



"OUT AND ABOUT IN VK5"

Issue 11, September 2015

Welcome



Hi all, and welcome to Issue 11, September 2015, of 'Out and About in VK5'.

This little newsletter is now getting exposure overseas, courtesy of Rob VK4FFAB who has been posting on the Field Radio Facebook site and also on the WWFF Facebook site. Thanks Rob.

I am still struggling to get contributors to the newsletter and still having to chase people for subject material. I'm sick of seeing my name in print, so I would really appreciate some articles from new people for the next issue.

Out and About is released at the end of the month, so as long as I receive your info by then, it will appear in Issue 12.

Henry Ford said.....

Enthusiasm is the yeast that makes your hopes shine to the stars. Enthusiasm is the sparkle in your eyes, the swing in your gait. The grip of your hand, the irresistible surge of will and energy to execute your ideas.

So come on. Contribute. I'm sure there are some readers out there with some interesting info that they could share.

Please drop me an email at.....

vk5pas@wia.org.au

The warmer weather is fast approaching, which will undoubtedly see a lot more SOTA & parks activity.

Myself and John VK5BJE have talked about running another introduction day. This would entail a morning of guest speakers and then an afternoon activation session at Mount Lofty and the Cleland Conservation Park.

As the weather warms up I will also kick off the Spring/Summer Friday night activation evenings, which proved to be very popular last season.

Best 73 and happy activating.

Paul, VK5PAS.

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What does 44 mean?

By Paul VK5PAS

44

I was recently on my way home from work, and spoke with Brett VK4FTWO from my mobile, whilst Brett was out activating a park in Queensland. It was great to get Brett in the log, but it was the QSO before ours, that really had me interested.

A VK3 (whose call sign will remain un-named), gave Brett a call and questioned him why he was signing '73 & 44'.

The term '44' is a salutation in the WWFF award program. The first digit '4' represents the four elements: earth, water, air and fire. The second digit '4' represents the four directions: north, south, east and west. It is widely used in Europe by park activators and hunters, and has just started to come into use here in Australia.

One of the gentleman's comments was along the lines....*'I've been licenced for 50 years, probably longer than you've been on the earth, and I've never heard that before'*.

Brett went on to explain the meaning of '44' within the context of the World Wide Flora Fauna program. This did not seem to appease the gentlemen concerned who proceed to tell Brett that '44' meant 'hurry up', and that he should cease using it at the end of his QSOs.

I must admit that I thought Brett handled the situation very well, despite being spoken to in a very condescending manner by the gentleman in question.

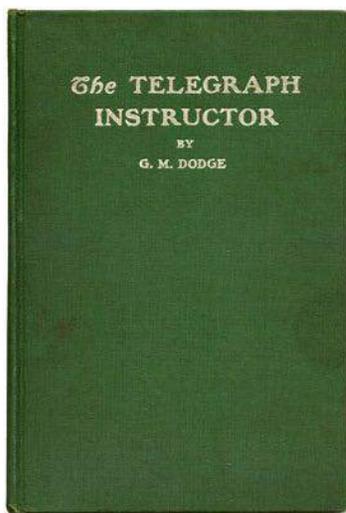
So I did some research on the internet and found a raft of information. Way too much to publish here. But in summary, I learnt that in 1859, Western Union standardized on the '92' code, which was a series of telegraphic abbreviations in which numbers were assigned meaning. Originally, these numbers were from 1 to 92. The reason for this adoption was to reduce bandwidth usage over the telegraph lines and speed transmissions by utilising a numerical code system for various frequently used phrases.

1	Wait a minute.	25	Busy on another wire.
2	Very Important.	26	Put on ground wire.
3	What time is it?	27	Priority, very important.
4	Where shall I go ahead?	28	Do you get my writing?.
5	Have you business for me?	29	Private, deliver in sealed envelope.
6	I am ready.	30	No more - the end.
7	Are you ready?	31	Form 31 train order.
8	Close your key, stop breaking.	32	I understand that I am to
9	Priority business. Wire Chief's call.	33	Answer is paid.
10	Keep this circuit closed.	34	Message for all officers.
12	Do you understand?	35	You may use my signal to answer this.
13	I understand.	37	Inform all interested.
14	What is the weather?	39	Important, with priority on through wire.
15	For you and others to copy.	44	Answer promptly by wire.
17	Lightning here.	55	Important.
18	What's the trouble?	73	Best Regards.
19	Form 19 train order.	77	I have a message for you.
21	Stop for meal.	88	Love and kisses.
22	Wire test.	91	Superintendent's signal.
23	All stations copy.	92	Deliver Promptly.
24	Repeat this back.	134	Who is at the key?

Above:- Western Union codes. c/o Wikipedia.

These were later included as part of the 'Phillips Code', a series of abbreviations first published in 1879 by Walter Phillips of the Associated

Press for use in the telegraphic transmission of press dispatches.



Above:- The book entitled ‘The Telegraph Instructor’ by G.M. Dodge, released in 1911. Image c/o www.moresetelegraphclub.org

There is some excellent information on

<http://www.morsetelegraphclub.org/library/files/html/dodge/dodge.htm>

While most of the codes have fallen into disuse, the form 19 and 31 train orders remained in railroad use long beyond the end of landline telegraphy, the use of ‘30’ at the end of a news wire story was continued through the teletypewriter era, and the ‘73’ and ‘88’ greetings remain in use in amateur radiotelegraphy.

Two non-standard codes, rarely used, were coined within the amateur radiotelegraphy service. The Young Ladies Radio League (YLRL) organized in 1939 and quickly coined ‘33’ as ‘Love sealed with mutual respect and friendship between one YL and another Y.’.

More recently, ‘72’ has been used in QRP operation to signify a ‘73’ sent with reduced transmitter power.

For another very interesting read, please have a look at.....

<http://www.civilwarsignals.org/pages/tele/wurules1866/92code.html>

It contains some very interesting information.



WOOD’S PLAN
OF
TELEGRAPHIC INSTRUCTION,
ARRANGED BY THE
PROFESSORS AND TUTORS
OF
“MORSE’S TELEGRAPH INSTITUTE”
SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1864, by
“Morse’s Telegraphic Institute” Association,
In the Clerk’s office of the District Court for the Northern District
of New York.

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The Signal Corps Association 1860 - 1865
For: education purposes only.
DO NOT COPY



The Signal Corps Association 1860 - 1865
<http://www.civilwarsignals.org/>

Above:- Woods Plan of Telegraphic Instruction, published in 1864 by Morse’s Telegraphic Institute. Image courtesy of www.civilwarsignals.org

So is there any harm in using the term ‘44’ for WWFF park activations. Personally, I think

not. However, everyone is entitled to their opinion.

Out of interest, I also telephoned ACMA who said there was absolutely no problems in park activators using the term ‘44’ to say goodbye to fellow park enthusiasts.

REFERENCES.

Wikipedia, 2015, <[http://www.amateur-radio-wiki.net/index.php?title=Codes and Alphabets](http://www.amateur-radio-wiki.net/index.php?title=Codes_and_Alphabets)>, viewed 26th Aug 2015.

Wikipedia, 2015, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/92_Code>, viewed 26th Aug 2015

SOTA 10m and 6m Challenge

By Paul VK5PAS



A reminder that the 10m and 6m challenge is currently under way for the Summits on the Air (SOTA) program.

The SOTA 10m and 6m challenge is in two x three month blocks. The first period has ended. It concluded on Friday 14th August. The next period commences in November 2015 and

concludes in February 2016.

Chasers:

For every unique summit you chase on 10m or 6m you get a multiplier.
For every unique activator chased you get 1 chaser challenge point.
Your final score is chaser challenge points * multipliers.

Activators:

For every unique summit you activate on 10m or 6m you get a multiplier.
For every unique chaser worked you get 1 activator challenge point.
Your final score is activator challenge points * multipliers.

More information can be located on the SOTA reflector, which is linked off the right hand side of the SOTAWatch website at.....

<http://reflector.sota.org.uk/t/the-2015-2016-official-sota-challenge/9822>

SOTA Spotter

By Paul VK5PAS



SOTA Spotter is a simple application that retrieves spots from sotawatch.org and displays them in an easy to read manner. It is written for devices running Android versions 4.0.3 and above, like smartphones and tablets.

Main features:

- Retrieves spots from sotawatch.org
- Spot sending-via internet or via SMS
- Spot filtering (by band, mode, call sign, association, region and summit)
- Notifications (vibrations, ringtone and LED)
- Multiple colour themes.

It can be located on Google play.....

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ro.netroute.sotaspotter&hl=en>



I recently received a QSL card from a VK3 ham, for my recent operation as VI5ANZAC. Unfortunately I was unable to reciprocate by sending back a QSL card as no VI5ANZAC cards were ever printed up by the WIA. QSL for the special ANZAC calls is via eQSL & LOTW only. Secondly, there was no return postage in the envelope.

I managed to track down the ham concerned and phoned him and explained the situation (he did not have an email address recorded on QRZ.com).

Personally, I love collecting QSL cards but I hate writing them out, so I have a QSL Manager in the UK, Charles MoOXO. Fortunately I have a handful of cards that I keep at home, just in case I get some QSL card requests direct here. Which I do, despite, spelling it out very clearly on my QRZ.com page how to get a QSL from me.

As a result of this recent QSL request, I thought I would touch a little bit on QSLing. The old saying that ‘a QSL is the final courtesy of a QSO’ is very true and most amateurs enjoy receiving QSL cards. But if you are to be successful in collecting QSL cards, you need to follow some basic rules.

Here are some tips:-

1. Always check QRZ.com first to see what the QSL route is, and if there are any special requirements.
2. Remember that not all hams QSL
3. Nor do many send out traditional hard copy QSL cards. Many hams use eQSL or LOTW.
4. Always include return postage. In Australia that consists of a Stamped Self Addressed Envelope. For overseas, I send either US dollars or IRC's dependant on the instructions on QRZ.com of the station I am sending the QSL card to. Do not expect a high return rate if you do not include return postage costs. If you get a card at all, it will most likely be back via the Bureau.
5. Ensure your SSAE is large enough for a QSL card.
6. Be aware that some countries suffer from mail theft. Do not include call signs on the outside of envelopes. And ensure you seal the envelope well and ensure you 'hide' any \$\$\$ inside.
7. Patience. Remember that a busy QSL card Manager can handle thousands of direct requests per month. They may have to wait for logs once the DXpedition is complete. Don't send an email to the Manager or the ham, 2 weeks after sending your initial request.
8. Always make sure that your QSL card is legible and contains accurate information.

There is a plethora of information on the internet regarding QSLing. Some good sites include.....

<http://www.ac6v.com/qsltips.htm>

<http://w5ue.net/qsl-slide1.html>



If you are interested in chasing DX park activators, I strongly recommend that you keep an eye on Hamspots. It can be found at.....

<http://hamspots.net/wwff/>

Information	Settings	Searches	Digital Clubs	Digital Modes	Special	LOTW & eQSL	BANDS	Online?
SFI 92, A 5, K 1					** WWFF, FLORA FAUNA **			
Online : 00:00:39					227 Online 10:40:19 - UTC			
C Aug-31 09:09	+1h	OH0/DL3SEM	OHFF-0037	Aland Is.	21010.00	CW	RA0W	trx QSO
C Aug-31 08:33	+2h	FSNXX/P	FFF-0702	France	14044.00	CW	IZBEFD	# 702
C Aug-31 08:17	+2h	FSNXX/P	FFF-0702	France	14044.00	CW	HA0LG	FFF-702
P Aug-31 08:03	+2h	CT9/DK1AX	CTFF-0030	Madeira Is.	21008.00	PSK31	UTSCO	
C Aug-31 08:00	+2h	CT9/DK1AX	CTFF-0030	Madeira Is.	14011.30	CW	EA2DT	QSK: 14012.6
C Aug-31 07:46	+2h	CT9/DK1AX	CTFF-0030	Madeira Is.	14011.30	CW	DK1AX	AF-014 CTFF-0030
C Aug-31 07:45	+2h	DL8WT/P	DLFF-0114	Germany	7032.00	CW	G3VQO	CW DAARP-222 + DLFF-114
C Aug-31 07:40	+2h	DL8BV	DLFF-0134	Germany	14044.00	CW	EA2DT	
C Aug-31 07:34	+3h	DL8BV	DLFF-0134	Germany	14044.00	CW	9A4FM	dlff 134
C Aug-31 07:17	+3h	SP1/DL1EKO/P	SPFF-0211	Poland	14044.00	CW	W3ILM	SPFF-211 in call area SP1 not SP
C Aug-31 07:12	+3h	SP1/DL1EKO/P	SPFF-0211	Poland	14044.00	CW	YU7RQ	
C Aug-31 07:08	+3h	SP1/DL1EKO/P	SPFF-0211	Poland	14044.00	CW	ISFLN	Toni SPFF-0211
C Aug-31 07:04	+3h	CT9/DK1AX	CTFF-0030	Madeira Is.	10113.40	CW	DK1AX	cq
C Aug-31 07:02	+3h	SP1/DL1EKO/P	SPFF-0211	Poland	14044.00	CW	HA0LG	SPFF-211 Toni 44!
C Aug-31 06:58	+3h	SP1/DL1EKO/P	SPFF-0211	Poland	14044.00	CW	EA2DT	
P Aug-31 06:47	+3h	CT9/DK1AX	CTFF-0030	Madeira Is.	10143.60	RTTY	FSRRS	
C Aug-31 06:47	+3h	IG9/IV3TMM	IFF-0435	Italy	14257.00	SSB	IK2ZJN	IIA-G001 IFF-0435
C Aug-31 06:46	+3h	CT9/DK1AX	CTFF-0030	Madeira Is.	10143.50	SSB	DK1AX	cq
C Aug-31 06:43	+3h	IG9/IV3TMM	IFF-0435	Italy	14257.00	SSB	F4WBN	AF 019
C Aug-31 05:47	+4h	IG9/IV3TMM	IFF-0435	Italy	14260.00	SSB	IV3TMM	AF-019 IFF-435
C Aug-31 05:36	+5h	VK2IO/P	VKFF-0212	Australia	7032.00		VK4RF	SOTA VK2/SM-051 (WWFF) VKFF-0212
C Aug-31 05:35	+5h	VK2IO/P	VKFF-0212	Australia	7032.00		VK4RF	SOTA VK2/SM-051
C Aug-31 05:13	+5h	VK1RX	VKFF-0972	Australia	14310.00	SSB	VK3HRA	(WWFF) - VKFF-072
C Aug-31 04:58	+5h	VK1DI/2	VKFF-0230	Australia	7103.00	SSB	VK4RF	SOTA VK2/MN-079
C Aug-31 04:43	+5h	VK1DI/2	VKFF-0230	Australia	14310.00	SSB	VK3HRA	(WWFF) - VKFF-230
C Aug-31 04:39	+6h	VK1RX	VKFF-0972	Australia	7090.00		VK3HRA	(WWFF) - VKFF-072
C Aug-31 01:39	+8h	VK1DI/2	VKFF-0230	Australia	10130.00	CW	VK3HRA	(WWFF) - VKFF-230
C Aug-31 01:20	+8h	VK1DI/2	VKFF-0230	Australia	14310.00	SSB	VK3HRA	(WWFF) - VKFF-230
C Aug-31 00:48	+8h	VK1DI/2	VKFF-0230	Australia	7090.00		VK3HRA	(WWFF) - VKFF-230
C Aug-30 22:32	+8h	VO1/DJ8QP	VEFF-0098	Canada	10110.00	CW	NJ1T	Now QRT
C Aug-30 22:12	+8h	VO1/DJ8QP	VEFF-0098	Canada	10110.00	CW	DM5YRL	



I have placed a calendar on the WWFF website, which I will populate as I become aware of events. If there is a particular event you would like to see go on the calendar, please drop me an email at.....

vk5pas@wia.org.au

Qualifying VK5 Parks for WWFF

By Paul VK5PAS



In the files section of the WWFF Australia Yahoo group, you can find a spreadsheet of qualifying VK5 Conservation Parks for the WWFF program.

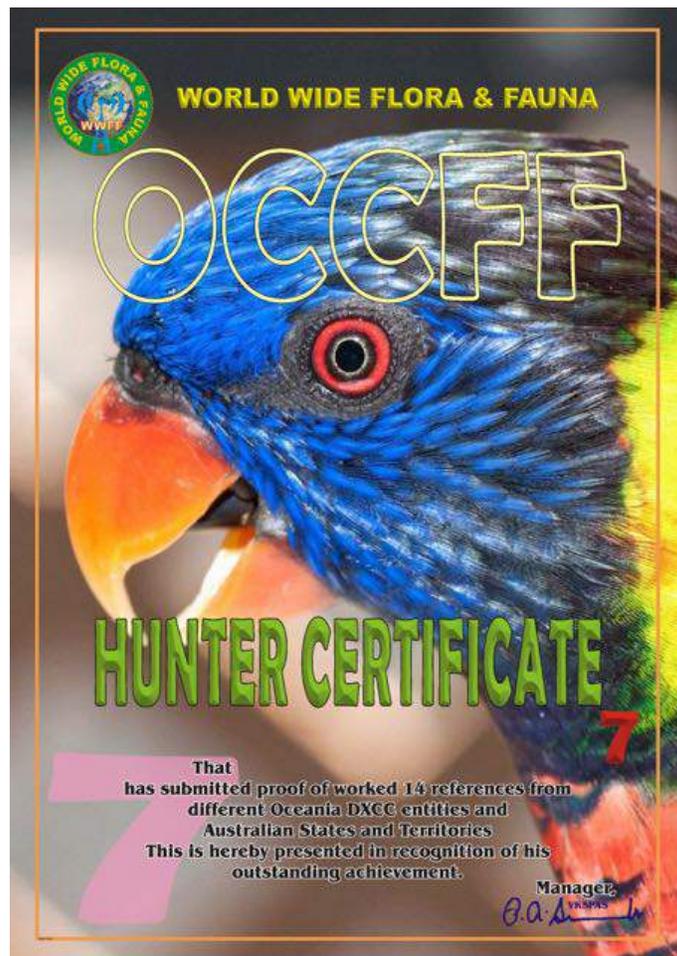
New OCCFF Award

By Paul VK5PAS

I am pleased to announce that a new WWFF award will soon be available on WWFF LogSearch.....

The OCCFF Hunter award.

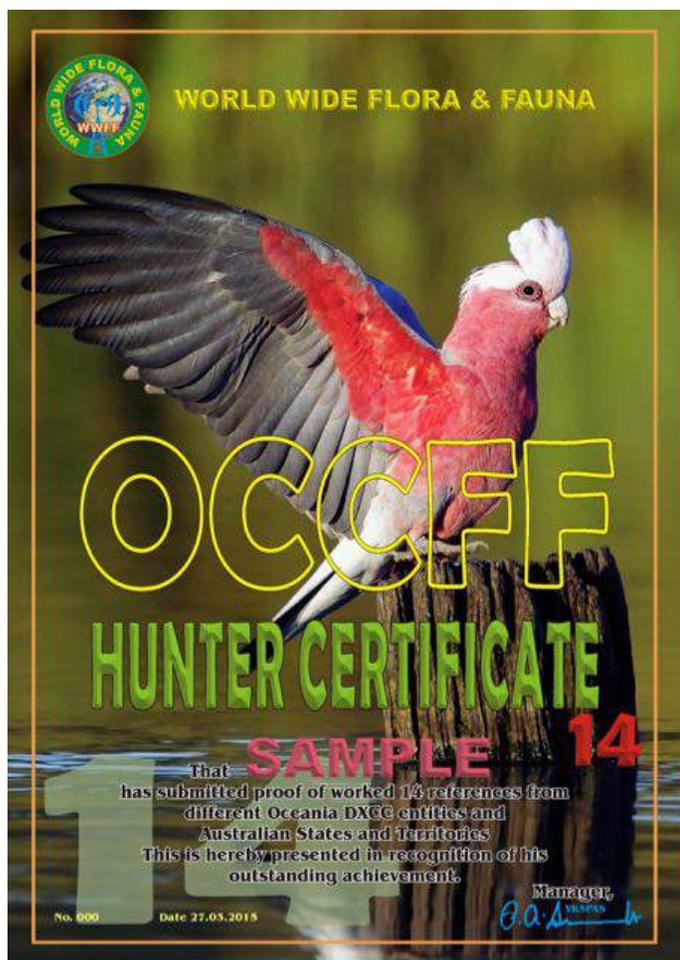
It will be issued for working 7, 14, 21, etc different reference areas in Oceania DXCC entities and Australian States and Territories.



All applications will be electronic via LogSearch, which I will receive. I will then forward out the certificates via email as a PDF file.

I would like to thank Pit YO3JW for designing the certificates.

Who will be the first to receive an OCCFF award??



PAFF-0080 Yerseekse Moeren

By Danny OT4V

Our first WWFF activation outside Belgium : **PAFF-0080** in Yerseke, the mussel capital of Holland. A very nice and quiet area with tiny canals and little ponds.

Together with my buddy OR7Z we set up our stations here for a morning CQ /PA.



Above:- QSL card. Image courtesy of Danny OT4V.

During our activation we got the visit from Jan, PD3JAG. A very warm and symphatetic fellow living not that far away from Yerseke.

I made 206 QSO's in 33 DXCC and 4 continents. **VK5PAS** was the best DX, worked on 20m.

We had a nice after-party with fresh mussels, fries and of course a cool beer!



Above:- Danny OT4V & Mario OR7Z. Photo courtesy of Danny OT4V

KML files

By Paul VK5PAS

I have created KML files for all qualifying parks in each Australian State and territory. They can be found in the Files section of the WWFF Australia Yahoo group.

They can be downloaded and used in Google Earth to show you the location of each park. A very handy tool.

Please put them to use. Data taken from Allen's parksnparks site.

Aerial as opposed to antenna

By Doc VK5BUG



Having Australian Defence Force and Marconi School of Wireless professional training backgrounds, and thus being a 50-year user of the term "aerial" as opposed to "antenna", I retrieved the following item from 26 July 2015 RAN Communications Branch website:

"From Jeff Sykes (<http://www.godfreydykes.info/>) -

The word "antenna" was never used by the British, the rationale being "Get it right!" A device that emits and receives radio waves is an A E R I A L - full stop.

If you were a German or a French person you would say ANTENNE; if a Spaniard, ANTENA (one letter 'n') and an Italian ANTENA.

Marconi, an Italian, is known as the father of communications, but, in the Royal Navy, Admiral of the Fleet H.B. Jackson (then Captain Jackson RN) had as much to do with radio

communication as did Marconi, at least in the embryonic days of the late 1890s.

Unfortunately for us, our American friends copied the Italians but we Brits say AERIAL.

This paragraph is taken from Chapter XVI of the Royal Navy Wireless Telegraphy Manual dated 1920."

Given that I am a derivative British subject and in no way American, AERIAL is my natural option. The two terms have become somewhat blurred & as long as we all know what it is we are are talking about, either term "works" in my opinion.

However, further evidence of severe molestation of the English language and grammar may be endorsed by listening to any sports commentator and a number of newsreaders from today.

Australians have become very adept at applying their laziness to what is said and what is written, although the digital age is rapidly removing both those skills from society anyway.

regards de Doc/VK5BUG

Recent Park Activations

Here is a list of recent park activations by VK5's (that I am aware of). A few more activations this month compared to July. Can't wait for

Spring and the warmer weather! In fact once the weather does warm up, I will quick off the Spring/Summer Friday night activation evenings which proved to be very popular last Summer.



- Sandy Creek Conservation Park VKFF-933, Stuart VK5STU/p (30/8/2015)
- Winninowie Conservation Park, Chris VK4FR/5 (30/8/2015)?????
- Lashmar Conservation Park, VKFF-902, Rob VK4AAC/5 (29/8/2015)
- Pelican Lagoon Conservation Park VKFF-926, Rob VK4AAC/5 (22/8/2015)
- Warren Conservation Park VKFF-941, Paul VK5PAS (28/8/2015)
- Giles Conservation Park VKFF-884, Paul VK5PAS (27/8/2015)
- Scott Creek Conservation Park VKFF-788, Paul VK5PAS (22/8/2015)
- Parndana Conservation Park VKFF-925, Rob VK4AAC/5 (22/8/2015)
- Mount George Conservation Park VKFF-784, Paul VK5PAS (21/8/2015)

- Marino Rocks Conservation Park, VK5ARG (16/8/2015)
- Bimbowrie Conservation Park, Hugh VK5NHG/p (14/8/2015)
- Mount Brown Conservation Park, Ian VK5CZ/p (13/8/2015)
- Dutchmans Stern Conservation Park, Ian VK5CZ/p (11/8/2015)
- Mimbara Conservation Park, David VK5PL/p (8/8/2015)
- Pelican Lagoon Conservation Park, Rob VK4AAC/5 (8/8/2015)
- Telowie Gorge Conservation Park, Gordon VK5GY (8/8/2015)
- Ferries McDonald Conservation Park VKFF-881, Paul VK5PAS (2/8/2015)
- Cromer Conservation Park VKFF-779, Paul VK5PAS (31/7/2015)

For more information on the VK5 National & Conservation Parks Award please have a look at.....

<http://www.vk5parks.com/>

And for more information on the World Wide Flora Fauna (WWFF) program, please have a look at.....

<http://www.wfffaustralia.com/>

Recent SOTA activations



Ian VK5CZ and Hugh VK5NHG have been leading the way with SOTA activations here in VK5.

Here is a list of known recent VK5 activations.....

- Mount Jay South VK5/ NE-047, Ian VK5CZ (29/8/2015)
- Hallett Hill VK5/ SE-003, Hugh VK5NHG/p (29/8/2015)
- Mount Arden VK5/ NE-034, Ian VK5CZ (29/8/2015)
- New Campbell Hill VK5/ SE-007, Hugh VK5NHG/p (26/8/2015)
- Mooleugore Hill VK5/ NE-115, Hugh VK5NHG/p (14/8/2015)
- Binberrie Hill VK5/ NE-114, Hugh VK5NHG/p (14/8/2015)
- Mount Brown VK5/ NE-014, Ian VK5CZ (13/8/2015)
- The Dutchmans Stern VK5/ NE-028, Ian VK5CZ/p (11/8/2015)

- Mount Stokes VK5/ NE-050, Ian VK5CZ/p (10/8/2015)
- Bumbunga Hill VK5/ SE-015, Hugh VK5NHG/p (9/8/2015)
- Mt Bryan VK5/ SE-001, Hugh VK5NHG/p (7/8/2015)
- Black Hill VK5/ NE-031, Ian VK5CZ/p (2/8/2015)
- Black Hill VK5/ NE-031, Hugh VK5NHG/p (2/8/2015)
- VK5/ NE-031, Ian VK5CZ/p (1/8/2015)
- VK5/ NE-031, Hugh VK5NHG/p (1/8/2015)
- Mt Plantagenet VK5/ NE-013, Ian VK5CZ/p (1/8/2015)
- Mt Plantagenet VK5/ NE-013, Hugh VK5NHG/p (1/8/2015)

For more information on SOTA in VK5, please check out.....

<http://www.sota.org.uk/Associations/viewAssociation/prefix/VK5>



Above:- Hugh VK5NHG on Black Hill VK5/ NE-062. Image courtesy of Ian VK5CZ

New VK5 Parks Yahoo members

By Paul VK5PAS



Welcome to the following new members of the VK5 Parks Yahoo group.....

- Dene VK5DO

A reminder that the VK5 Parks Award Yahoo group can be found at.....

<https://au.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/sanpcpa/info>

It is a great way to keep up to date with the latest news, who is activating what park and when, etc.

It is FREE and EASY to join. Why not check it out and consider joining.

New VK5 Parks Facebook members

By Paul VK5PAS



Welcome to the following new members of the VK5 Parks Facebook site....

- Ayswaria VK5FASH

The VK5 Parks Award Facebook site can be found at.....

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/528980233908284/>

I am pleased to report that we now have 68 members from around Australia, NZ & overseas.

Recent Award recipients

By Paul VK5PAS

Here is a list of VK5's who have recently qualified for SOTA, WWFF, VKFF, VK5 Parks, and KRMNPA awards. Interstate recipients of the VK5 Parks Award are also included.

If you do receive a certificate, please drop me an email to let me know, with preferably a copy of the certificate, so I can include it here.

Summits on the Air (SOTA)

- Paul VK5PAS
 - 250 points Activator



World Wide Flora Fauna (WWFF)

- **Jeff VK5JK**
 - **Gold VKFF Hunter**



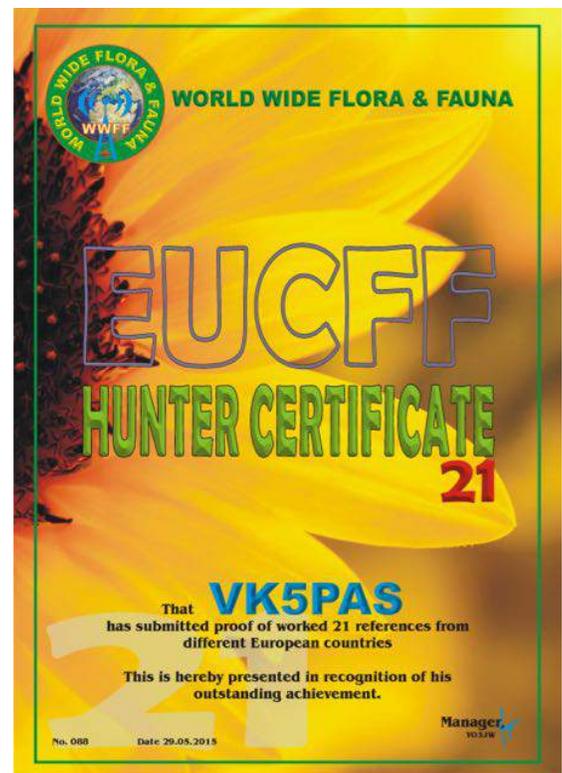
- **Rob VK4AAC/5**
 - **Bronze VKK Activator**



- **Bob VK5FO**
 - **Silver VKFF Hunter**



- **Paul VK5PAS**
 - **EUCC 7, 14, and 21.**



▪ Paul VK5PAS

- SPFF Hunter – 24 SPFF references



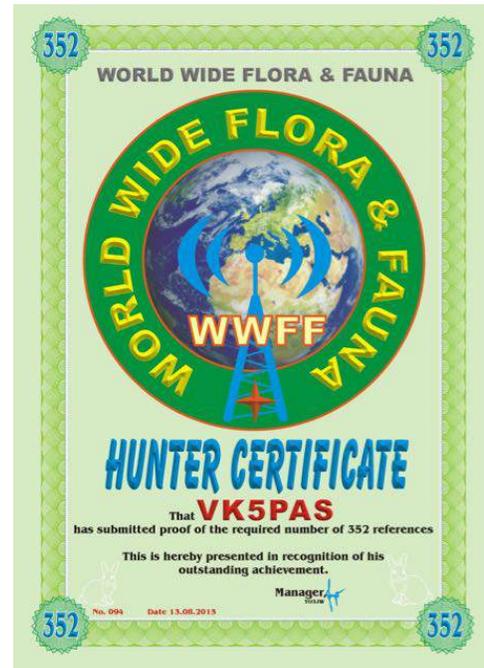
▪ Paul VK5PAS

- ONFF Silver Hunter



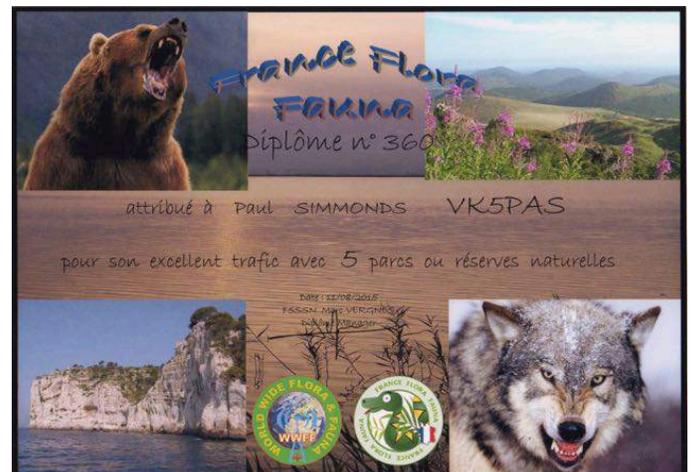
▪ Paul VK5PAS

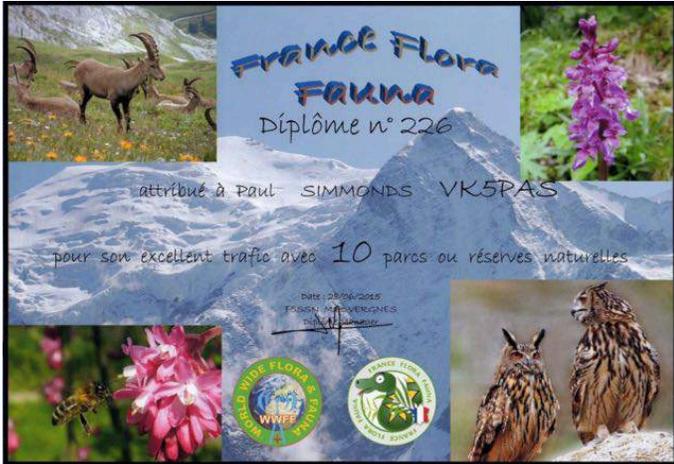
- WWFF Hunter 352 references



▪ Paul VK5PAS

- France Flora Fauna 5 & 10 FFF references.





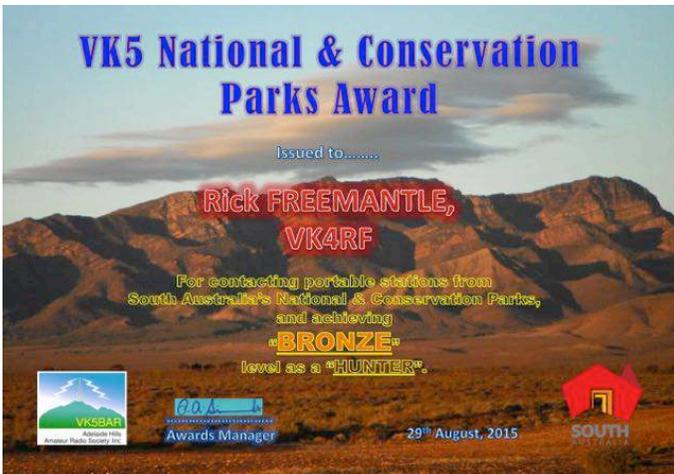
Mimbara CP and Hopkins Creek CP – 8/8/2015

By David VK5NQP



VK5 Parks Award

- **Rick VK4RF**
 - **Bronze Hunter**



I had planned to be at Mimbara CP by 23:00UTC, but I got the conversion to local time mixed up, so it was past UTC rollover when I arrived at the turnoff on the Roberts town/Burra bitumen road just past the Burra Gorge Camping area turnoff. The dirt track heads east into the hills and soon the first gate is in sight. It would be handy to have a co driver. To open the gates. Soon the next gate is reached and the park starts soon after on the right hand side.

Keith Roget Memorial National Parks Award.

NIL KNOWN



I drive up the ridge where I had planned to setup, but it is wide open and the wind whistles across the hillside so I decide to go a bit further down and find a clearing on the next smaller ridge a little more protected.

The gear is unloaded & dropped over the fence and in a short time, despite a few tangles, the antenna is up. I was trying out a modified golf buggy to hold the radio. It has a seat and a table and can be used to transport all the gear for a short distance.

The IC 718 radio is switched on, a quick search for a clear frequency & my first calls go out. First up is a Tassie station VK7NWT and Peter VK3PF and soon I am getting regular calls.

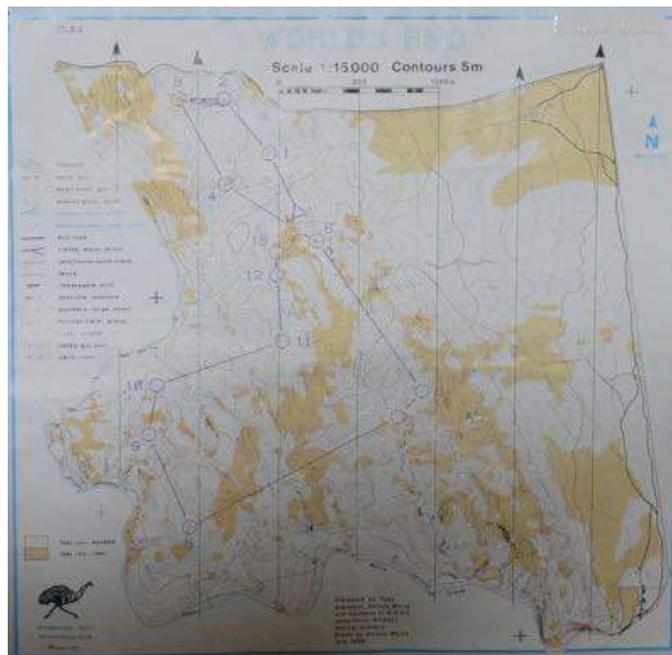


The weather was sunny with hardly any clouds at first, but that wind! It was not strong but it was sooo cold. Half an hour later a big dark cloud blotted out the sun and the temperature dropped markedly, so in a short break I grabbed my jacket & stayed warm.

The calls started slowing down and after about an hour, and 29 contacts, stopped altogether and as I was supposed to be activating another park I started to pack up. I had calls from

VK1,2,3,5 and 7, including a couple of VKFF parks and a SOTA summit. Most of them were booming in at over strength 9 on the end fed half wave antenna thru a sotabeams end fed match unit.

In the 1980s I used to go Orienteering in the area that is now Mimbara, the map was called Worlds End as that was what the area was known as. The map is a mix of treed & open areas with hills in the west side & flat on the east side. It about 4km North to South, and about the same East-West. Up in the hills there are many wombat burrows and kangaroos and emus are also seen. I think there is only access from the East road which is inside the park and the North road which is outside it.



Competitors in orienteering must navigate around the controls in order, punching their card at each control point to prove they were there. The course shown on the map is about 8km. You can travel any way between controls avoiding hills or climbing them if you are so

inclined. The fastest around the course is the winner.

Where I activated the park was northwest of control number 3 adjacent to the fence line.

Down on the lower right corner of the map where the road crosses Burra Creek brings back another memory of my younger days.

I used to navigate for my dad in car rallies and Worlds End Creek was always used when there was a rally in the area. There were always a very large crowd of spectators at the crossing to watch the cars splash through.



The photo below is one I took while spectating.



In those days we had to plot map references and could take any route between points but had to follow instructions such as approach control 'X' from the south or via a crossroads from the east and so on. Of course we had to find the shortest route to save time. A target time was set at an average speed of 60km/hour. If you did arrive early you could nominate your correct arrival time, if late you lost 1 point per minute. The winner was the one who lost least points.

This was on roads open to the public and at night, so you could see other vehicles by their lights.

Nowadays, rallies are run on closed roads and in daylight and the fastest time wins.

This brings me nicely to my proposed activation of Hopkins Creek CP.

As I travelled away from Mimbara, I turned off the Robertstown road and found some cars and a closed road sign. Yes, there was a Rally on today in the area and all the roads across the hills were closed for the rally. I had to detour south to Robertstown and try and find my way to access the park. The map I had was a 1:250,000 map so did not show all the very small roads and bends and I thought I had gone too far and never found where I wanted to go.

Looking at the map on my PC when I got home I think I was just a couple of hundred metres from finding the right spot when I turned around and gave up.



This is the view at the North east corner of Mimbara. It would be a nice activation spot with nice squid pole attachment posts. There are no ID signs in the park yet, only a couple like this advising no public access on the internal tracks.

Access to the park is from the south near Robertstown, via a few gates & from the west near the Burra Gorge camp area turnoff on the Burra road with two gates to pass through.



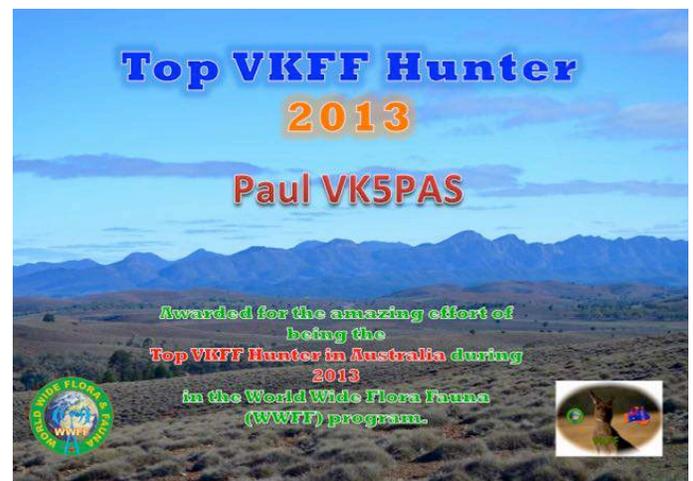
As a follow up to the recently released Top VKFF Activator certificates in the World Wide Flora Fauna (WWFF) program, I have now released the Top VKFF Hunter certificates.

These will be released annually to the Top VKFF Hunter (the amateur who has worked the most number of VKFF reference areas annually).

I have started off in 2013, as this is the year that WWFF kicked off in Australia.

2013.

1. Larry VK5LY and Paul VK5PAS (39 VKFF references).
2. Ron VK3AFW and Bernard VK3AMB (38 VKFF references)
3. Nick VK3ANL (35 references)
4. Peter VK3PF (34 references)
5. Allen VK3HRA (32 references).



2014.

1. Peter VK3PF (85 VKFF references)
2. Paul VK5PAS (83 VKFF references)
3. Amanda VK3FQSO (81 VKFF references)
4. Nev VK5WG and Matt VK1MA (62 VKFF references)
5. Ron VK3AFW (59 VKFF references)



Got under way early from Clare and had a nice drive to Orooroo to stop at the coffee shop and buy some smoko and lunch. I must say the salad roll was really nice after my long walk to my first Summit. I had permission from Ben to walk to the summit but this time I took the Colorado a lot further than I could take my poor

old Subaru so the walk was only about 2 km. Up that ridge behind my ute !!.



Backed the ute up off the side of the track and set out. My legs were a bit sore today I did a couple bike rides on the weekend so not sure why I was so sore today, maybe the 12% hill I started on was the reason. I did the walk in about 40 minutes and the wind was not so strong on the summit so it was a nice day after all.



Great out look down south from here that must be Coomoroo Hill off to the south. I had lots of

chasers on 40m ssb then a follow up on 40m cw, I heard vk6nu call me but lost him . Knowing he was about I re spotted on 20m cw but he was not there but I did manage to get a few more contacts on 20. Thanks to VK1MA for the S2S on 40m , I did listen for him on 28mhz ssb but not having an antenna for 10m I was hopeful. I heard nothing and nobody responded to me on 28 MHz to be expected with current conditions and a non resonate antenna. As I was about to pack up I noticed a spot msg on my phone and vk2yk asked me to try 14.310 ssb and we made a contact there it was lucky I saw the msg I was shutting down my phone and saw it. Thanks everyone for the contacts and Sue and Ben for the use of Stokes Hill.

Next Day Dutchmans Stern .

This was going to be a tough climb when I did it last time in the warmer weather and was afraid more of snake bite than any thing. At the start of the walking track to the top I decided to go up the down track or clockwise around the walking loop as I had a plan to bush bash off that track. With 6 waypoints saved in the e-trex I headed out with great gusto until I saw the creek that looked so easy on Google Earth, I thought it would make a shorter trip to the top. Well the bloody Gamin would not select the mode I needed to have my location the waypoint and the floating arrow to point me where I wanted to go. It was a one foot in the grave moment “I DON’T BELIEVE IT ” the bloody thing was working ok at home when I did several trips around the place looking for my test waypoint. Oh well not to worry the terrain I selected on Google was pretty ambitious anyhow. So I headed up the walking

track a lot further which was giving me altitude as I went.



The Summit is that hill in the back ground of my shot or somewhere near there. This is somewhere near the start on the walking track which is very well made with a km post every so often just to bother you when you think the top is near and it says 4 km to go. At a certain point though on this track it starts to heard north and that is where I turned south, I still had two waypoints to work with from this spot all the ones up along the creek had been abandoned as being of any use. I found the first one at the top of the ridge and got back to familiar ground I had been on last time I activated this summit. The bush is really thick about chest height most on the time, the greenies have either shot or hunted out the goats so the track was over grown but I was making way as best I could.



This is a shot of the bush I am trying to negotiate through and that is Devils Peak and Mount Brown of in the distance. I did stumble across a survey marker of all things when walking along the top of the range. It was about another 2 km to the waypoint of the actual summit so it was a slow process and I was wondering if I would make the spot time.



This is the view out to the north west once on the other side of the range I don't think it's a summit but a mighty impressive lump of dirt.



The final climb was easy on this western side of the range the wind was very strong and not as much bush grows here plus the goat made a track up to the top.



This is my poor set up, the poor old pre dinosaur grass tree [yuka] helping modern technology at work by hold up my antenna pole. The dipole was only about 5 metres at the centre but it still worked pretty good I was working vk2 in the middle of the day on 40m and had a nice pile up of chasers. Nev gave me a call on ssb and I exchanged rst with him on cw so that was a first for me . I have heard Wayne

activating on CW only and work SSB chasers so it worked well. I must say the little YK rig went well but it was very noisy with the wind being so strong I had the volume level up and held my hands over my ears to help hear at times, that made my side tone very loud on tx. 20m was really good around VK, VK2IO gave me 579 and I got John VK6NU in the log this time but he had qsb problems but after I sent his report several times he pieced it together. I must thank Angus VK2SB who was on the frequency calling cq when I first got set up , I worked him and told him I was doing SOTA so he gave me the frequency to continue on with the activation. Thanks to my loyal chasers and a couple new ones VK2SB and VK2NP nice to work you.



This is my shack for the moment its funny I spent at least 4 hours walking there and 3 and a half hours back to the ute and I was on air maybe 30 minutes tops. The rig is the YK HB-1B 5 Band and a SOTA beams link dipole using that very light 2200 mAh battery that weighs a few grams and it runs the rig quite nicely for the time spent on air. I think it would probably give service for an hour or possibly more it did not seem to drop much more than .2 of a volt on the

screen and only took maybe 10 minutes on the charger once I got back to camp.

Big day out I walked 16.2 km round trip 4.5 hours walking and about 3 hours stopped, at least the useless garmin told me that much. Not that I am bitter it would not cooperate finding my way points, possibly op error, more than likely the case. Well an un eventful decent but I did find a better goat track down the eastern side of the ridge that got me clear of so much under story bush and into a sheoke forest which was easier. Dare I say I saved a couple way points for next time in the general area to the walking track to try my accent from there HI.

Thanks again everyone next stop Mount Brown.

Day 4 Mount Brown

I had a relaxed start to the day with no real hurry to get a start the day was very foggy and damp and I thought it would clear as the day went on.



The Colorado looks a bit dirty after all the rain but I am sure the local farmers are enjoying this rain on their crops.

Off I set on the 6 km hike to Mt brown it is up along a creek bed for about 3 km so not a hard walk to start out and I saw some very tame locals having breakfast along the way.



I really need a better camera.



Let the fun begin . On my back pack I placed the hood of my rain jacket on my sqiddy and covered the pack with the coat so if it did rain my gear would stay dry. Legs pretty sore on this climb and it took me probably another hour of puff and stop and so on until I reached to top.



Fog and mist covering Devils Peak and Richmond hill back to my north as the track makes its way up.



More Kangaroos one with two heads.

Made it to the top and told a short story in the visitors book then set up for SOTA.

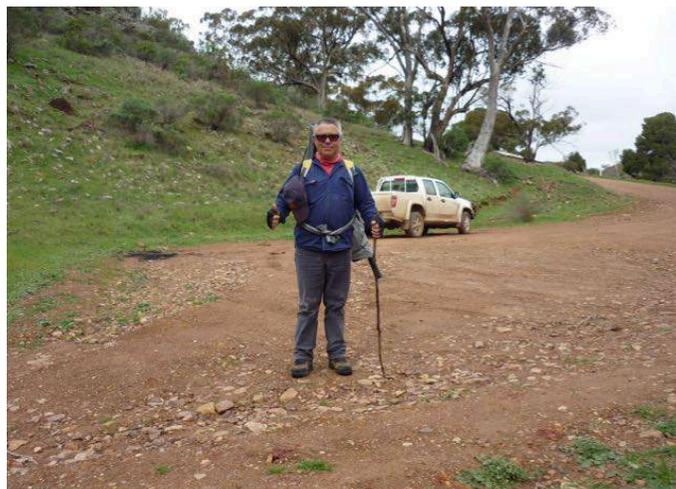


Another selfy of my great hiking boots and rig, the rocks were very slippery when I set up my antenna so I was real careful . I had a very nice pile up waiting for me on 40m of locals the band seemed very quiet so all vk5's on ssb and vk2io vk3byd vk5is on 40m cw then a re spot and found vk6nu on 20m cw.



I had a short listen to the beacons on 15/17 m and heard a couple ja jcc chasers but decided to pack up and head on down. Thanks for all the contacts.

The end of another great activating time in Quorn what a great place and really nice folk, the caravan park is great with a good selection of accommodation and nice people to make your stay a welcome one.



Looking a bit worse for ware and after all that I am still suffering from SOTA fever, I can't explain it and hope there is no cure.

cheers de Ian vk5cz .

Cecil the lion

By Rob VK4FFAB

I'm sure that most if not all of us here, who are SOTA and/or park activators, have a love for the bush and wildlife. And I guess all would have seen the recent incident involving Cecil the lion. Cecil was a male Southwest African lion, aged 13 years, who was shot and killed in July. Initially wounded with an arrow fired by Walter Palmer, an American dentist, and

recreational big game hunter, Cecil was then tracked and about 40 hours after initially being wounded, was killed with a rifle. Cecil was then skinned and his head removed.

Cecil had been a favourite in the Hwange National Park, and was fitted with a GPS collar as part of an Oxford University study.



Above:- Cecil, in 2010. Image courtesy of Wikipedia.

The game park owner accused of letting Palmer illegally hunt and kill Cecil, has been charged in connection with the killing. Palmer’s guide was also been charged. There is also talk of having Palmer extradited from the USA to Zimbabwe to face charges.

Amazing that these sort of things occur in 2015!!!



I recently had a query from a regular VK5 & VKFF activator as to whether generators could be used during both VK5 Parks Award and

VKFF activations. The answer is yes. However, the general use of generators in South Australian parks is now allowed. I’ve extracted the information below from the DEWNR website.

Remember, that if you do use a generator in a park, you will most certainly get into trouble with DEWNR staff and this will reflect poorly on the hobby of amateur radio and the parks programs in general.

Using generators in parks

To make sure that parks are quiet places to visit, generators are not allowed in most parks. If you need to use a generator for medical reasons you should contact the DEWNR District Officer responsible for the park you plan on visiting and inform them of your medical condition and that you require the use of a generator.

Please advise the District Office of the specifications of your generator and that you have a medical letter/certificate verifying your condition. The District Ranger may grant permission after consideration of your request, the park regulations, and individual logistical considerations of each site.



The thoughts of a Madman

By Rob VK4FFAB



So this came up in a polite conversation, that an activator was assessing his options about what park to go activate. Park A, a new park, or park B, one that was closer to the activator's home, but a park that had been activated a few times, but never activated by the activator.

With the activator tending towards park A, because the chances of success were greater, where no-one had the park in their list yet.

And so I got to thinking about this. Surely we have not got to the stage yet where we need new parks to keep people interested. So outlined below are the reasons I see for reactivating parks that you may have already activated, or parks that have been activated many times over.

1. There are always new hunters getting interested in WWFF who have never worked that reference number.
2. There are always DX hunters who will want to work the reference.

3. Reactivating a park counts towards your yearly total for the Top Activator award.
4. The reference will count for hunters yearly total for Top Hunters award.
5. There are mental cases like myself and Paul VK5PAS et al, who will work every park station that they can hear just because it is there, even if you have worked that reference 5 times already.
6. Activators deserve YOUR support, because without them, you have no radio program.

And if you have never activated a park, a peak, a lighthouse, an outhouse, a beach, an island, or gone portable for John Moyle Field Day, or any of the myriad of excuses we have to get out and play portable radio. Then give serious thought to getting out and doing something. You will be pleasantly surprised at hoe much fun it can be.

VKFF activation weekend

By Paul VK5PAS

On Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th, a VKFF Activation weekend will be held. It is envisaged that there will be park operators out and about all across Australia.

So far I have heard back from activators in VK3, VK4, VK5 and VK6.



If you do intend to activate a park, please either send me an email to....

vk5pas@wia.org.au

Or place your intentions on the WWFF Australia Yahoo group at.....

https://au.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/wwff_australia/info

Is mobile allowed?

By Paul VK5PAS.

SOTA – NO

VK5 National and Conservation Parks Award – NO. Definitely NO mobile. Strictly portable in the field.

WWFF – YES.

VKFF – YES. But discouraged.

KRMNPA – YES, but discouraged.

ONFF-0488 Demerbroeken

By Danny OT4V

A new reference on the ONFF list : **ONFF-0488 Demerbroeken** in Zichem/Testelt. This is a very wet area so a good take off should do the job here.

For the statistics this was the best /P activation I ever did : 349 QSO's in 5 continents and 38 DXCC countries. The 20m band was hot with best DX:

K6RIM (CA), W2OO, VK4RF(CW+SSB), **VK5PAS**, VE6UX, VE7CV, ZL2IFB & JW/RD1AL.



Also 40m gave a good run this time with lots of locals in the log.

And again visit of buddy ON3EVO ... again a pleasant morning and packed before the temperatures headed above 30°C. Glad to have given a new one to everybody !

Log is uploaded to WWFF, LoTW, eQSL, Clublog OQ-RS and QRZ.com. For paper QSL (either direct or BURO) please use the OQRS form on the [OT4V QRZ.com](http://OT4VQRZ.com) page !!



Chasing overseas SOTA & WWFF

By Paul VK5PAS

If you have worked an overseas SOTA or WWFF station, please send me the details to...

vk5pas@wia.org.au

...and I will include it here.

To work the SOTA & WWFF DX, keep an eye on SOTA Watch....

<http://www.sotawatch.org/>

And WWFF Hampots.....

<http://hampots.net/wwff/>

Below is a list of VK5 to DX (SOTA & parks contacts) that I am aware of.

Paul VK5PAS.

- Mike 2EoYYY/p, SOTA – ENGLAND (22/8/2015)
- IZ1NJA/p, Italian Abbeys Award (19/8/2015)

- IZoMQN/p, Talian Abbeys Award (18/8/2015)
- EG1LWC/p, Lighthouse - SPAIN (15/8/2015)
- CT1EGW/p, CTFF-015 - PORTUGAL (14/8/2015)
- SV2BZM/p, SOTA - GREECE (14/8/2015)
- IZ1NJA/p, Italian Castles Award (13/8/2015)
- IK2SAV/p (13/8/2015)
- CT4NH/p, CTFF-015 - PORTUGAL (13/8/2015)
- F5RHD/p, World Castles Award - FRANCE (13/8/2015)
- Swa ON5SWA, ONFF-309 (13/8/2015)
- Barrie G7UFI/p, pedestrian mobile - ENGLAND (12/8/2015)
- Dave G4AKC/p, pedestrian mobile - ENGLAND (12/8/2015)
- Sal EA5DY/p, EAFF-125 - SPAIN (11/8/2015)
- Robert F5RHD/p, FFF-1554 - FRANCE (11/8/2015)
- Yves On8ON/p, ONFF-186 - BELGIUM (11/8/2015)
- IZoMQN/p, Italian Abbeys Award (11/8/2015)
- Carl 2EoHPI/p, SOTA - ENGLAND (11/8/2015)
- Mike 2EoYYY/p, SOTA - ENGLAND (11/8/2015)
- Danny OT4V/p, ONFF-0486 - BELGIUM (10/8/2015)
- Chris F4FYU/p, World Castles Award - FRANCE (9/8/2015)
- Franck F4DTO/p, FFF-074 - FRANCE (9/8/2015)
- IZ1NJA/p, Italian Castles Award (9/8/2015)
- Swa ON5SWA/p, ONFF-293 - BELGIUM (9/8/2015)
- Jar OOK1XZ/p, OKFF-0371 - CZECH REPUBLIC (9/8/2015)
- Henry IZ5WTV/p, Italian Castles Award (8/8/2015)
- Franck F4DTO/p, World Castles Award (8/8/2015)
- Robert F5RHD/p, FFF-365 - FRANCE (8/8/2015)
- Marcus DK4MH, SOTA - GERMANY (8/8/2015)
- Steve IZ5GST, Italian Castles Award (8/8/2015)
- Robert F5RHD/p, FFF-1374 - FRANCE (6/8/2015)
- Ivo IZoMQN/p, Italian Abbeys Award (6/8/2015)
- Swa ON5SWA , ONDD-254 - BELGIUM (6/8/2015)
- SP5ZIM/p, SPFF-1114 - POLAND (5/8/2015)
- Ryszard SP5KD/p, SPFF-1114 - POLAND (5/8/2015)
- Pepe EA5KB/p, EAFF-0127 - SPAIN (5/8/2015)
- Swa ON5SWA, ONFF-198 - BELGIUM (4/8/2015)

- Danny OT4V/p, ONFF-488 – BELGIUM (3/8/2015)
- Harm F/PC5Z/p, FFF-833 – FRANCE (31/7/2015)
- Swa ON5SWA, ONFF-475 - BELGIUM (31/7/2015)

I haven't been receiving much info for this item. I'm sure that there are some of you out there who have worked some portable DX ops. If you have, please drop me an email at.....

vk5pas@wia.org.au



This is exciting news, as I'm sure it will mean some increased WWFF activity in New Zealand and some great opportunities for us Aussies to work our Kiwi mates in parks in that beautiful country.

A few months ago, Ken became a regular caller to me whilst I was out in parks. He is a recipient of VK5 Parks award certificates and is a keen VKFF hunter as well.

The Kiwis are on board with WWFF

By Paul VK5PAS



Great news from across the 'dutch'. Oh, sorry, I mean the ditch. After liaising a bit with Ken ZL4KD via email, I am pleased to report that Ken has agreed to take on the role of New Zealand ZLFF co-ordinator for the World Wide Flora Fauna (WWFF) program.

SOTA in New Zealand

By Paul VK5PAS

Thanks to Ken ZL4KD, for the following info.....

SOTA ZL are about 16% of the way through verifying the validity of each summit in that country (848 out of 5.028 peaks from NZ Land Information Service). The more mountainous Lower South Island has yet to be tackled.



Above:- the pink dots are still to be surveyed. The yellow dots have been surveyed. Image courtesy of zl-sota facebook site

A VK4 out and about in VK5

By Rob VK4AAC/5



Ok, where do I start, oh yeah, it's bloody cold down here in VK5.....Hi, my name is Rob, VK4AAC, my wife, Doris, and I have been retired and on the road since March 2014. Prior to retirement we were living in Townsville, in far north Queensland. We are travelling around VK with our 4wd and caravan and plan to spend a year in each state. We made a direct route to Sth Australia to catch up with our families and so far we have been here for about 15 months. We like SA so much that we will be hanging around until early 2016 before heading off towards the eastern states.

I hadn't been very active in AR for many years until I met this fella, Paul VK5PAS, on air one day while he was activating a park. This was back in early March 2015, when he was setup in Marne Valley CP. I was unaware of this activity with operating AR in parks, so he explained to me about the WWFF, VKFF and VK5 Parks programs. I was eager to get back into AR and because I was an avid bushwalker, I was very interested in this concept.

Dashboard			
Region	Candidates Checked	To Be Checked	Named To be Named
Taranaki	17		
Auckland	20	20	0
Northland	73	73	0
Wellington	127	127	0
Gisborne	138	138	0
Hawke's Bay	139	113	26
Manawatu-Wanganui	169	48	121
Waikato	189	50	139
Bay of Plenty	229	229	0
Nelson	280	2	278
Marlborough	329		
Otago	538		
West Coast	735	9	726
Canterbury	880	39	841
Southland	1165		

Surveyors Surveyed	
zl3dmc	48
vk3arr	390
zl2aj	410

848 Checked Out Of 5028 Candidates = 16.865552903739 %

There is also a SOTA ZL Facebook site, which can be located at.....

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/489754491186181/>

Since then I have made several park activations and numerous contacts as a hunter. Well, now I'm thoroughly hooked, so much so, that when planning the route to our next destination, I am thinking about which parks are along the way!!! My wife is quite supportive of this activity, in fact she helps out with the setting up and she also logs on paper during the operation. After we finish, I then transfer the logs from paper to my electronic logger. She is also the catering manager and ensures that I stay fed and well hydrated!!

My First Activation

My first activation was in VKFF-176, Flinders Ranges NP. We were staying at the Wilpena Pound camp ground and doing many of the bush walks. Wilpena Pound is a naturally formed oval of hills, resembling a meteor crater. In the early days of settlement in Sth Australia this was used for cropping and to keep stock due to its shape as a natural barrier. The pound itself is approx 8000ha in area and the entire Flinders Ranges NP takes up a whopping 93,826ha. The park is located approx 400km's north of Adelaide, in the far north of South Australia, quite a remote area, and a very popular tourist destination.



I was very nervous before the start of the activation and at this stage I only had the 2.4m whip antenna on the front of the car. I was working from my mobile so the activation counted for VKFF only. We travelled out of the pound and into the NP to set-up. The site we chose was very scenic. There were a few Wedge Tailed eagles making the most of the thermal up drafts and the roos were plentiful on the ground with the Flinders Ranges as the backdrop.



It was a very pleasant spot to spend a few hours. We took some refreshments (tea) and nibbles and settled down to make a few contacts, fingers crossed!! Start time was just after lunch, about 0330utc, on 20m and proceeded to call CQ WWFF. Well, I was pleasantly surprised at the response to my CQ calls. By 0500utc I had made 11 contacts, this was more contacts made in one sitting than I had made for a very long time. I was chuffed. Then onto 40m, another 10 contacts were made by 0744utc. They were all VK's, not bad, I thought, little did I know.....

After more consultation with Paul, VK5PAS, I learnt about the Parks N Peaks website and placing alerts before my activations. An alert was placed for the very next day and with fingers crossed again, we nervously went out to the same beautiful spot and tried again.

The start was later than anticipated, 0530utc, but by 0800utc we had 19 QSO's which included VK's and one ZL on 20m and 40m.

Again, on the third activation of VKFF-176 a couple of days later, we made 34 QSO's on 40m and 20m, which included many VK's and European contacts, many of which would

become the "usual suspects" of hunters.

Second Activation

We were headed to Arkaroola after Wiplena Pound, so I decided to stop in at the Gammon Ranges NP VKFF-189 and try my luck. Arkaroola is located outside the National Park so we chose to stay in the park for a few days. "Grindells Hut Campground" was our destination. The Gammon Ranges NP is located in the far north of VK5, approx 500km north of Adelaide and has an area of over 122ha.



Well, the road into the campground was quite rugged, it took us 1 hour to do the 15km track to the campsite. On reflection, I think it must have been a 4WD track only, but we managed to get the Landcruiser and our 22' Kedron off-road van through with only minor scratches. Grindells Hut campground, named after the original landowner John Grindell, (shown above) is a beautiful spot to spend a few days. It is located in a gorge surrounded by hills and there is a holiday cottage for rent, set up high on the edge of the gorge. Toilet facilities are provided for campers, they were new and clean, everything else you need to bring with you including water. We chose a spot near the creek (dry) and setup the van and of course the 40m portable dipole ready for our activation the next day.

Picture shows part of the gorge wall surrounding the campground.



The rugged high hills around was a concern regarding propagation and whether I would be able to get out, rf wise.

My concerns were not warranted, starting out late at about 0530utc we managed to make 50 contacts up to about 1100utc. VK's made up the bulk of the QSO's, about 39, the rest were from Europe and the US. A good day on the radio!

The next day was a little better with 54 QSO's. By the way, this was the first time I used my homebrew 40m dipole and 6m squid pole for the antenna. We made a good mix of VK and non VK contacts, I was please with the result.



The northern part of South Australia is truly rugged, beautiful and remote. Arkaroola is a geologists dream and the scenery is spectacular

especially from the Sky Trek lookout towards Lake Eyre.



We enjoyed the outback experience and fully intend to revisit this area someday, with the radio gear of course!!

73's and 44's for now...

Rob VK4AAC

What's the best battery to use and how to use it

By Paul VK5PAS

Recently there was an interesting article uploaded to the SOTA Beams site regarding batteries for portable use. Here is a link.....

<http://www.sotabeams.co.uk/content/Batteries%20for%20portable%20use.pdf>

Thanks to David VK5PL who also dropped me an email pointing out this PDF file.

Parks on the Air

By Paul VK5PAS

Further to last months article about Parks on the Air (POTA) I found a POTA website at.....

<http://www.hamparks.org/>

It appears the website has not been updated since September 2011. I sent off an email to Fred VE3FAL, Kyle N4NSS and Pete W1PNS. They are recorded on the home page of the POTA website.

I received a response back from Fred VE3FAL and it appears that POTA has fallen over. Sadly I never heard back from Kyle and Pete.

I also found a POTA Yahoo group which I have joined, but it appears rarely used. Lots of activity back in late 2010 and into 2011 and 2012, and then posts dropped away. The Yahoo group can be found at.....

https://ca.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/p_o_t_a/info

Don't get it confused for the other POTA group. Which is the Planet of the Apes Yahoo group.

I posted on the Yahoo group, posing the question about the status of POTA, if people were aware of WWFF and if anyone on the group participates in WWFF. I received a handful of replies from USA amateurs who generally advised that POTA was fairly inactive and that very little was known of WWFF.

I also found that there were three parks ‘clubs’ in the following USA States:-

- Texas – Texas State Parks on the Air
- Ohio – Ohio State Parks on the Air
- Indiana – Indiana Parks on the Air (INPOTA)

To date only the Indiana INPOTA group have answered my email/s. And it appears that INPOTA is a completely separate entity to POTA. The INPOTA rep also advised that they were not aware of the WWFF program.

Seems very clear that there needs to be a lot of promotion of WWFF in North America.

The Great Outdoors Radio Club

By Paul VK5PAS



As mentioned above, I recently posted on the Parks on the Air (POTA) Yahoo group to gauge the current status of the POTA program, and I received a number of responses. One of those was from Randy KB4QQJ who advised me about another group.....**The Great Outdoors Radio Club (GORC).**

The GORC website can be found at....

<http://www.thegorc.org/>

Here’s what they say on their site....

"Welcome to the Great Outdoors Radio Club. This club was formed so all amateur radio operators who love the outdoors would have a place to call home. The only requirements to join this club are that you must hold a valid amateur radio license and sometimes operate portable away from your home QTH.

Hike if you like. Paddle if you please, Drive if you can. It doesn't matter how you get there. What matters most is that you find fun ways to tickle the ether from your favorite outdoor location. Hundreds of peaks, parks, trails, rivers, islands campgrounds,backyards and summits await activation.

I have since joined GORC. It is free and easy to do. Just simply click on the ‘Click to Join!’ on the website.

There is also a GORC Yahoo group.....

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/gorc/info>

GORC runs the ‘Pine Cone Award’ for GORC members.



In essence, once you have accumulated 25 QSOs, you can apply for your first Pine Cone. However, you are limited to counting a maximum of five QSOs in a 24 hour period. You can count QSOs with the same station more than once, if there is at least 24 hours separating time. QSOs are not limited to other GORC members.

You can apply for a second Pine Cone after logging an additional 25 QSOs, and so on, up to a maximum of five Pine Cones. All these QSOs must be made from an ‘outdoor QTH’. And all applications are done online.

<http://cwfun.org/gorc/pinecone.html>

So why not have a look at GORC.

WWFF activity in North America

By Paul VK5PAS

As a follow up to the above 2 articles on POTA & The Great Outdoors Radio Club, I did a bit of research of the status of the World wide Flora Fauna (WWFF) program in North America.

I have been contacted by many North American stations whilst I’ve been out in the field, but I have NEVER worked a North American park activator.

So I was keen to find out the status of the WWFF program in North America.

The WWFF website shows the following coordinators in North America.

- George N3GJ – USA
- Dave VA3RJ – CANADA
- Stephen AL3T – ALASKA

A check of the WWFF Directory & WWFF LogSearch shows the following.....

USA.

Total of 613 parks recorded in the WWFF Directory.

Only 17 parks activated (most of those have only been activated once or twice each).

I have spoken with George N3GJ and confirmed that he is still the WWFF coordinator in the USA. However, he has only just recently conducted his first park activation since 2013 due to other life commitments. He advises that activity in the USA has been low.

George advised that he hopes in the near future to create some awards for the USA WWFF program.

There is a USA call for the WWFF program. That call is W3WFF.

CANADA

Total of 119 parks recorded in the WWFF Directory.

Only 2 recorded activations.

I have confirmed that Dave VA3RJ is the Canadian co-ordinator and he advises that there is not much interest in WWFF in Canada.

ALASKA

Total of 26 parks recorded in the WWFF Directory.

No recorded activations

I have confirmed that Steffen AL3T/DL7ET is still the Alaska co-ordinator. However Steffen is now back in Europe, so he will not be activating in Alaska in the immediate future. Steffen has, as a result of speaking with me, sent out some info to the Alaskan radio clubs reminding them of the WWFF program.

So it appears that WWFF is little known and not very active in North America, which is a real shame.



VI5MCP

By Paul VK5PAS

The special call of VI5MCP commemorated the 100th year anniversary of the Morialta Conservation Park. The event was organised by the Amateur Radio Experimenters Group (AREG). Next month I hope to have a report from Bob VK5FO with regards to the total number of contacts. But in the meantime here are some photos from AREG's activities at Morialta CP.

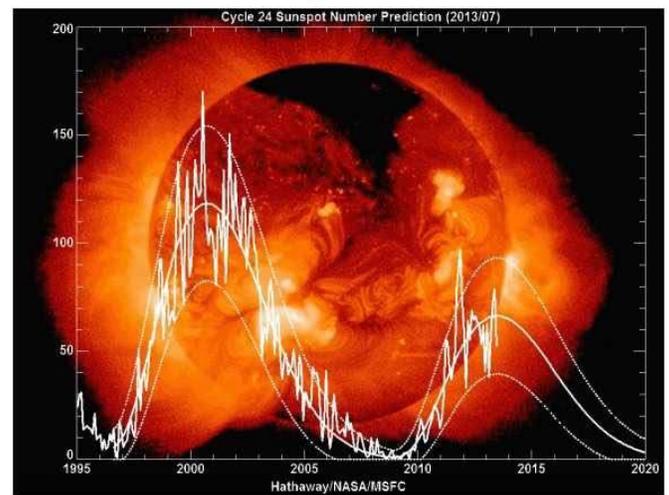


All Images above courtesy of AREG

Solar conditions

By Paul VK5PAS

Band conditions in the past few weeks have been very poor. ‘Close in’ propagation has been virtually non-existent on 40m, and DX has been a challenge.



Sky and Telescope magazine/internet have a very interesting article on the weakest solar cycle in 100 years. You can find it by clicking on the link below.....

<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/astronomy-news/the-weakest-solar-cycle-in-100-years/>

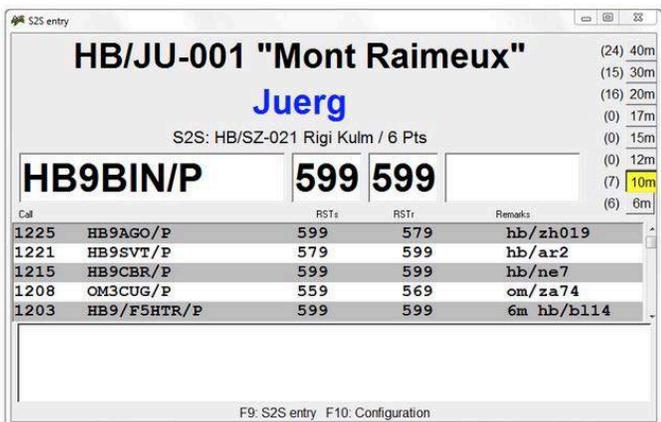
SOTALog

By Paul VK5PAS

I recently saw a post on the SOTA Australia Yahoo group by Andrew VK1DA re an app called SOTALog, for those who might be keen to take a laptop or tablet to a summit for onsite logging. So I decided to have a look.

SOTALog was developed by HB9TVK and is log software tailored for use by SOTA activators. It is provided for free by the author.

It can be used on Windows, Linux, or MacOS-X.



For more information, please see.....

http://sota.hb9tvk.org/?page_id=744

Ham humour

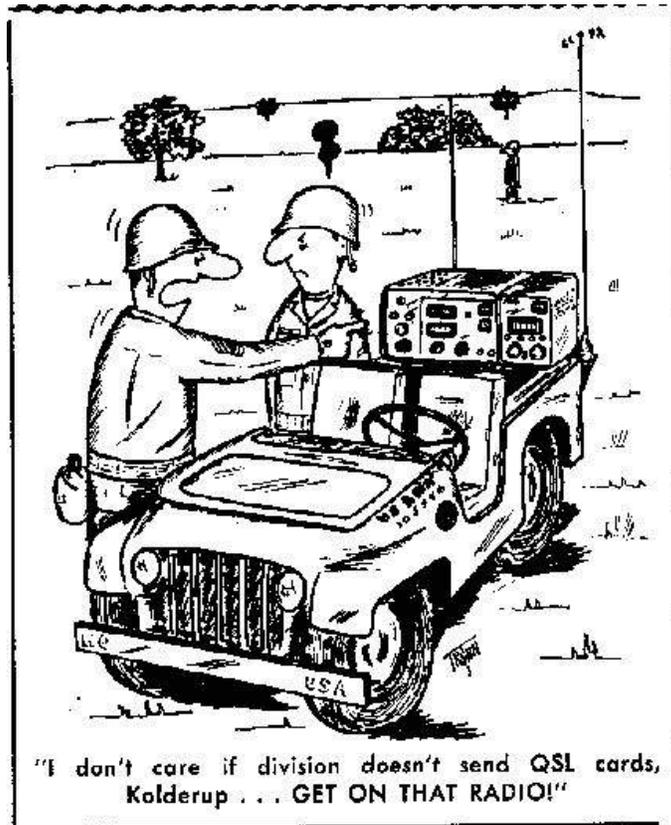


Image courtesy of www.repeater-builder.com

If you've seen a humorous ham cartoon, please send it to me via email at.....

vk5pas@wia.org.au

Inaccurate article in CQ magazine

By Paul VK5PAS

I'm not sure if people read the August issue of CQ magazine. But in it, was an article written an American ham about the WWFF program. Sadly, the article was full of errors and inaccurate information. I have sent off an email to CQ magazine, advising them of same, and providing some accurate and up to date info. But to date, I haven't received a reply.

Activation accreditation for Ireland WWFF

By David VK5PL



How would we go here if we had to follow these steps below, to get an activation accredited.

These are taken from the Irish WWFF site. I was interested to see if there were any areas I could activate when we visit there in a few years.

Interesting that photos are mandatory of the area, operator and antenna and you have to submit your log within 3 days. Must be some shonky operators if they have to go to these lengths to ensure a proper activation.

General Requirements.

1. No later than **3 days** before the beginning of the operation in the EIFF area the operator should **contact EIFF coordinator** and outline the plan for the activation:

2. For locations where special permission is known to be required to gain access, evidence of

awards
BY TED MELNICKSKY, K1BV

National Parks on the Air Can Lead to Awards on Your Wall

Summertime, if the bands hold out, can be a very active time of the year for contacting stations from 23 countries, operating portable and mobile stations from national parks, nature preserves, and other protected lands all over the world. This is a fine opportunity to be a "rare" station, since so many parks/areas have never been on the air.

This "Fauna and Flora" program began about a decade ago with Russian hams who were concerned about the preservation of nature. Over the next 10 years, 23 countries (19 from Europe) now offer their own programs that follow the overall format the Russians established. They also share the same online listing of valid operations and individual credits of everyone who has ever made a contact with one of the operations.

The Russian program website is: <www.wff4.org>. During the past five years, it has grown dramatically, and the current dizzying array of awards, programs, and plaques seems to have turned into a vast commercial enterprise rather than a hobby-driven interest. I'm a little discouraged about this, and for the purpose of this column, I choose to publicize the independent awards of individual countries that — for the most part — are either free of charge or make modest charges.

The countries which currently offer a formal awards program are: 4X, SA, CT, DL, EI, G, GM, HA, HB, I, LU, LZ, OK, ON, OZ, PA, SM, SP, SV, VK, VU, YL, and YO. A 253-page online document of every known nature preserve or nature park on earth can be downloaded at: <<http://www.dcia.it/>>.

*12 Wells Woods Rd., Columbia, CT 06237
e-mail: <k1bv@charter.net>

USA-CA Honor Roll			
900	5679	OMZVL	2500
DLSPCW	3680		1367
AFSCC			
1000			
EA7TG	1868		

The total number of countries for credit for the United States of America Country Award is 3077. The basic award fee for subscribers is \$6.00. For non-subscribers it is \$10.00. To qualify for the special subscriber rate, please send a recent CD mailing label with your application. Initial applications may be submitted to the USA-CA Record Book, which may be obtained from CQ Magazine, 25 Newbridge Road, Hicksville, NY 11901 USA for \$2.50, or by a PC-printed computer listing which is in alphabetical order by state and county within the state. To be eligible for the USA-CA Award, applicants must comply with the rules of the program as set forth in the revised USA-CA Rules and Program dated June 1, 2000. A complete copy of the rules may be obtained by sending an SASE to Ted Melnicksky, K1BV, 12 Wells Woods Road, Columbia, CT 06237 USA. DX stations must include extra postage for airmail reply.

It contains a catalog of 23,521 such areas throughout the world, and is meticulously updated annually and published by RW3GWW, IK1GPG, and DF1JN. For example, the listing shows that the U.S. has 692 parks and preserves. And the U.S. does not have a formal program similar to other countries. QSOs made from any of the U.S. sites that are listed are good for many awards offered by the originating group in Russia. Some interesting Internet sites you may want to bookmark are:

- Online tool which will show you how many WWFF stations you have already contacted: <<http://logsearch.wff4.co/index.php>>
- Links to all the individual national WWFF awards here: <www.wff4.co/pwff4.html>
- The "grand-daddy" Russian Site. English translation provided for most pages: <www.wff4.org>

Are you interested in checking out current operations, or perhaps operating from these parks and preserves? Suggested operating spots are HF frequencies ending with 24 or 44:
Phone: 3.744, 7.144, 14.244, 18.144, 21.244, 24.344, 28.444 MHz
CW: 3.544, 7.024, 10.124, 14.044, 18.084, 21.044, 24.894, 28.044 MHz

Since this is a specialty award, the pileups tend to be fairly light. Here is a selection of some of the countries that offer affiliated programs of modest cost just to familiarize yourself:

Australia Fauna & Flora (VKFF)
The Australian program (VKFF) of "World Wide Flora & Fauna in amateur radio" (WWFF) commenced in March 2013. The VKFF National Awards were initiated at this time. The awards are available to all amateurs and SWLs who con-



Australia's entry into the worldwide flora and fauna award features a map of the continent and the various wildlife found throughout the country.

this **permission must be presented.**

3. ADIF log has to be submitted to the [EIFF coordinator](#) for all contacts made from the activated EIFF area **no later than 3 days** after the end of the activation. In order for activation to be accepted, **a minimum of 44 QSOs** should be in the log.

4. The operator should provide the EIFF Committee with **a short story about the DX-pedition** accompanied with a few digital photographs.

5. A digital **photograph** of the operator taken against an identifiable **feature on the EIFF area**, for example a name plaque or a nature reserve sign, is a mandatory requirement.

6. A digital **photograph** of the operator and the antenna **used during for the operation** is a mandatory requirement.

7. If a special **QSL-card** is designed, WFF logo, **EIFF area's name** and its **reference number** should be clearly printed on the QSL-card.

- **Environmental Rules.**

It is expected that all DX-peditions will observe any environmental rules promulgated by the administration under whose authority the operation takes place. In the event that no such rules are actually promulgated, **the DX-pedition should leave the DX-pedition site as they found it.**

- **Programmes Integrity.**

These accreditation requirements are intended to preserve the integrity of the EIFF programme and to ensure that the programme does not encourage amateurs to Bend the rules in their enthusiasm, possibly jeopardizing the future development of Amateur Radio. Every

effort will be made to apply these criteria uniformly and to make a determination consistent with these objectives.

David Poole
VK5PL

Field Radio

By Paul VK5PAS



I have mentioned Field Radio in previous issues, but I thought it was worth mentioning again.

The Field Radio goals are promoting friendship within the international Amateur Radio community through the cooperative exchange of knowledge and experiences of portable operations in the field.

- We practice portable operations
- We exchange knowledge & experiences of field setups
- We assist and encourage new operators
- We educate those unfamiliar with our craft

- We respect the property we use and those responsible for maintaining it

The Field Radio website which was only launched in late June this year, can be located at.....

<http://www.fieldradio.org/>

There is also a very active Field Radio facebook site (1,105 members already), which can be found at.....

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FieldRadio/>



More SA Conservation Parks added to WWFF

By Paul VK5PAS



On the 30th July, 2015, I was successful in having the following 75 Conservation Parks added to the WWFF program.

That leaves just over 100 SA Conservation Parks to be added. I envisage that by the end of next year, all SA CP's will be in the WWFF Directory.

Here is a list of the recently added parks.

- Aldinga Scrub VKFF-866
- Angove VKFF-867
- Bakara VKFF-868
- Bangam VKFF-869
- Belt Hill VKFF-870
- Bird Islands VKFF-871
- Black Rock VKFF-872
- Bullock Hill VKFF-873
- Cape Gantheaume VKFF-874
- Caroona Creek VKFF-875
- Carribie VKFF-876
- Eric Bonython VKFF-877
- Eurilla VKFF-878
- Fairview VKFF-879
- Ferguson VKFF-880
- Ferries McDonald VKFF-881
- Furner VKFF-882
- Geegeela VKFF-883
- Giles VKFF-884
- Grass Tree VKFF-885
- Gum Lagoon VKFF-886
- Gum Tree Gully VKFF-887
- Hacks Lagoon VKFF-888
- Hale VKFF-889
- Hallett Cove VKFF-890
- Hanson Scrub VKFF-891
- Hogwash Bend VKFF-892
- Hopkins Creek VKFF-893
- Horsnell Gully VKFF-894
- Ironstone Hill VKFF-895
- Jip Jip VKFF-896
- Kaiserstuhl VKFF-897
- Karte VKFF-898
- Kelvin Powrie VKFF-899

- Lake Frome VKFF-900
- Lake Gilles VKFF-901
- Lashmar VKFF-902
- Lathami VKFF-903
- Little Dip VKFF-904
- Lower Glenelg River VKFF-905
- Marne Valley VKFF-906
- Martin Washpool VKFF-907
- Mary Seymour VKFF-908
- Minlacowie VKFF-909
- Montacute VKFF-910
- Morgan VKFF-911
- Mount Billy VKFF-912
- Mount Boothby VKFF-913
- Mount Brown VKFF-914
- Mount Dutton Bay VKFF-915
- Mount Magnificent VKFF-916
- Mount Scott VKFF-918
- Mowantjie Willauwar VKFF-919
- Munyaroo VKFF-920
- Myponga VKFF-921
- Newland Head VKFF-922
- Nixon-Skinner VKFF-923
- Padthaway VKFF-924
- Parndana VKFF-925
- Pelican Lagoon VKFF-926
- Piccaninnie Ponds VK FF-927
- Point Davenport VKFF-928
- Pooginook VKFF-929
- Ramco Point VKFF-930
- Reedy Creek VKFF-931
- Ridley VKFF-932
- Sandy Creek VKFF-933
- Scott VKFF-934
- Sheoak Hill VKFF-935
- Stipiturus VKFF-936
- The Knoll VKFF-937
- Tilley Swamp VKFF-938
- Torrens Island VKFF-939
- Waitpinga VKFF-940
- Warren VKFF-941

QSL cards

By Paul VK5PAS

Here are some of the latest QSL cards I've received from SOTA and park activators.

If you've received a card, please drop me an email, and I will include in the next issue.





Propagation

By Paul VK5PAS

I found this on the Field Radio facebook site. It is courtesy of KA4RUR.

The A index [LOW is GOOD]
 * 1 to 6 is BEST
 * 7 to 9 is OK
 * 11 or more is BAD

Represents the overall geomagnetic condition of the ionosphere ("Ap" if averaged from the Kp-Index)(an average of the eight 3-hour K-Indices) ('A' referring to amplitude) over a given 24 hour period, ranging (linearly) typically from 1-100 but theoretically up to 400. A lower A-Index generally suggests better propagation on the 10, 12, 15, 17, & 20 Meter Bands; a low & steady Ap-Index generally suggest good propagation on the 30, 40, 60, 80, & 160 Meter Bands.

SFI index [HIGH is GOOD]
 * 70 NOT GOOD
 * 80 GOOD

* 90 BETTER
 * 100+ BEST

The measure of total radio emissions from the sun at 10.7cm (2800 MHz), on a scale of 60 (no sunspots) to 300, generally corresponding to the sunspot level, but being too low in energy to cause ionization, not related to the ionization level of the Ionosphere. Higher Solar Flux generally suggests better propagation on the 10, 12, 15, 17, & 20 Meter Bands; Solar Flux rarely affects the 30, 40, 60, 80, & 160 Meter Bands.

K index [LOW is GOOD]
 * 0 or 1 is BEST
 * 2 is OK
 * 3 or more is BAD
 * 5 is VERY VERY BADb>

The overall geomagnetic condition of the ionosphere ("Kp" if averaged over the planet) over the past 3 hours, measured by 13 magnetometers between 46 & 63 degrees of latitude, and ranging quasi-logarithmically from 0-9. Designed to detect solar particle radiation by its magnetic effect. A higher K-index generally means worse HF conditions. A lower K-Index generally suggests better propagation on the 10, 12, 15, 17, & 20 Meter Bands; a low & steady Kp-Index generally suggest good propagation on the 30, 40, 60, 80, & 160 Meter Bands.

SSN - Sunspot numbers ---- more is better
 SFI - Solar Flux Index ----- higher number are better

Ap - Planetary Index ----- the lower the better, high means noisy band conditions

K - K Index ----- the lower the better, high means greatly disturbed

*Solar Flux Index (SFI):

Solar activity determines the amount of radiation we get from the sun. SFI is measured in Solar Flux Units, and varies between 50 and 300. In general (and NOT locally) SFI around 50 shows Maximum Useable Frequency (MUF) will be low maybe about 12 MHz, whereas SFI around 300 shows MUF will be pretty high, well into VHF frequencies. Expect low SFI values around bottom of sunspot cycle and high SFI values around peak of (+/- 11 year) sunspot cycle

*Geomagnetic activity indices, K and A. As the number of sunspots rises, more solar particles hit the geomagnetic field of the Earth. This causes the Earth's magnetic field to behave differently. As the solar stream disrupts the geomagnetic field, HF conditions degrade and M.U.F. gets suppressed. Hence the need to monitor and measure the geomagnetic state.

K-index:

Local index of magnetic activity relative to an assumed quiet-day curve for a single geomagnetic observatory site. Ranges from 0 through to 9 and largest value is recorded at a 3-hour interval of UTC time.>

Kp-Index:

Planetary average of all the K indices around the world. Values about 0 to 1 represent quiet magnetic conditions and this would indicate good HF conditions, whereas 7 to 9 represent a very major storm that could result in a blackout of HF communications.

A-index is for daily average of local geomagnetic activity, and is generated by the 3-hour K index.(We need it as K index is quasi-logarithmic, not suitable for daily averages.)
ap-index -> a measure of the general geomagnetic

ap-index a measure of the general geomagnetic activity over the planet for any given day.

Ap-index a daily, planetary index, calculated from 8 ap indices Ranges from 0 to 400

Values from 0 to 3 represent quiet conditions, whereas anything over 80 indicates a storm.

Hope this helps you guys out de ka4rur/qrp

Summits and Parks event

By Allen VK3HRA

Reminder of the upcoming Summits and Parks event - 24/25 October 2015.

There will be a seminar covering aspects of portable activities. Held in Wagga Wagga, October 2015. The intent is to provide a forum for the sharing experiences and to encourage participation in this exciting and dynamic aspect of our hobby.

Date:24/25 October 2015

Venue:Wagga Wagga Amateur Radio Club

Open to all interested parties. Topics will be broad to address aspects of portable activities.

Current topics include;

- Contact Logging
- Successful SOTA DX
- Antennas beyond the dipole
- CW Activation's for fun and profit
- Mapping Processes

Followed with discussions and meal Saturday evening.

Sunday you will be able to deploy you're the new skills with planned SOTA and WWFF activations in the local hills.

New or experienced, young or old all you need is a interest in operating portable. All Welcome.

We will be seeking confirmation of numbers for the meal on saturday night. More to follow.

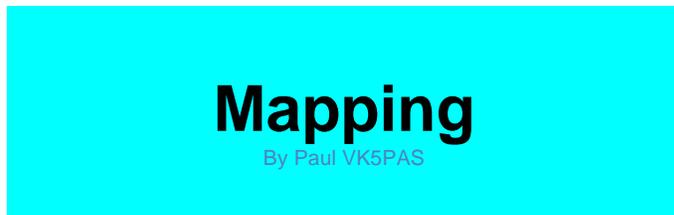
For more details contact - seminar2015@parksnpeaks.org

Allen
VK3HRA



I recently saw a post on the SOTA Australia Yahoo group, regarding the original SOTA Australia website. I thought people might be interested. Here is the link.....

<http://members.dcsi.net.au/stampton/index.html>



Here are some excellent mapping resources.....

DPTI Property Location browser.

<http://maps.sa.gov.au/plb/>

Govt SA, Location SA Map Viewer

<http://www.location.sa.gov.au/viewer/>

DEWNR.

<http://spatialwebapps.environment.sa.gov.au/naturemaps/?viewer=naturemaps>

Mapcarta

<http://mapcarta.com/>

Get Latitude Longitude

<http://www.latlong.net/>

Thanks to Greg VK5GJ, Colin VK5FCJM, and Jeff VK5DZ

VI0ANZAC, Antarctica on air

By Paul VK5PAS



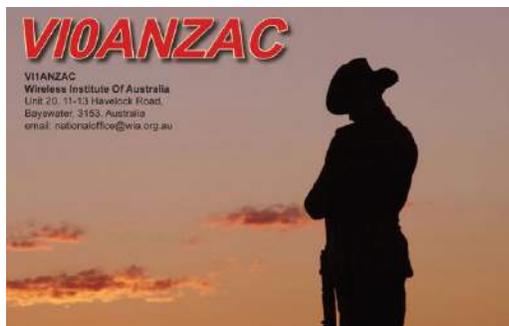
Above:- Casey Station. Image courtesy of Wikipedia.

On 29th & 30th August, the very special call of VI0ANZAC was put on air from Casey Base, Antarctica, VKFF-571.

Many thanks to Doug VKoDMV and Fred VK3DAC.

I was very fortunate enough to work Doug on 20m. Hope you got VI0ANZAC in the log too.

And I am pleased to advise that Doug & Fred have provided the log for upload to WWFF LogSearch, so hopefully it was a new VKFF reference for some.



VK100ANZAC QSL card

By Paul VK5PAS

Just a reminder that there is a very special QSL card on offer for VK100ANZAC which was activated in June by John VK5BJE, David VK5KC, and Paul VK5PAS.

The card can be sent electronically as a PDF/Jpg file by dropping an email to VK5PAS at.....

Vk5pas@wia.org.au

Or a hard copy can be mailed by sending a Stamped Self Addressed envelope to....

Mr Paul SIMMONDS,
PO Box 169,
Mount Barker,
S.A.
5251

DATE	UTC	CALL	BAND	MODE	RST
16/6/2015	0639	VK5GJ	40m	USB	5/9

14.244

By Paul VK5PAS

Increasingly the nominated calling frequency for the WWFF program on 20m, which is 14.244, is unusable here in Australia. A group of Aussie and American hams get on there, or very nearby, almost every day. This makes working from here, or making contact with the European activators difficult, if not impossible.

So please bear this in mind, and perhaps nominate a different frequency for your upcoming park activation on 20 m.

A little higher up, around 14.310 has been very popular for Australian parks and SOTA activators.

And more and more European park activators are also becoming aware of the issues with 14.244 and are trying @ 14.310 as well.

Ten Tec Rebel, Model 506

By John VK5BJE



I thought I would share a few comments about my new radio, a Ten Tec Rebel, Model 506. I have owned this radio for about three weeks, but for two of those weeks I have been out of action (illness). However, I have listened to some CW transmissions on 40 metres and I intend to keep the radio on that band.

It is capable of transmitting on both 40 metres and 20 metres, CW only at about five watts at 13.8 volts, a little less using a 12 volt supply. The radio is an open source Arduino based device for tinkerers! But is it ready to transmit on either 40m or 20m depending on the band you select by changing five sets of jumpers.

There is no frequency readout but the default 40 metre frequency is 7.030. Changing frequency is achieved by setting the frequency step, turning the dial and counting the led flashes.

I listened to some SOTA activations on 7.032. I already own a Ten Tec Argonaut Model 539 and the controls are very similar to the controls on the Rebel.

There is a Rebel Group on Yahoo and many US operators have added additional features to their Rebels, for example, frequency readouts, band changing circuitry, additional bands and a morse keyer to name just a few. I have armed myself with the ARRL publication ‘Ham Radio for Arduino and Picaxe’ edited by Leigh L Klotz, WA5ZNU. I would rank a frequency readout as a useful add-on. Anyway it is my intention to use the radio on portable operations and try my hand at some slow morse contacts.



The radio is packed in a cardboard box after being shrink-wrapped to a piece of cardboard which is fitted to the bottom of the box. There is no foam. Indeed no additional packing at all is used. I was impressed. The radio is very small and no accessories are included in the package. You therefore need to add a speaker and make up a power cable, connect to the power source and attach a hand key and it is ready to work.

The radio is very small: about the size of two cigarette packs side by side! For anyone seeking more information I thoroughly recommend the You Tube videos from NG9D. I will say more about this radio as I get to use it more.

Best 73,

Jon, VK5BJE

Editors note:- Please check out John's Wordpress site at.....

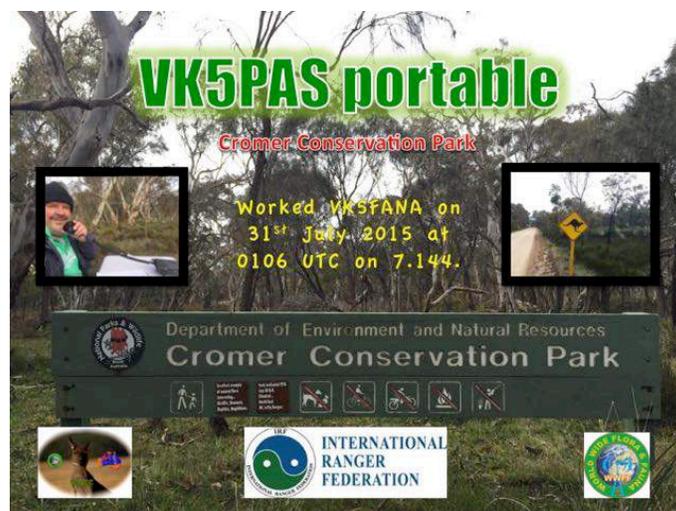
<http://vk5bje.com/>

Cromer Conservation Park

By Paul VK5PAS

Just a reminder that if you worked me whilst I was in the Cromer Conservation Park on 31st July, 2015, I have a special electronic QSL card on offer.

Friday (31st July) is World Ranger Day, which commemorates rangers killed or injured in the line of duty, and celebrates the work rangers do to protect the world's natural and cultural treasures.



If you would like a card, please send me an email.

Closure of parks

By Paul VK5PAS

If you would like to keep up to date with South Australian park closures, here are some links.....

http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/Safety/Park_closures

http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/firemanagement/Burns_and_Bushfires/Park_and_reserve_closures

Heysen trail

By Damien VK5FDEC

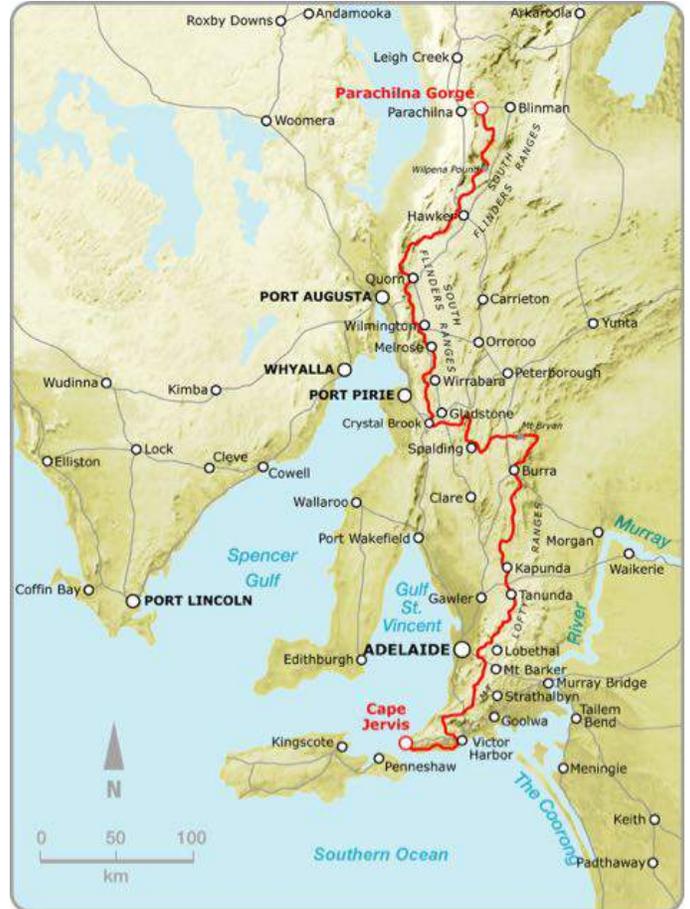
Hi all,

I have been planning this trip for a very long time. I wish to walk the length of the Heysen trail in 1 trip.

What are your thoughts on the subject and would you be willing to support the trip (for charity) any way you can?

I intend to take hf with me. I need a support network before I plan any further.

Cheers Damien VK5FDEC



Above:- the Heysen Trail. Image courtesy of heysentrail.asn.au

MacLogger DX for iPad.

By Paul VK5PAS

If you use MacLogger DX and would like to use it out in the field on your iPad, well here a the link you might be keen to have a look at.....

http://www.dogparksoftware.com/MacLoggerDX_HD.html

ONFF 0486 Catselt activated.

By OT4V

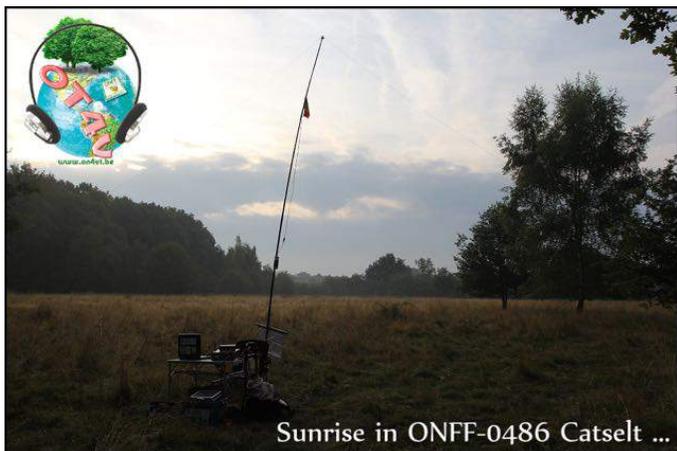
Another new ONFF reference on the list, **ONFF-0486 Catselt** near the city of Diest.

“An early start is an early win” is a Flemish saying that I’m keeping in mind all the time. As usual started on 20m CW and then changed to 20m SSB.

Best DX was **VK5PAS** (SSB), VK4HA/VK4RF (both SSB & CW) and ZL3XDJ (CW). Not one North American made it.

On 40 and 30 meters I could log a lot of locals. Finally 342 QSO’s in 35 DXCC and 4 continents.

Where do we go next ?



Sunrise in ONFF-0486 Catselt ...

Looking for VK for the first time

By Paul VK5PAS

Earlier in the month, Yves ON8ON headed out to activate a Belgium park, ONFF-186. Yves was looking for some contacts for the very first time from a park. He worked the following:-

VK5PAS, VK2IO, VK3BY, and VK2HAS pedestrian mobile.

Below are some photos from Yves activation.....





Moor which is located on the northern edge of the North Yorkshire Moors National Park, WWFF, GFF-012.

Our first contact was Mike 2EoYYY on SOTA peak, G/ SP-017 and then we heard Paul VK5PAS with a very loud signal 5/8.

Our set up was a 20/40 linked dipole and the yaesu ft 817 running 5 watts.

Jonathan and myself enjoyed the summit from 6am utc for around 4 hours and worked many around Europe and northern Africa.

Look forward to working you again soon.

73 Carl 2EoHPI and Jonathan M/VK6JON

Latest videos

By Paul VK5PAS

Not many videos this month. If you have put together a video and uploaded it to You Tube, I'd love to hear from you. Perhaps you've found a video on You Tube that you think would interest the readers. Please drop me an email.

VK3YE, QRP

<https://youtu.be/qPW7mUV8Kds>

VK6JON in the UK

By Carl 2EoHPI & Jonathan VK6JON

Our day started of from Hartlepool with a 25 mile drive. The summit was called Cringle



Protected Area data

By Paul VK5PAS

Every two years, the Australian Government collects information on protected areas from state and territory Governments and other protected area managers. This information is published in the Collaborative Australian Protected Area Database (CAPAD).

CAPAD is used to provide a national perspective of the conservation of biodiversity in protected areas.

During 2014 state and territory nature conservation agencies provided information on their terrestrial and marine protected areas. This information was compiled into CAPAD 2014.

For more information, please see the following website.....

<http://www.environment.gov.au/land/nrs/science/capad>



SOTA Logger (beta testing a new version) used to keep a log and can also send spots via internet or SMS.

Rucksack Radio Tool (still the default "go to" app for SOTA and GMA. I find - needs to be installed from authors site, not on Google Play). Has the features of all the other apps.

SOTAWatch (front end to display what you see on SOTAWatch spot webpage on your phone) - hardly ever use this as the feature is included in other apps.

SOTA Spotter - similar capabilities to RRT except no GMA support nor how far to next Summit based on GPS and as you will have seen from the emails here, some of us are having

issues understanding how to set the filtering and alerting tones/vibration etc.

Pocket SOTA - an older app, with various info options - details about associations, nearby summits etc. and supports qrspots.com as well as SOTAWatch. As well as Spots, can be used to add / change an Alert entry (other apps only deal with Spots).

SPOTmySOTA - new spotting app from Spain - supports the new Spain and Hungary SMS gateways for spotting (as well as via Web). Only used for sending a spot.



Those Activators amongst you who have chased Pacific DX, will know all about the alarm clock going off at at 0430 local time. The things we go through in pursuit of our hobby :- (After an hours drive and 15 minute walk, I was at the Trig Point and QRV on 20m by 0600z. To my surprise, the first call was [Carl 2E0HPI](#) and [John M/VK6JON](#) activating G/TW-002 giving me a unique summit.

Lord alone knows what time they must have left home to be QRV on Cringle Moor at 0600z!!! Very next call was [Paul VK5PAS](#) with his great signal. Paul found Carl and John still on my frequency and was able to QSY up 5kC's to work them. A few EU's were logged before two tricky contacts were made with SOTA regulars [Matt VK1MA](#) and [Tony VK3CAT](#).

Only other DX I was able to find on 20m, was SOTA Chaser Alberic NP3MR in Puerto Rico. 40m was not easy at all, with just 5 contacts logged, however, this gave me an s2s with Karl M3 Kitt Hill for yet another unique summit... Cheers Karl. 10m was very hard work with just 10 contacts one of them an s2s.



In desperation, I tuned up the fishing pole antenna for 15m where just 2 contacts were made, one of them being a nice contact with Kim UK8ZC in Uzbekistan, which I think is a unique SOTA DXCC for me. There's little doubting the HF bands are very hard work and so, to finish the activation, I chucked up the Colinear and worked about 25 stations on 2m FM.

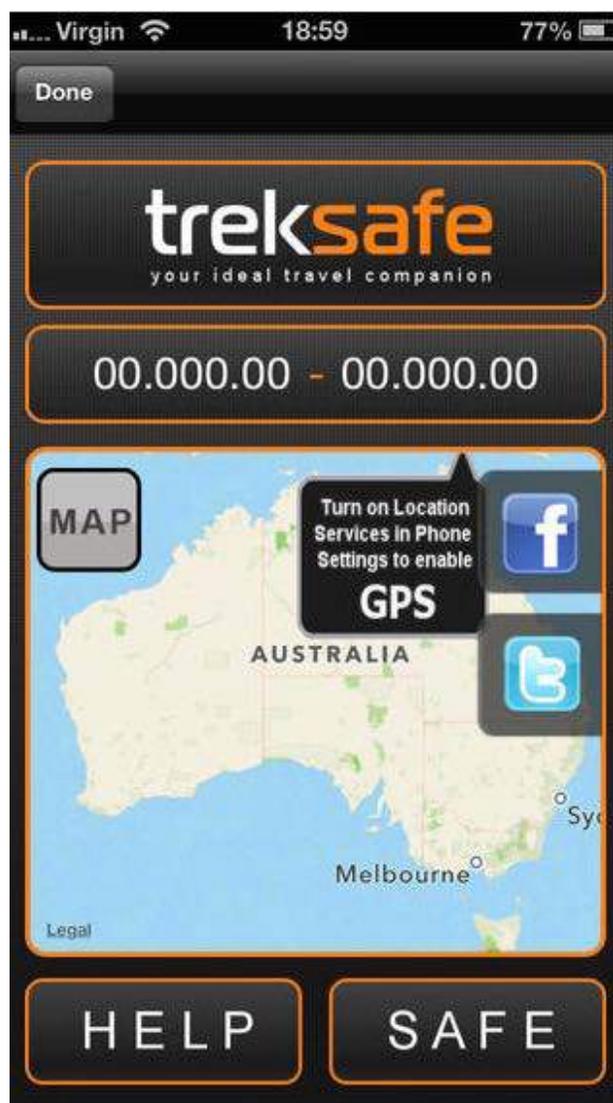
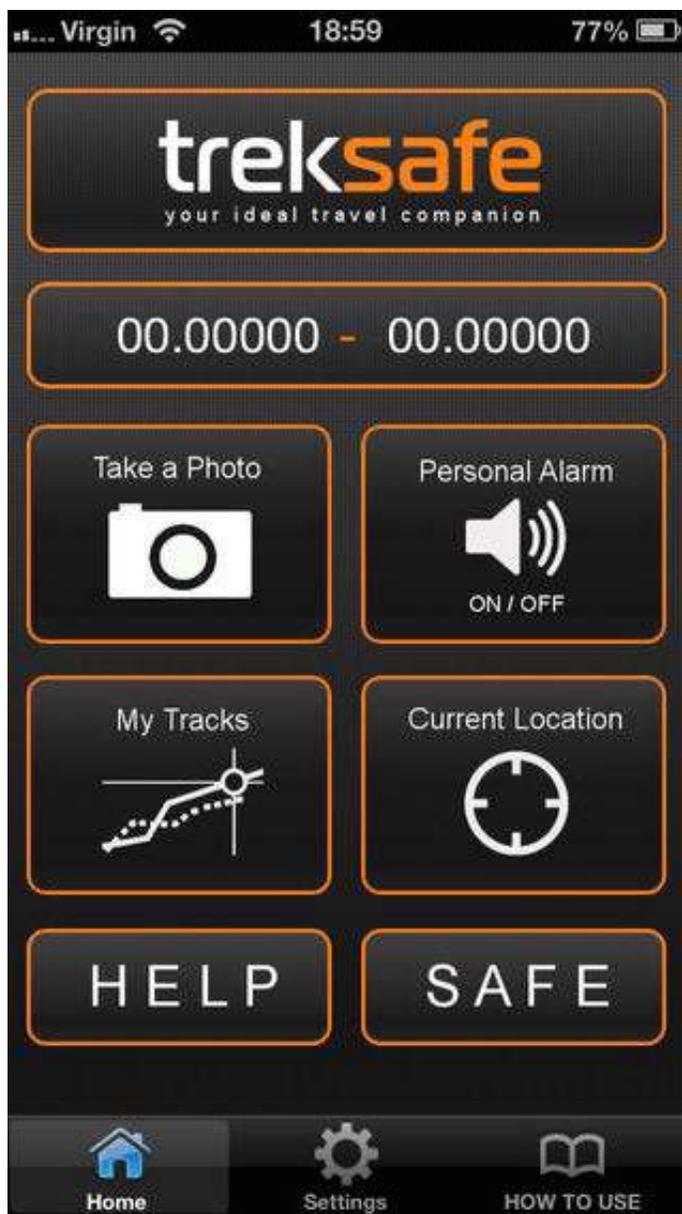
Thanks to all the chasers. The photo shows the A-99, 8m fishing pole and X-300 5/8 over 5/8 colinear.

73 Mike 2EoYYY



I recently saw a post (By Grant VK2GEL) on the SOTA Australia Yahoo group about an app called TrekSafe. So I decided to check it out.

Using GPS and cell phone coverage - TrekSafe provides a line of communication with friends and family when you want it; and it alerts multiple contacts of your last known location when you need it, all with the push of a button.



I have used treksafe on my last 3 or 4 park activations and it has worked perfectly. My wife thinks it is fantastic.

I would recommend it to other park & SOTA activators. Of course it is dependant on phone coverage.

Rite in the Rain

By Paul VK5PAS

‘Rite in the Rain’ offer a range of products including writing instruments and water proof paper.

For more info, please see.....

<http://www.riteintherain.com/>

Keith Roget Memorial National Parks Award activation weekend

By Paul VK5PAS

As of 21st August, 2015, the following parks will be activated.....

- Alfred National Park, VKFF-618, VK3VTH
- Burrowa Pine Mountain National Park, VKFF-069, VK3BYD
- Coopracamba National Park, VKFF-113, VK3VTH
- Croajingolong National Park, VKFF-119, VK3VTH
- Errinundra National Park, VKFF-158, VK3VTH
- French Island National Park, VKFF-622, VK3YSP and VK3FOWL
- Grampians National Park, VKFF-213, VK3PMG
- Great Otway National Park, VKFF-405, VK5PAS
- Greater Bendigo National Park, VKFF-623, VK3FQSO
- Gunbower National Park, VKFF-740, VK3FMPB
- Hattah Kulkyne National Park, VKFF-231, VK3OF and VK3BRQ
- Heathcote Graytown National Park, VKFF-624, VK3FMPB
- Kara Kara National Park, VKFF-629, VK3FQSO
- Lind National Park, VKFF-287, VK3VTH
- Little Desert National Park, VKFF-291,

VK3PMG

- Lower Glenelg National Park, VKFF-296, VK5AV
- Murray Sunset National Park, VKFF-373, VK3OF and VK3BRQ
- Port Campbell National Park, VKFF-420, VK5PAS
- Terrick Terrick National Park, VKFF-630, VK3FMPB

Short activation report for Gun G/SP-013

By Mike 2E0YYY

Strange HF conditions last weekend...

On Saturday 15 August, I activated my local summit G/SP-015 Gun. Due to work commitments, this could only be a fairly short activation.

The aim of the activation was to try and make a s2s contact with John VK6NU who was activating VK6/SW-042. I was QRV at 0535z and put out a CQ. Conditions were pretty grim and it took 35 minutes of calling to get my first contact into the log :-)

Then at 0615z Peter VK3PF completed a tricky contact, for my first bit of DX. Tony VK3CAT also made the trip, however, my signal was well down on normal. The EU stations were coming along thick and fast with dreaded QRM.



At 0647z an armchair contact with the rare Galapagos Islands, thanks to Geoff, signing HC8/G8OFQ! Along came Ernie VK3DET for our first contact for some time and then Paul VK5PAS signing as VI5ANZAC, called in with a much reduced signal. Sadly, despite a big effort by both of us, no s2s contact was made with John :-)

Thanks for trying John, with the signal reports I was receiving from VK, I think we both knew it would be tough.

It's a funny old hobby Amateur Radio, on a band that I couldn't buy a contact for 35 minutes, I finished up with 55 contacts and 27 DXCC's in the log, all on the 20m band!

Big thanks to all the callers.

73 Mike
2EoYYY

Parksnpeaks update

By Paul VK5PAS

Allen VK3HRA continues to add fantastic features to parksnparks. And here is another which is currently on the drawing board.

You will be able to search on parksnparks by distance, to show available parks and summits. The search will show parks and summits within a particular distance from a QTH. A great idea.

It will show up a map with parks and summits highlighted. You will also be able to download a KML file for use with Google Earth.

If you haven't already checked out parksnparks, I highly recommend that you do. It can be found at.....

<http://parksnparks.org/>

G/CE-002 Walton Hill activation 22/8/2015, short report

By Mike 2E0YYY

20m Band still hard work :-)

It's only a short 15 minute walk to the trig point of Walton Hill and there's a very convenient fence to bungee antennas. This is not a summit I'm mad keen about, as I've got serious doubts about the take-off.

At 0602z I sent off a self spot on 14.300, only to notice that Andrew VK1NAM/P was QRV on 14.315, activating VK1/AC-043 Mt Stromlo. I had a listen, but he was just too weak to work.



Nevertheless, I persevered and just over 15 minutes later, his signal came up enough to exchange summit info and signal reports. Some Europeans were logged when Peter VK3PF called in, followed by Ron VK3AFW. Then it was the turn of Paul VK5PAS who was activating Scott Creek Conservation Park, VKFF-788. Final VK of the morning was Tony VK3CAT. There was a run of EU chasers and when they dried up, I took a look at the 15m band.



Once again, 15m wasn't easy and after 20 minutes of calling, I had just 8 calls to show for my hard work, including a nice chat with Gez MoNTC. Time to chuck up the little X-50 colinear and try some 2m FM. First call was a s2s with Rob G7LAS, activating HuMP G/HSP-

005 Bolehill. There was a run of 15 contacts including Stewart GoLGS, Peter M1CNL and Matt 2EoMDJ.

Time to search and pounce a few summit to summit contacts! A total eleven were logged, however, I couldn't pull out Barry MoIML/P who was activating G/SE-015 Cheriton Hill.



It was at this point I had a bit of a brainstorm and decided to try some 10m FM. Yeah, I know what you're thinking "Triple Yankee has finally lost the plot". Well almost, however, I did work Lithuania and Italy as well as one G station, so not a total disaster.

My last throw of the dice was a call on the 20m band where four North Americans were logged.

88 ccontacts for the activation

73 on HF

15 on VHF.

Thanks to all the callers.

73 Mike

2EoYYY

Tall timber

By Paul VK5PAS

A few months ago Rob VK4FFAB posted on the WWFF Australia Yahoo group about one of his activations. He included a photo of operating from Moogerah Peaks in amongst some tall trees. See below.....



This resulted in a post by one of the regular European park hunters who stated that the power from the antenna was absorbed by the

vegetation, and that activators should elevate the antenna above the treeline, or look for a clear place near the forest, but not inside.

It inspired me to do some research on whether trees affected propagation.

Mal VK5MJ provided me with a very interesting military document entitled ‘Performance of trees as radio antennas in tropical jungle forests’. I will place it into the Files section of the WWFF Yahoo group & VK5 Parks Yahoo group in the next few days.

In essence, from what I have read, it appears that although trees do absorb some RF energy, it isn’t a major problem on HF.

I’d be interested to hear from anyone’s experience.

MP1R Super whip antenna

By Paul VK5PAS

I recently read on the SOTA Australia Yahoo group, some info about the MP1R Super whip which is a portable/mobile HF All Band antenna. Looks interesting.

For more information, please see.....

<http://newsuperantenna.com/MP1R-SuperWhip/>

VK5ARG ILLW Activity 2015

By Bob VK5FO

On Saturday 15th August, members of AREG participated in the International Lighthouse and Lightship weekend event. AREG reserved the Marino Rocks lighthouse-AU-018 to operate as VK5ARG, while Peter VK5KX went over to Edithburgh on Yorke Peninsula and activated Troubridge Hill lighthouse.



Bob VK5FO and Ray VK5RR arrived onsite at around 1.00 p.m. in the cold and light rain. They took a walk from the carpark up to the lighthouse in the Marino Conservation Park, looking for a suitable place to set up the station.

A 15 minute walk up to the hill to the lighthouse, which is in a fenced enclosure in the middle of the conservation park, a bit of walk around to admire the view to the west across the Gulf and to the north along the coast towards Adelaide, they could see that the rain was clearing. There was a suitable spot to set up a portable station about 50m from the lighthouse overlooking the Gulf.



Back at the carpark, Gary VK5FGRY had arrived and everyone made their way back up and set up the station. The station for this operation was a KX3 and an inverted V on 40m and also a 1/4 wave vertical on 20m.

As we were setting up the weather cleared and we were lucky enough to have even better views towards the city and across the Gulf.

Once set up we started looking over the bands and came across another club member-Peter VK5KX who was at Troubridge Hill lighthouse

AU-0105 and made the first contact for the day at 0455 UTC.



Even though the bands were busy with the RD contest it was fairly steady going – conditions were only average. The station mainly worked 40m and tried 20m for a little while at around the time we would expect EU activity – but only worked a single station on 20m.

Across the afternoon we had a relaxed time and worked a total of 18 stations with the mix of 2 RD contest stations, 7 other ILLW stations and 9 chasers. The team worked the following lighthouses: AU-0105, AU-0029, AU-0017, AU-0107, AU-0110, AU-0079, AU-0007 before packing up around 5pm local time.



All up a fun day was had by everyone involved. It was a great opportunity to undertake some portable operation from some quite landmarks. Congratulations to all involved who braved the wintery weather.

