Edgecumbe, Mercury Bay and Klondyke. Due to the extra DC load presented by this current loan repeater, the battery charger was upgraded from 3A to one capable of

delivering 8A.

While on site (in rather inclement weather), our 2400.260MHz ZL1VHW beacon was also checked, and the hut's south-west guy tightened.

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### **HANDHELD RADIOS ON REPEATERS**

At least one frequent user on our Waipiente 2m repeater network has been observed using a handheld radio, frequently with marginal access. Each repeater in our network has 25W transmitter output, so a handheld radio's much lower powered Tx trying to access the repeater results in a significant power imbalance of at least one 'S' point below the repeater transmitter received by the handheld radio (which is likely to be fitted with an inefficient 'rubber ducky' aerial. That power imbalance becomes especially evident when the handheld radio is used inside a moving vehicle. Preferable to employ a properly installed radio with an external antenna while operating mobile.

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### **CHRISTCHURCH REPEATER SITE at MARLEYS HILL**

Progress is being made to restore all facilities on this site. Branch 05 Christchurch report that electricity has been restored to their site, and new wooden poles installed awaiting rigging of antennas and feeders. Winter isn't the best time to be doing that site work, however expectations are rising to see the National System reconnected through Christchurch again.

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### **ZL1AQC – SK**

It saddens us to report Vic Sinclair ZL1AQC became a silent key on 9<sup>th</sup> May. His wife reports he was diagnosed with an aggressive stomach cancer only one week before passing away. Vic joined the Waikato VHF Group in April 2012 after moving to Tauranga from Wellington. He attended our 50<sup>th</sup> AGM in Matamata in March 2013, and appears along with wife Sue and his then seeing eye dog 'Willow' in the photo record of attendees published on our web site at <https://www.zl1is.info/historical.html>

## MFJ is bowing out:

Many hams will be familiar with MFJ products (antenna tuners, SWR meters etc), so will be familiar with their various products produced under their various companies. At the end of April, the following letter from the company founder was distributed:



April 25, 2024

Dear Fellow Hams and Friends,

It is with a sad heart as I write this letter.

As many of you have heard by now, MFJ is ceasing its on-site production in Starkville, Mississippi on May 17, 2024. This is also the same for our sister companies' Ameritron, Hygain, Cushcraft, Mirage and Vectronics.

Times have changed since I started this business 52 years ago. Our product line grew and grew and prospered. Covid changed everything in businesses including ours. It was the hardest hit that we have ever had, and we never fully recovered.

I turned 80 this year. I had never really considered retirement, but life is so short and my time with my family is so precious.

I want to thank all of our employees who have helped build this company with me over the years. We have many employees who have made MFJ their career for 10, 20, 30, 40 and more years.

We are going to continue to sell MFJ products past May 17, 2024. We have a lot of stock on hand. We will continue to offer repair service work for out-of-warranty and in-warranty units for the foreseeable future.

Finally, a special thanks to all of our customers and our dealers who have made MFJ a worldwide name and a profitable business for so many years. You all are so much appreciated.

Sincerely Yours, 73s

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Martin F. Jue, K5FLU'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Martin F. Jue, K5FLU

## magazine "VHF COMMUNICATIONS"

Some may remember the magazine "VHF Communications", published in the UK, which drew extensively on material from "Dubus", the German VHF/UHF and Microwaves publication.

The magazine commenced publication in 1969 and continued until 2013. All issues of VHF Communications have been scanned in and are now available online at

[https://www.worldradiohistory.com/VHF\\_Communications\\_DE.htm](https://www.worldradiohistory.com/VHF_Communications_DE.htm)

Some of the earlier issues are a bit faint and hard to read but all the later ones are good quality. A wealth of technical articles on all aspects of amateur VHF/UHF and microwave.

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## Waikato VHF Group SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions fall due on 1 January each year for the ensuing twelve months. Our subs for 2024 are:

Member or Associate Member - **\$30.00**

Family or Club Member - **\$35.00**

Family membership means two or more members residing permanently at the same physical address, please give all names and callsigns.

Student member - **\$15.00**

### RENEWAL OF EXISTING MEMBERSHIP:-

If you're renewing membership, your subscription can be made by payment to the Waikato VHF Group, Westpac account, No. 03 1555 0091289-00 via internet banking. When paying by this method, please include name and callsign details where appropriate so our treasurer can identify who the payment came from.

### CHANGE OF DETAILS:-

Any change in membership details can be notified by:

1. posting a [Membership Application/Details Update Form](#) to PO Box 606, Hamilton 3240.  
or
2. scanning the completed form and emailing it to; [branch.81@nzart.org.nz](mailto:branch.81@nzart.org.nz)  
or
3. placing details in an email to our email address in 2 above.

If you've already paid for 2024, you will have been emailed a receipt by our treasurer. **Money saving tip**; please confirm or inquire to avoid paying a second time.