



# "OUT AND ABOUT IN VK5"

Issue 16, February 2016

## Welcome



Hi all, and welcome to Issue 16, February 2016, of *'Out and About in VK5'*, which is dedicated to all things SOTA, Parks, portable operation, QRP, pedestrian mobile, mobile, etc from a VK5 perspective.

The month of January saw quite a bit of activity out in the field. Although, very hot weather forced the cancellation of the weekly Friday VK5 Parks event on a few occasions. We have experienced some very hot weather here in VK5 during December and January. And yet, as I type this, it is pouring with rain outside here in the Adelaide Hills. All as a result of the tropical cyclone in Western Australia.

On a personal level during January, I undertook a couple of SOTA activations at Mount Lofty and Mount Gawler, and a handful of park activations. I also enjoyed some time away with

my family at Swan Hill, and deliberately left the radio gear at home. But I did slip in some contacts from the vehicle.

As many of you would know, I also accepted a position as a Director on the WIA Board. At this stage, I will be there until the AGM in May on Norfolk Island. I have also submitted a nomination form for the WIA elections, as a Director after that time. Sadly, there is quite a bit of negativity floating around at the moment regarding the WIA. I would like to see that turned around in due course.

I will be attending the WIA AGM on Norfolk Island VKFF-0392, in May, and will be operating from Norfolk Island, hopefully as VK9PAS (I am awaiting confirmation on the call). I hope to undertake some VKFF & SOTA activations from Norfolk Isl.

During January, devastating bushfires swept across Western Australia, Victoria, and Tasmania. I remind everyone of the dangers of going out into the bush on days of extreme weather. I would strongly discourage this.

January also saw the tragic death of a bushwalker in one of the Adelaide Hills most popular Conservation Parks. This is also a poignant reminder of the danger of the Australian bush.

Close in propagation has not really improved, with some very challenging conditions for SOTA & Parks Activators and Chasers/Hunters, particularly during the morning. During the late afternoon and evenings, conditions certainly seem to be a lot better.

And long path propagation into Europe on 20m continues to be quite a challenge whilst out portable. But, for the first time in a long time, I was able to work some European park hunters on 20m. Lets hope it is a sign of things to come.

The real pleasing sign through for January was 28mhz. The 10m band has been percolating along very nicely with some very good openings for the SOTA activators and chasers. I've experienced some very strong signals from the VK1 and VK2 SOTA activators here into the Adelaide Hills. I have to get a 10m portable antenna together!

I've also been having a lot of fun on 15m. Rob VK4FFAB was my inspiration for trying this band whilst out portable. Often, the VK4 Foundation operators can't make the contact on

40m, but 15m seems to work very well. So, why not give bands other than 40m or 20m a go next time you are out portable.

Despite many pleas, I still get very few VK5 contributors to the newsletter. I know that there are a lot of people that read 'Out and About in VK5', but for whatever reason, it is like pulling teeth, to get VK5 amateurs to contribute.

I am still very keen to receive information from contributors. If you have any information that you would like to see in the next issue, please drop me an email at....

[vk5pas@wia.org.au](mailto:vk5pas@wia.org.au)



Best 73 and happy activating/chasing/hunting.

Paul, VK5PAS.

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## The issue of alerting and spotting again

By Paul VK5PAS



Recently a relatively new park activator went out into the field, and failed to get a contact for the activation. Although this appears to have been a combination of a number of factors, the issue of the amateur failing to place an alert before heading out, appears to have dramatically influenced the outcome of the activation.

The message here is.....as an Activator, place an ALERT before heading out.

Advertise the fact that you are going to be out & about in as many forums as possible.

Where and how do you do that? Here are a few ideas.....

- SOTAWatch
- Parksnparks
- SOTA & Parks Yahoo groups

- Facebook
- Email
- SMS messages
- Local repeater

With regards to alerting, don't worry if you are late to the summit or the park. Or early for that matter. You can always edit the alert yourself if you have internet coverage. But don't worry if you can't access the internet to change the alert. If the SOTA chasers or park hunters really want that summit or park bad enough, they will wait for you.

There has been a multitude of posts on the SOTA Yahoo group over the years regarding the subject of alerting. Many chasers have aired their disappointment about not working an activator, because they didn't know that the activators was going to be there.

So, place an ALERT. Let everyone know that you are going to be out in the field. You will increase the number of hams in your log by doing so.

And for the SOTA chasers and Park hunters..... PLEASE place a spot if you've worked an activator, or place a post up on Facebook. Not only will the activator appreciate your efforts, but so will your fellow chasers/hunters.

The parksnparks website, created by Allen VK3HRA, will throw out a goat bleating once a SOTA activator has been spotted, and a kookaburra laughing when a park activator is spotted. If you spot a park activator, the parksnparks system will also send the spot to the international DX Cluster.

On a personal level, I've found that a single spot on the DX Cluster has resulted in a large pile up.

Many hunters and chasers are also taking full advantage of the various Facebook sites. Not just the dedicated SOTA and Park Facebook sites, but also sites such as Amateur (HAM) Radio Australia, and Amateur Radio Operators.

Here are some links to a few of the more popular Facebook sites.....

#### VKFF & SOTA

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/959490830770023/?ref=bookmarks>

#### VK5 Parks Award

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

#### Field Radio

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

#### World Wide Flora Fauna

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/WWFF44/>

#### Amateur (HAM) Radio Australia

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/9260226322/>

#### Amateur Radio Operators

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/164375340269425/>

There is no doubt, that being placed on the DX Cluster, parksnparks, Facebook, etc, dramatically increases the number of callers.

So come on chasers and hunters. A 'spot' only takes a very short time to do.

## All VK5 Parks now qualify for WWFF

By Paul VK5PAS



All VK5 Conservation Parks have now been added to the WWFF program. A full list can either be found on the WWFF Australia website or the global WWFF website (by downloading the WWFF Directory).

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

<http://www.wwff.co/>

This is now going to save a lot of confusion as to why certain VK5 Parks were on the list, and others were not.



## Progress of the VK5 Parks Award database

By Paul VK5PAS



The VK5 Parks Award database is coming along nicely. Myself, John VK5BJE, and Col VK5HCF have been uploading logs to test out the system, prior to its official release. And in general, all seems to be working well.

I hope to have the database released live in the next couple of months. This will mean the end of excel spreadsheets....yeeehaaaaaa.

Only activators will be required to upload logs. The system will do all the hard work for the park hunters. You will be able to apply for awards on-line, and we hope to also have reference report (to see when a park was last activated and by whom), and an Honour Roll/Top Operators list.

I would like to take the opportunity of thanking Jonathan VK6JON who has been doing all the hard work behind the scenes.

I will keep everyone posted of developments.

## VK5 Park identifier codes

By Paul VK5PAS

Following on from the database story, each VK5 Park has a unique identifier code, starting with 5CP. These were created by Allen VK3ARH (formerly VK3HRA) for parksnparks.

They have been adopted for use for the VK5 Parks Award and the VK5 Parks Award database.

I have now placed these codes on the VK5 Parks website.

<http://www.vk5parks.com/qualifying-parks.html>

I would encourage all VK5 Parks activators to start handing out these numbers to park hunters, and if there is any initial confusion, please take the time to explain to the hunter/s, that identifiers will now be used for the VK5 National and Conservation Parks.

e.g.

Belair National Park 5NP-001

Murray River National Park 5NP-016

Aberdour Conservation Park, 5CP-001

Grass Tree Conservation Park 5CP-080

## Travelling Hams Facebook site

By Ian VK5IS



There is a new Facebook site out. It is called Travelling Hams and was created by Stef VK5HSX and his XYL, Wendy.

It is a place for Hams & XYLs to meet, share tips and stay connected while on the road.

It can be found at.....

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/474109479451891/>

## SOTA on New Years Day

By Paul VK5PAS

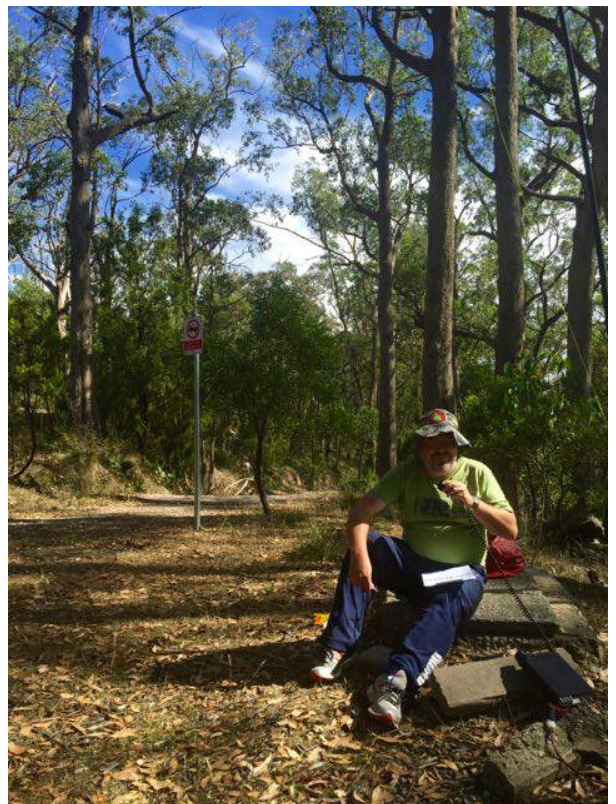
I had enjoyed a very quiet night on New Years Eve, so early on New Years Day I headed over to Mount Lofty summit VK5/ SE-005 which is located within the Cleland Conservation Park (VKFF-0778 and 5CP-042).

There were a large number of alerts on SOTAWatch from other SOTA activators around Australia, so it was shaping up to be a fun morning.

There were reports that a massive solar storm was predicted to hit the Earth.....

<http://qrznow.com/a-massive-solar-storm-will-hit-earth-before-new-years-eve/>

Operating conditions started off very quiet, but soon picked up. I ended up with a total of 93 contacts including 36 Summit to Summit contacts.



More information can be found on my Wordpress site at....

<http://vk5pas.org/2016/01/01/mount-lofty-vk5-se-005-and-cleland-cp-vkff-0778/>



## A change in the WWFF Top Operators section

By Paul VK5PAS

Several changes have been made to the Top Operators chart on the WWFF Log Search page. Andrew MoYMA has mentioned this in the Service Status section on Log Search.

The changes include:

- The 44 QSO quorum for activators is now enforced.
- Club and team callsigns are now only listed on the Club/Team section.

Now, this has upset one or two VK's. They. But lets remember, that WWFF is a global program.

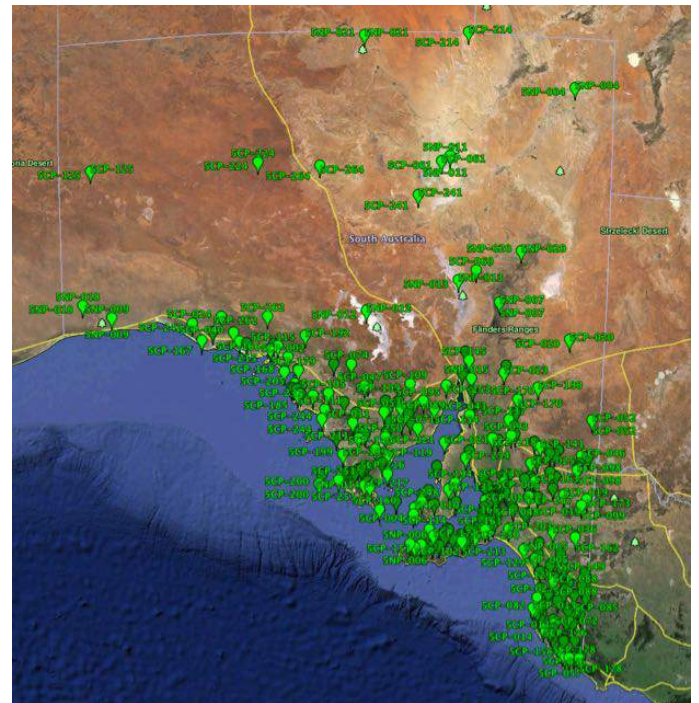
## KML file with all VK5 Parks

By Paul VK5PAS

You can find the most recent KML file with all of the VK5 National & Conservation Parks, on either the VK5 Parks website, or in the files section of the VK5 Yahoo group. I also posted it on the VK5 Parks Facebook site.

The KML file can be downloaded and used in

Google Earth and Google maps, to show you where each park is located.



## Fire restrictions in SA Parks

By Paul VK5PAS



Greg VK5GJ dropped me an email with a copy of the South Australian Government Gazette dated 29 October 2015 which has an entry

which relates to fire restrictions for parks in South Australia.

I have read the Gazette reference, which is 4 pages long. Schedule 1 specifically refers to fire restrictions in parks in Country Fire Service Fire Ban Districts. The purpose of these fire restrictions is to ensure the safety of visitors using the parks and reserves, and in the interests of protecting the Reserves and neighbouring properties.

**PLEASE ensure that prior to entering into a park, you are full conversant with what you can and cannot do.**

For example, with parks in the Mount Lofty Ranges, all wood fires or solid fuel fires are prohibited throughout the year. Gas fires or liquid fuel fires are permitted in designated areas only, other than on days of total fire ban. In the Belair National Park, designated fixed gas barbecues may be used on days of total fire ban other than when the Director has formally closed the Reserve in accordance with Regulations.

Check out the DEWNR website and also the CFS website at.....

<http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Home>

<http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/home.jsp>



## VK5 Parks flags

By Paul VK5PAS



The first batch of the flags for the VK5 National and Conservation Parks Award have arrived, and have been forwarded on to the majority of those who ordered them.

So far, no complaints. In fact, all very good reports.

I have flown the flag twice now, during some recent VK5 Parks activations.

I am currently taking orders for a 2<sup>nd</sup> batch. If you are interested, please send me an email.....

[vk5pas@wia.org.au](mailto:vk5pas@wia.org.au)

The flags are \$17.00 each (depends on how many we order). Plus a small charge for me to post out the flag/s to you, or you can collect them from me.

The flags are made by 'Australian Flag Makers' and are made from 200D knitted polyester, designed for outdoor use. The flags are single

sided, with 2 grommets so you can attach the flag to a squid pole. The flags are 40cm X 60cm in size.



## Science Alive

By Paul VK5PAS



Dale VK5FSCCK is looking for volunteers for the upcoming (August 2016) Science Alive Event. This is a great way of promoting this amazing hobby.

Dale has kicked off a Facebook page which can be located at.....

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1035439429812823/>

Please contact Dale ASAP if you can help. Already, a number of VK5 hams have volunteered, including myself, Stuart VK5STU, and Nigel VK5NIG.

More information on Science Alive can be found at.....

<http://www.scienceweek.net.au/science-alive/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Science4Everyone/>

## The second Friday event for the VK5 Parks Award

By Paul VK5PAS

On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2016, the second Friday afternoon/evening event for 2015/2016 for the VK5 Parks Award was held.

Seven activators ventured out to put five Conservation Parks on air.....

1. Theo VK5MTM, Morialta CP
2. Gary VK5FGRY, Morialta CP
3. Les VK5KLV, The Dutchmans Stern CP
4. Peter VK5PET, Bullock Hill CP
5. Col VK5HCF, Telford Scrub CP
6. Tom VK5EE, Telford Scub CP
7. Paul VK5PAS, Mount Billy CP



Conditions on 40m were quite good.

Col VK5HCF has provided a report on his activation. Please see the next article.

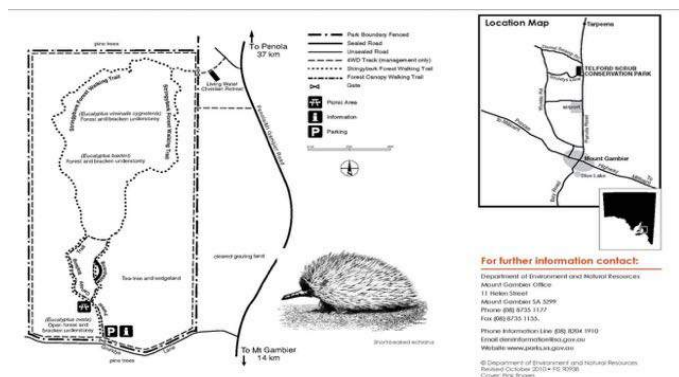
## Telford Scrub for the VK5 Parks Friday event

By Col VK5HCF

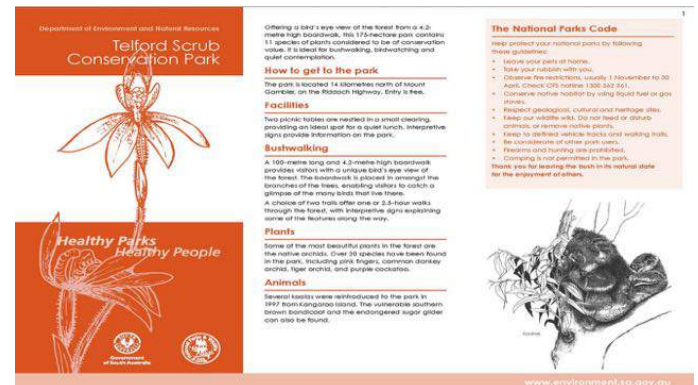


This was a Friday twilight activation and our first for the New Year.

Tom, VK5EE and I decided to head to Telford Scrub C.P. as it is only about 14km. North of Mt. Gambier.



There has been a small fire adjacent to the car park which was obviously spotted very early as only about 200 square metres had burnt. At a rough guess I would say that some thoughtless fool threw a cigarette butt onto the ground without bothering to make sure that it was out. Very lucky. The park has deteriorated since our last visit and there has obviously been no maintenance work carried out. A very sad state of affairs but, like every other government department, there is no money available.



We arrived at 3 p.m. and set up in the car park using the 40 metre P.A.R. end fed as an inverted V. We ran this out more or less East West and parallel with the road. On turning on the radio the noise was S7 and it would have been a pain to operate like that so we decided to take it all down and move up the track into the park. We threw the fishing sinker up into a gum tree at about 8 metres and set up the inverted V in a North South direction so that it was at right angles to the power lines out on the road. This dropped the noise level down to an acceptable S2-3.

We fired up with me calling C.Q.

For the first 5 minutes or so I thought that we would be packing up and heading home but then David, VK5PL gave us a call and the contacts slowly but surely followed.

The band was quite severely affected by qsb with a couple of stations disappearing all together but with a little patience we were able to gain valid contacts. Others were booming in. It is amazing how propagation can be so different from one location to another.

At one point Tom suggested that we swap the KX3 for his FT-857 as he was lusting for some more power. We swapped the radios over but I could pick no difference even though Tom was now using 50 watts. (I think he is trying to trash my battery?) Tom has the unfortunate habit of subscribing to the “More is good” members of the watt brigade whereas I prefer to “Do more with less”. Next thing you know we will be carting a 200 Amp/Hr battery around and nursing our hernias. Mention has been made of an amplifier.(sigh).

Although the contacts were a bit slow in coming we both had a good number and we thank all of those who called in, particularly the couple who faded right out but who persevered and with a bit of patience the contacts were completed.

Tom worked the following stations:-

Ron, VK3VBI,

Gavin, VK3MLU?

Greg, VK5GJ,

Mick, VK3PMG,

Ray, VK3YAR,

Damien, VK5FDEC,

Adrian, VK5FANA

Don, VK3MCK,

Hans, KHZ

Peter, VK5PET

Gerrard, VK2IO

Jeff, VK4RF

Jeff, VK4HA

Jeff, VK5JK

and last but by no means least

Joe, VK3YSP.

These were all on the FT-857 at 50 watts.

Using the KX3 and 10 watts I was lucky enough to be called by:-

David, VK5PL

Dennis, VK2HHA

Greg, VK5GJ

Adrian, VK5FANA

Peter, VK3PF

Mick, VK3PMG



Paul, VK3DBP

Amanda, VK3FQSO

Les, VK5KLV

Shaun, VK5FAKV

Roscoe, VK3KRH

Chris, VK3AWG

Jeff, VK5JK

and

Peter, VK5PET.



Many thanks to all of you and we hope to catch you again soon.

73,

Col VK5HCF

## 3<sup>rd</sup> year anniversary event – VK5 Parks Award

By Paul VK5PAS

The special VK5 Parks Award Activation Weekend to celebrate the 3<sup>rd</sup> year anniversary will be held on....

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>  
April 2016**

If you do intend to activate a park that weekend, please drop me an email at.....

[vk5pas@wia.org.au](mailto:vk5pas@wia.org.au)

The purpose of this is to maintain a spreadsheet which will prevent ‘double up’ activations, and assist with stats at the end of the weekend.

There were a few activators last year who did not send me an email. This makes it very hard to compile accurate stats at the end of the weekend. You also risk turning up to a park, where somebody is already operating from.

So, PLEASE, send me an email.

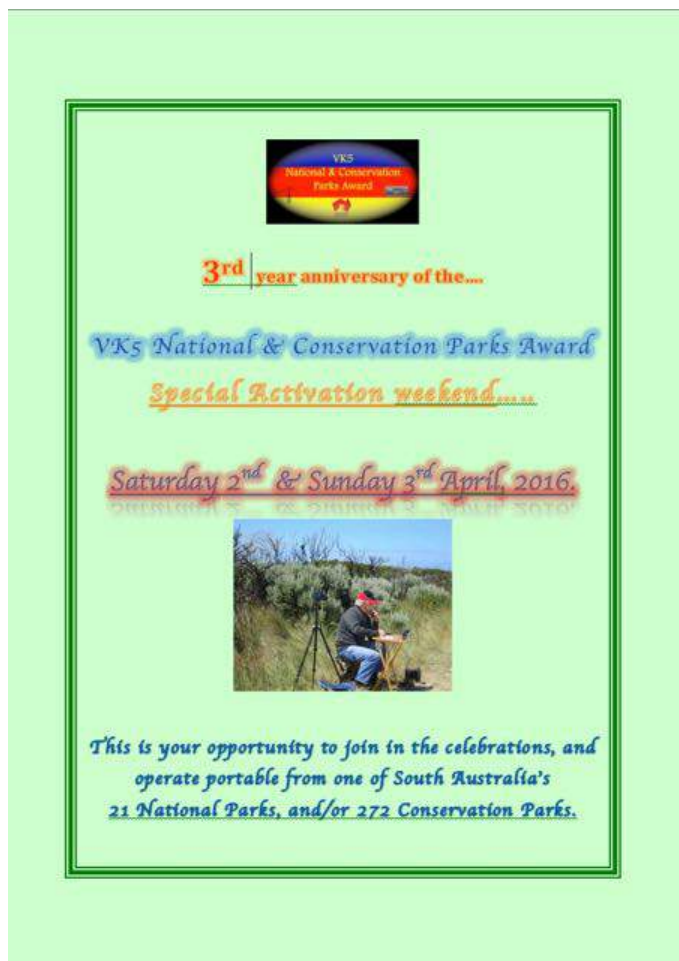
Last year a total of 41 amateurs took part and there were a total of 111 South Australian park activations. Of those, 81 were unique parks. A number of VK3 hams took part in the event, which we are very appreciate of.

I've only heard from a handful of hams at this stage. So, please don't leave it to the last minute.

And don't forget to place an alert on parksnparks.

<http://parksnparks.org/>

Can we make it bigger than last year? I certainly hope so.



## 2016 VKFF Activation Weekend

By Paul VK5PAS

The 2016 VKFF Activation Weekend will be held on.....

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>  
November 2016.**

Last years inaugural VKFF Action Weekend (held in November just gone), saw a total of 51 amateurs venture out to activate 77 unique parks all across Australia. There were over 3,200 QSOs made over the 2 day period.

Again, please drop me an email should you be intending on activating a park.....

[vk5pas@wia.org.au](mailto:vk5pas@wia.org.au)



# Mount Gawler 2016

By Ian VK5CZ



Mount Gawler vk5/se-013 is my first activation for 2016.

The weather was nice and cool and the Tour Down Under cycle race started today so I decided to activate a summit on the way to watch the Women's race go by at Mount Torrens in the Adelaide Hills.



Parked nearby the set up area the bush is slowly recovering from a bush fire in 2015 easy summit to access .



Lots of burnt out trees in woods and forest country across the road and still very dry from months of no rain this summer .

So once set up I was glad to start out with a S2S, VK1VIC/2 was very clear and strong on 40m ssb so I knew it was going to be ok to qualify the summit and as it turned out I got 3 qso's from the same summit with VK1VIC/2 , VK1FAJW/2 and VK4JAZ/2 so 3 S2S QSO's right from get go. Unfortunately no short skip to VK5 again with only a very low signal qso with Ian VK5IS on cw and VK5AO Mait who was just below me in Adelaide, luckily the vk 2 3 and 4 stations were quite strong on 40m cw.





On this summits it is hard to set the antenna up under the trees and I could only run out the dipoles north south direction which would later make it harder to qso to Japan on 15m . The wx was a nice breeze to keep cool but not really fill out the flags all the time.

Once roll over came I went on 40m ssb and made some qso's mostly with the same chasers I had worked on cw giving them some extra points but with conditions poor for the locals I could not complete a couple qso's I am sorry.



The Large tree over the fence only allowed me to put the dipole up end on to Japan which

probably did not help my signal but with the FT 857 I was running 25 watts on cw . I noticed the internal noise in the 857 is not as quiet as the kx3 and the DSP filtering was turned off helping improved my reception when working hard to pull out the weak signals. No man made noise was evident and 15m was very quiet but with low signals and qsb we had to repeat reports several times and keep listening for the qsb to go up. With this type of conditions it is good practice to slow the cw speed down and just send the RST three or four times no other information/chatter. JJ1SWI/1 Go was on summit JA/KN-020 in Kanagawa and he had the best signal considering conditions, then Mot JP1QEC/1 who was portable in a park was workable as well. Mot is my friend on Face book and I have chased him on summits before from my home, so we were proving the possibility of a s2s one day. I was very pleased NS7P Phil was able to make contact with me, its been a while since I heard from him.



This SOTA station was a FT 857 running 25 watts on ssb and cw the antennas are my newly made 40/20m and 30m/15m link dipoles fed with rg 174 feed line and in this case both



inverted V's were up 7 metres . New wire is from SOTA beams which I think is great antenna wire, the link dipoles are made up from the dipole design on sota maps.org page which has a great antenna design feature. Even down to the length of the support strings needed for my set up with a 8m squid pole and keeping with the 60 deg angle of the inverted V. The software calculates for you the length of wires needed to get the two bands you are aiming for, the length of cord needed for end supports and I call my tent pegs .1m . Very little tuning is needed to get it resonate in the area I want to operate in if you follow the design plan.



Working the pile up .

Thanks everyone for chasing and S2S, sorry to those who I could not work .

23 contacts plus 2 uncompleted from the qsb.

Thanks for your interest in my blog.

cheers from

Ian vk5cz ..

## Participation certificate

By Paul VK5PAS

I have emailed out a 'Participation' certificate to everyone who took part as an Activator in the 2015 VKFF Activation Weekend back in November.



## New SOTA website

By Paul VK5PAS



There is now a new website for the Summits on the Air (SOTA) program.



Here is an item that appeared recently on the SOTA reflector from GM4ZfZ.....

*Just a quick heads up that soon we will have a new SOTA website. I do hope to have it live before Christmas.*

*There is a possibility that certain functions may be at risk during the transition. These are Spotlite and the RSS feed. I know that many people and some third party software rely on these functions.*

*It is also worth mentioning that some aspects of SOTAwatch will be now incorporated in the new website and eventually it is entirely possible that a fully new version of SOTAwatch will end up more integrated as well. This will also impact some third party software that relies on screenscraping.*

*Alongside this, I will also be launching a new SOTA API service. Now it will not be fully comprehensive for some time but should, over time, end up serving as an adequate data source for all third party software requirements.*

*Anyway, if you have any specific concerns regarding the impact of these changes upon software that you are involved with, then please get in touch with me directly by email, private message or via the contact page on the website.*

73, Jon

## Field Radio

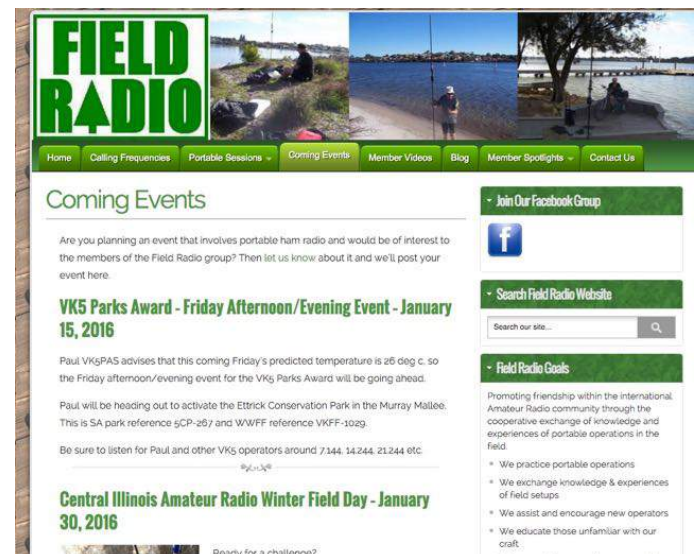
By Paul VK5PAS

The ever popular Field Radio website has a ‘Coming Events’ area where you can check out many portable radio events.

If you do have a portable event scheduled, then give it some more exposure here on the Field Radio website.

Field Radio can be found at.....

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



## QSL cards

By Paul VK5PAS

If you have received any QSL cards from a SOTA activator or a WWFF activator, please send me a copy and I will include them here.

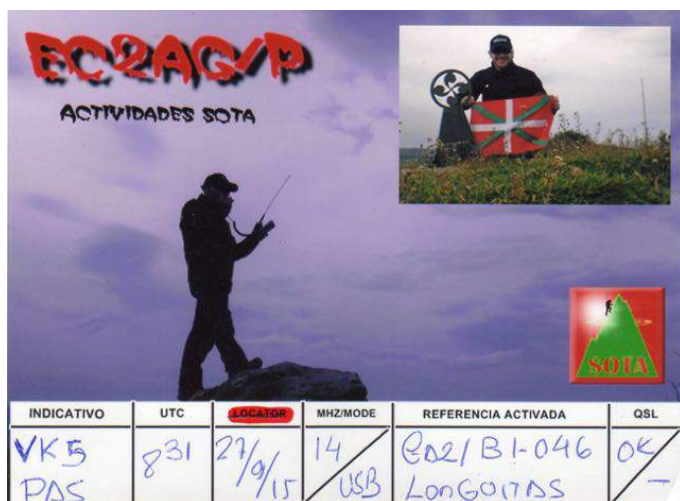
Send me a copy to.....

[vk5pas@wia.org.au](mailto:vk5pas@wia.org.au)

Andrew MXoWFF.



Antonio, EC2AG



EM9WFF, Ukraine



Dave G4AKC/p





## ZLFF logo

By Paul VK5PAS

Courtesy of Danny ON4VT, there is a brand new logo for the ZLFF program.



A reminder that there is a ZLFF Facebook site. It can be located at.....

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1387753918190265/>

## Recent Park Activations

Local propagation around VK5 continued to be a challenge during January, particularly during morning activations. So sadly, many of the keen VK5 park hunters missed out on logging fellow VK5 activators.

Here is a list of recent park activations by VK5's (that I am aware of).

- Marne Valley Conservation Park VKFF-0906, Paul VK5PAS/p (31/1/2016)
- Wills Creek Conservation Park VKFF-0819, Rob VK4AAC/5 (30/1/2016)
- Lake Tyers State Park VKFF-0761, Stef VK5HSX/3 (28/1/2016)
- Namadgi National Park VKFF-0377, Stef VK5HSX/1 (26/1/2015)
- The Knoll Conservation Park VKFF-0937, Paul AX5PAS/p (26/1/2016)



*Above:- The Knoll Conservation Park. Image courtesy of VK5PAS*

- Roonka Conservation Park VKFF-1090, Richard VK5ZRY/p (24/1/2016)
- Red Banks Conservation Park VKFF-1086, Peter VK5FLEX/p (16/1/2016)
- Mark Oliphant Conservation Park VKFF-0782, John VK5BJE/p (15/1/2016)



*Above:- Plaque in Mark Oliphant CP. Image courtesy of VK5BJE*

- Mount George Conservation Park VKFF-0784, Peter VK5PET/p (15/1/2016)
- Murray River National Park VKFF-0372, Adrian VK5AW (15/1/2016)
- Ettrick Conservation Park VKFF-1029, Paul VK5PAS (15/1/2016)



*Above:- VK5PAS set up in Ettrick CP. Image courtesy of VK5PAS.*

- Telford Scrub Conservation Park VKFF-0805, Col VK5HCF/p (8/1/2016)
- Telford Scrub Conservation Park VKFF-0805, Tom VK5EE/p (8/1/2016)
- Bullock Hill Conservation Park VKFF-0873, Peter VK5PET/p (8/1/2016)



*Above:- The shack of Peter VK5PET at the Bullock Hill Conservation Park. Image courtesy of VK5PET*



- Mount Billy Conservation Park VKFF-0912, Paul VK5PAS/p (8/1/2016)



*Above:- VK5PAS 'shack' at Mt Billy CP. Image courtesy of VK5PAS*

- The Dutchmans Stern Conservation Park VKFF-0817, Les VK5KLV/p (8/1/2016)
- Morialta Conservation Park VKFF-0783, Theo VK5MTM/p (8/1/2016)
- Morialta Conservation Park VKFF-0783, Gary VK5FGRY/p (8/1/2016)



*Above:- The VK5MTM and VK5FGRY shack in the Morialta CP. Image courtesy of VK5MTM*

- Kaiser Stuhl Conservation Park VKFF-0897, Stuart VK5STU/p (3/1/2016)
- Peebinga Conservation Park VKFF-0830, Andrew VK5AKH/p (3/1/2016)
- Peebinga Conservation Park VKFF-0830, Mark VK5QI/p (3/1/2016)



*Above:- Mark VK5QI in the Peebinga Conservation Park. Image courtesy of VK5QI*

- Karte Conservation Park VKFF-0898, Andy VK5AKH/p (3/1/2016)
- Karte Conservation Park VKFF-0898, Mark VK5QI/p (3/1/2016)
- Cleland Conservation Park VKFF-0778, Paul VK5PAS/p (1/1/2016)

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.wwffaustralia.com/>

## Recent SOTA activations



Mount Gawler, VK5/ SE-013, continues to be a popular haunt for VK5 SOTA activators.

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

- Mount Gawler VK5/ SE-013, Nigel VK5NIG/p (31/1/2016)
- Mount Gawler VK5/ SE-013, Stuart AX5STU/p (26/1/2016)

- Mount Gawler VK5/ SE-013, Nigel AX5NIG/p (26/1/2016)
- Mount Gawler VK5/ SE-013, Paul AX5PAS/p (26/1/2016)



*Above:- L-R Paul VK5PAS, Stuart VK5STU, & Nigel VK5NIG, on Mount Gawler summit.*

- Mount Gawler VK5/ SE-013, Nigel VK5NIG/p (25/1/2016)
- Mount Gawler VK5/ SE-013, Ian VK5CZ (16/1/2016)
- Mount Lofty VK5/ SE-005, Paul VK5PAS/p (1/1/2016)

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

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

## New VK5 Parks Yahoo members

By Paul VK5PAS



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

- Colin VK5FCJM
- Brendon VK5FFCC

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.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary activation weekend for the VK5 Parks award is coming up early next year.

## KRMNPA Activation Weekend 2016

By Paul VK5PAS



**Amateur Radio Victoria**  
For a century doing what we do best: in support of the amateur radio community

The 2016 Activation Weekend for the Keith Roget Memorial National Parks Award (KRMNPA) will be held on....

**Friday 11th to Monday 14<sup>th</sup>  
November 2016**

If you do intend to activate a park, don't forget to place an alert on parksnparks.

More information on the KRMNPA Award can be found at.....

<https://www.amateurradio.com.au/awards>

There is also a KRMNPA Yahoo group which can be found at.....

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



## New VK5 Parks Facebook members

By Paul VK5PAS



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

- Michael VK5FMSB
- Louis VK5FLY

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

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

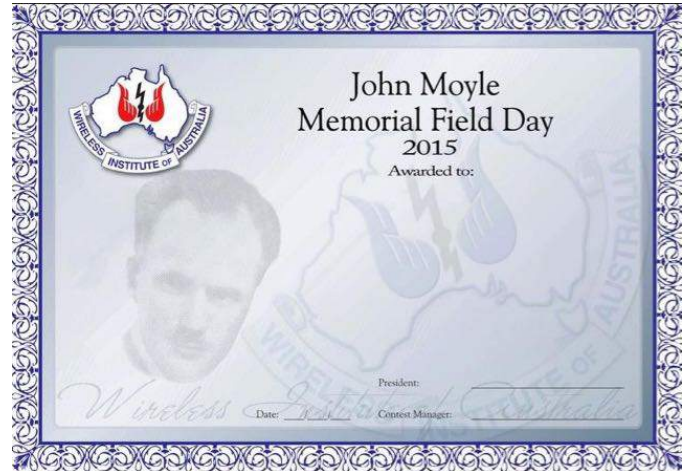
## John Moyle Memorial Field Day 2016

By Paul VK5PAS

The 2016 John Moyle Memorial Field Day (JMMFD) is rapidly approaching. It will be held

from 0100 UTC on Saturday 19th March to 0059 UTC on Sunday 20th March.

This is a great chance to go portable and activate a park, and participate in the JMMFD which is a lot of fun.



I will be heading down to my normal operating spot at the Coorong National Park.

Anyone else proposing to go out and participate?

More information can be found at.....

<http://www.wia.org.au/members/contests/johnmoyle/>



## 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.

[vk5pas@wia.org.au](mailto:vk5pas@wia.org.au)

### Summits on the Air (SOTA)

- **Paul VK5PAS, Summit to Summit 1,000 points**



### World Wide Flora Fauna (WWFF)

- **Stef VK5HSX**
  - Bronze VKFF Activator



- **Adrian VK5FANA**
  - VKFF Hunter Honour Roll 250





- **Greg VK5ZGY**

- VKFF Hunter Honour Roll 125



- **Rob VK4AAC/5**

- VKFF Hunter Honour Roll 175



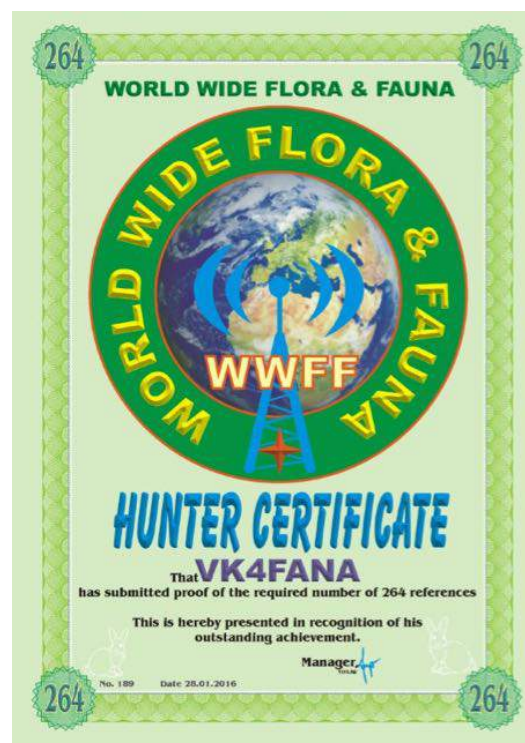
- **Peter VK5FLEX**

- Diamond VKFF Hunter



- **Adrian VK5FANA**

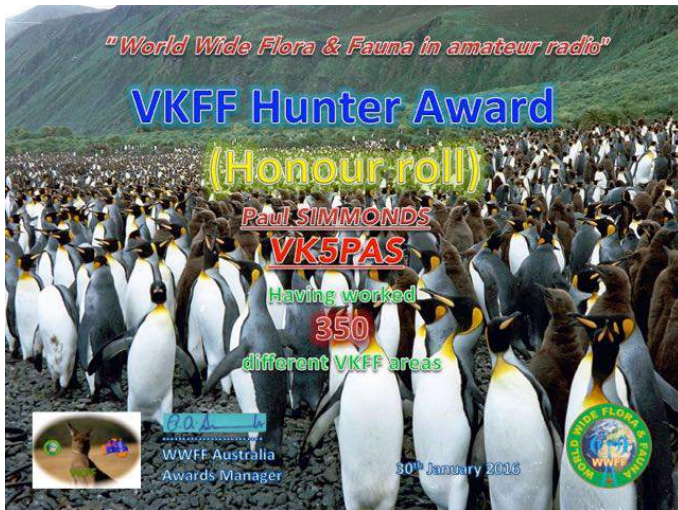
- 264 Global Hunter





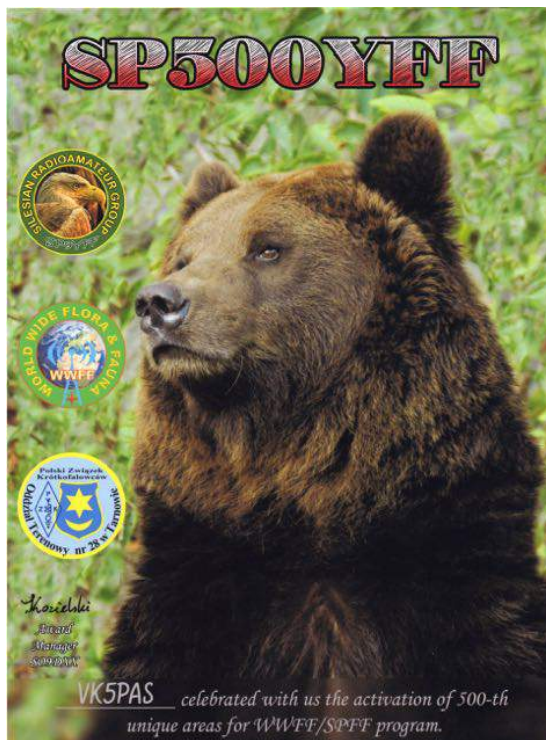
- **Paul VK5PAS**

- VKFF Hunter Honour Roll 350



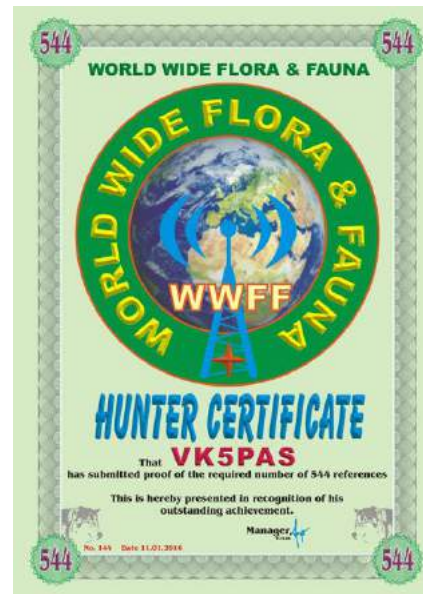
- **Paul VK5PAS**

- SP500YFF certificate



- **Paul VK5PAS**

- WWFF Global Hunter 544 references.



- **Paul VK5PAS**

- Top 44 certificates

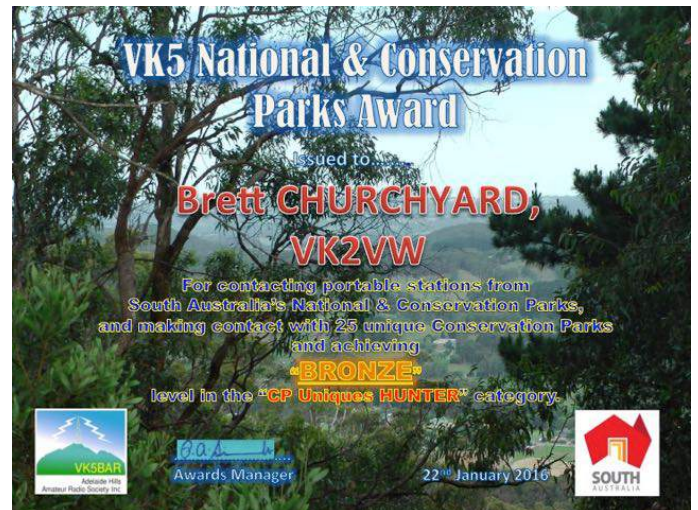






### VK5 Parks Award

- **Brett VK2VW**
  - Gold VK5 Parks Hunter
  - Bronze National Parks Uniques Hunter
  - Bronze Conservation Parks Uniques Hunter



- **Rick VK4RF**
  - Platinum VK5 Parks Hunter
  - Bronze Conservation Parks Uniques Hunter
  - Bronze National Parks Uniques Hunter



### Keith Roget Memorial National Parks Award.

- Nil known

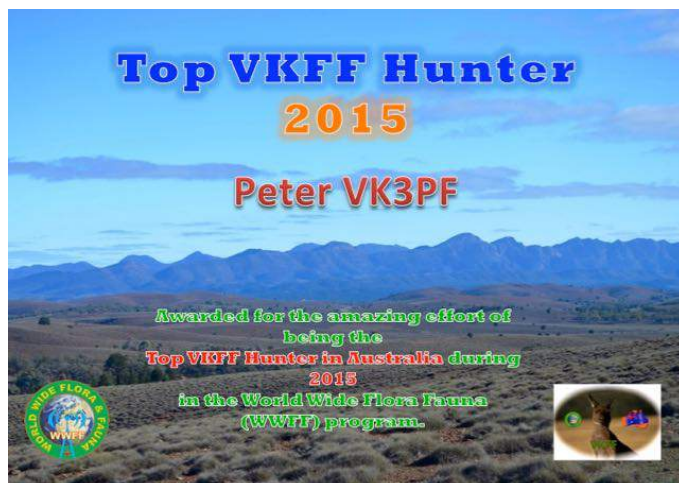
## Top VKFF Activator and Hunter

By Paul VK5PAS

CONGRATULATIONS to Peter VK3PF for taking out the honour of Top VKFF Hunter 2015, and Tony VK3VTH for taking out the Top VKFF Activator 2015.

To view the Top 44 list, check out WWFF Log Search.....

<http://logsearch.wwff.co/index.php>



## Granite Island Penguin centre closes

By Paul VK5PAS

I was very saddened to hear that the Granite Island Penguin Centre is to close after 12 years in operation.

For more information please check out.....

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/granite-island-penguin-centre-closed-after-16-years/news-story/42706ea6f8288e4d722b45d0770a5b60?sv=e46ada16598703151c41307b993b9ff6>



## Ham introductions

By Paul VK5PAS

I decided that it would be interesting to hear a little about some of the amateurs that are active in the portable field. So each month, there will be a segment featuring an active ham. This month, it is John VK5BJE.



John was first licenced in December 1976 as VK3YFG, and in May 1977 became VK3BJE and then VK5BJE in June 1982. So John is in his 40th year as an amateur and in his eighth decade of life.

John has been interested in radio since he was a boy in Devonport. He has recently applied for a two letter call-sign. No, he is not relinquishing his current call, but as John said....”I thought I could have a bit of fun with a call for CW only (including from Parks)”.

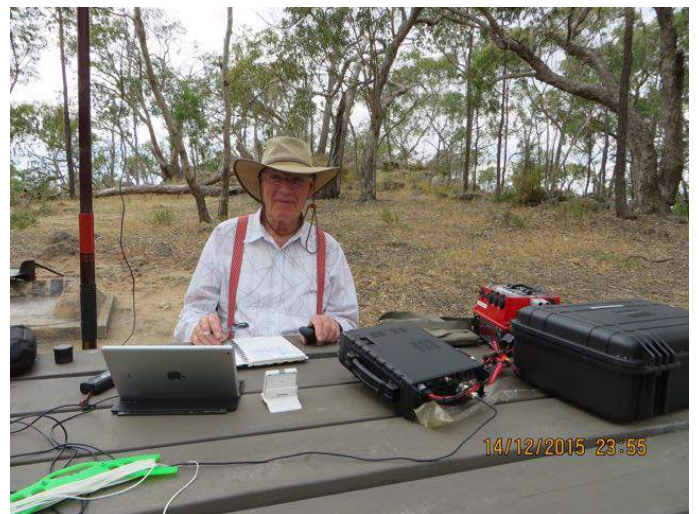
John has explored many facets of the hobby including home brewing transmitters, amateur television, Dstar and, of course, lots of HF. John has worked all mainland states on 2 metres SSB (except VK8), all states on 70 cm (except Queensland and Tasmania) (and

worked as far as Nhill on 23 cm (using tropospheric ducting and sporadic e and a good radio location in the Adelaide Hills).



*Above:- John on air at Mount Arden, with VK5KC & VK5PAS, June 2015. Image courtesy of VK5PAS.*

He has always enjoyed portable activity and John stated....”WWFF, SANCPA award and SOTA have enriched my portable operations enormously”.



*Above:- John in Warby Owens NP, December 2015. Image courtesy of VK5BJE.*

John has operated portable in all states of Australia and New Zealand and held a NZ call as a visitor. In Australia John has operated from National Parks in all states: unfortunately before the awards programs began. John stated that back in those days....”Often the only way to get a contact was through nets or prior arrangement”.

Radio has been a hobby entirely unrelated to his employment. John has other interests besides radio, including music (he plays clarinet and saxophone) and reading. John is a prolific reader (biography and philosophy).



*Above:- John operating as VK100ANZAC at Farina in the South Australian outback, June 2015. Image courtesy of VK5BJE.*

John has worked as a bureaucrat for the Victorian and South Australian Governments and the last ten years of his working life was spent at Flinders University teaching criminology in the Law School.

*Editors comment.....John has an excellent Wordpress site which can be located at....*

<http://vk5bj.com/>

## Take care out there

By Paul VK5PAS

# WARNING!

**Please take care when activating parks.**

A 26 year old man died whilst hiking alone last night in the Morialta Conservation Park.

It is a reminder, that parks and peaks can be very dangerous places.

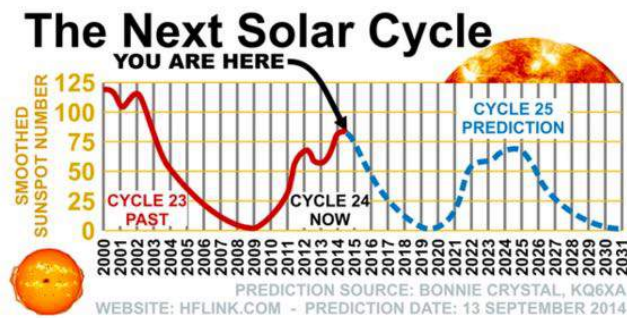
For more information on the death at Morialta, please have a look at.....

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/man-dies-after-falling-down-cliff-at-morialta-conservation-park/news-story/a260037fc48d649df7876c6058dba656?sv=fface6c3325114c25c6f55ea3d42a3d6>

## Sad times ahead

By Paul VK5PAS

Propagation does not look like its going to get any better.....



## Beaches on the Air (BOTA)

By Paul VK5PAS



### Beaches On The Air

Amateur radio from the beach

Rob VK4FFAB recently posted on the VKFF & SOTA Facebook site about Beaches on the Air (BOTA).

Beaches on the Air (BOTA) is an award scheme for radio amateurs and shortwave listeners that encourages portable operation from beaches.

There are awards for activators (those who operate from the beaches) and chasers (those who contact activators from home or elsewhere).

BOTA can be operated from any country or region across the world. Each country or region has its own manager, who prepares the list of recognised beaches within that country or region, which is approved by the central BOTA management team.

At this stage, the list shows that there are 30 participating countries, including Australia.

### Countries And Entities

Country	DXCC entity code	Regions
Australia	VK Australia	2
Chile	CE Chile	14
Germany	DL Germany	16
Denmark	OZ Denmark	5
Spain	EA6 Balearic Islands	1
Spain	EA8 Canary Islands	2
Spain	EA9 Ceuta and Melilla	2
Spain	EA Spain	21
France	F France	19
France	FY French Guiana	1
France	FG Guadeloupe	1
France	FM Martinique	1
France	FH Mayotte	1
France	FR Reunion Island	1
United Kingdom	GW Wales	1
United Kingdom	G England	5
United Kingdom	GI Northern Ireland	1
United Kingdom	GM Scotland	1
Greece	SV Greece	39
Saint Lucia	J6 Saint Lucia	1
Macedonia	Z3 Republic of Macedonia	3
Malaysia	9M2 West Malaysia	0
Puerto Rico	KP4 Puerto Rico	1
Portugal	CT3 Madeira	1
Portugal	CU Azores	1
Portugal	CT Portugal	5
Romania	YO Romania	2
Sweden	SM Sweden	8
United States	KL Alaska	1
United States	K United States	35

At this stage, it appears that only beaches in New South Wales and Western Australia are on the Australian list. I can't see from the website as to who the Australian Manager is?



But there was a record of the very first Australian BOTA activation by Simon VK6MSC on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016 from Floreat Beach in Western Australia.



*Above:- Coogee Beach NSW. Image courtesy of Wikipedia.*

Activators and chasers accumulate points with each QSO. Their total score is calculated by adding the square root of the number of QSOs made from each different beach (activators) or with each different beach (chasers).

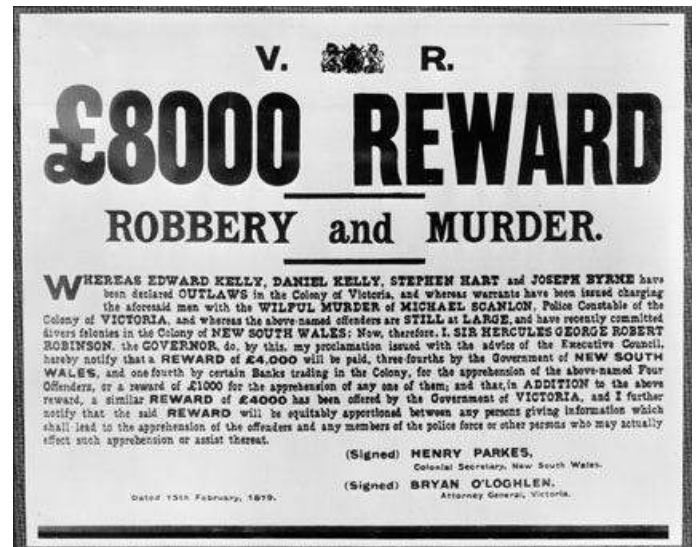
Activators can activate, and chasers can chase, the same beach as many times as they wish and they will always earn additional points, but there will be decreasing returns to activating the same beach due to the square-root rule, which encourages the exploration of new beaches. Certificates are available for various scores, both for activators and chasers.

For more information please have a look at.....

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

## Bushrangers at large

By Paul VK5PAS



Peter VK3ZPF recently posted on the VKFF & SOTA Facebook page re a recent robbery that took place in a State Forest near Ballarat.

Shame, the crooks picked on some plain clothes police officers.

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/shock-for-armed-robbers-who-try-to-holdup-plainclothed-police-near-ballarat-20160120-gm9woa.html>

## Self spotting

By Paul VK5PAS

I was recently involved in a discussion regarding self spotting on the DX cluster. So, is it an acceptable practice, or is it frowned upon?

The answer is the latter.



Although self spotting is tolerated on parksnparks and the SOTAWatch for SOTA & park activators, it is not recommended that you ‘self spot’ on the DX Cluster.

There is a Code of Conduct for the DX Cluster, which in dot point 5 states:

*“It is impolite to self spot (spot your own callsign) unless you are desperately trying to start activity on an open but quiet band – and even then it is preferable to spot a real DX station with a comment to the effect that the band is open”.*

For more info, see.....

<http://www.dx-code.org/cluster.html>

## Alert SA

By Paul VK5PAS



Here is a nifty website and app, that can come in very handy when you are out and about.

The Alert SA website and mobile app provides you with access to the most comprehensive source of official real-time event and warning information in South Australia including: fire, flood, storm, earthquake, power outages, road closures, traffic and transport disruptions, and much more.

Fourteen (14) agencies are now providing this data to Alert SA.

You can find the new website at.....

<https://www.alert.sa.gov.au>

And download the mobile app from:

<https://www.alert.sa.gov.au/download/>

With Alert SA you can:

- view all known planned and current events and warnings on a map of South Australia

- Create ‘watch zones’ to receive alerts about events and warnings in your area of interest (e.g. home/work/school).
- Personalise the types of alerts you receive
- ‘Follow’ events or warnings of interest outside of your watch zone (s) to receive status updates
- Turn on ‘proximity alerts’ to receive alerts around you when you are on the move in South Australia (mobile app only)
- Easily ‘share’ event and warning information with others via sms, email and social media

In addition to the iOS and Android mobile apps, there is a mobile enabled version of the website, to view on any of your smart mobile devices.



A reminder about the VKFF & SOTA Facebook page.



It can be located at.....

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/959490830770023/?ref=bookmarks>

## Australia Day

By Paul VK5PAS

On Australia Day I headed out to activate The Knoll Conservation Park, 5CP-229 and VKFF-0937.

I used the special prefix of AX.

I have a special Australia Day AX5PAS QSL card. If you worked me and would like one, please send me your QSL card, along with a SSAE, to:

PO Box 169

Mount Barker,

SA. 5251



More information on the activation can be located on my Wordpress site at.....

<http://vk5pas.org/>



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday VK5 Parks event

By Paul VK5PAS

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday afternoon/evening event for the VK5 National and Conservation Parks Award took place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

The following activators took part.....

- John VK5BJE/p, Mark Oliphant Conservation Park
- Adrian VK5AW/p, Murray River National Park
- Peter VK5PET/p, Mount George Conservation Park.
- Paul VK5PAS/p, Ettrick Conservation Park

For more information on John VK5BJE's activation, see the following entry, and John's Wordpress site at.....

<http://vk5bje.com/>

And for info on Paul VK5PAS's activation please see.....

<http://vk5pas.org/>

## Mark Oliphant Conservation Park, VKFF-0782, 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

By John VK5BJE



Over the last two years VK5PAS, Paul, the originator of the SANCPA award program, has established a tradition of Friday late afternoon or early evening activations of South Australian National and Conservation Parks for the award. This award encourages portable amateur radio operations from South Australian Parks. It has become quite popular and a number of portable operators in the state make the effort to set up in a Park and lots of South Australian chasers and even more from interstate reward the activators with contacts. From the point of view of the portable operators, the activity develops planning skills, navigation techniques, introduces them to SA's great parks as well as developing amateur radio skills associated with

setting up a satisfactory low-power station and using battery power. Of course the activity develops operating skills, on-going learning of communication techniques, which not only benefit the individual, but perhaps may be useful to community organisations or help with developing a career.

For me, it is just fun. I have always enjoyed portable operations. So I decided to return to the **Mark Oliphant Conservation Park, VKFF-0782**, for the fifth time. I was keen not only to assist chasers obtain this park but also to gain a score of 44 contacts to qualify this Park for the WWFF award. I always enjoy hearing from the operator at the other end say ‘this is a new Park for me’. On Friday evening I secured 38 contacts, including three duplicates, my overall cumulative score more than reaching the required 44. Here is a link to my previous activation:

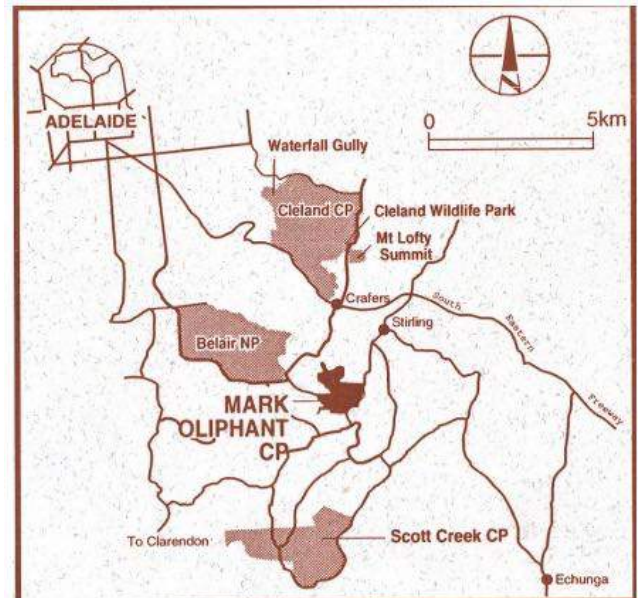
[Mark Oliphant Conservation Park, VKFF-782, 28th June 2015](#)

## The Park

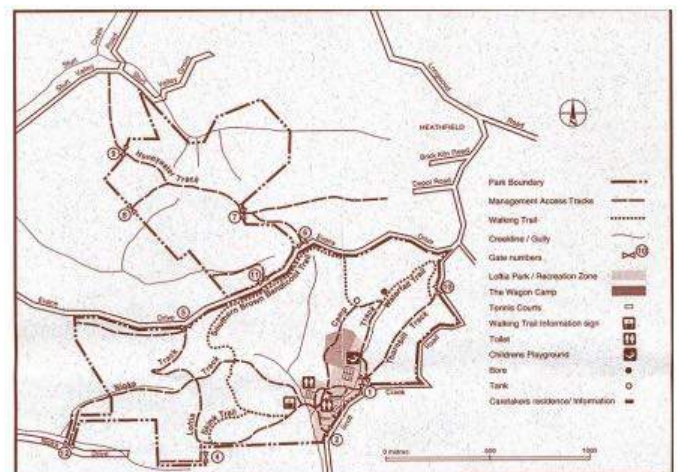
I was pleased to be able to briefly discuss the symbolism of operating from this Park, with one of my contacts. The Park is named after a very prominent Australian scientist, who was also a conservationist and a past Governor of South Australia. Of course Sir Mark was interested in radiation, from nuclear energy, slightly different to the electro-magnetic radiation we play with! He also invented the Magnetron.

In my post of 11th December 2015 I included a photo of the plaque with the citation to Sir Mark. The operator told me he had read my

earlier post and had noted the detail about Sir Mark.



This map, taken from a Park Guide shows the location of the Park in relation to **Belair National Park, Cleland Conservation Park and Scott Creek Conservation Park**. The brochure indicates that the ‘main function is to conserve an important example of the Adelaide Hills Forest Environment’. Messmate and Brown Stingybark trees dominate the forest canopy.



On this occasion I chose as my operating location an area just inside the Park near the point marked 6 on the map. Travel down Evans Drive (from the Heathfield end), a gravel track, until you reach the park boundary on your right hand side and you will come to a gate. When turning from Scott Creek Road into Evans Drive the Park begins on the corner and is thus on your left hand side at the turn. Near point 6 is a better location for the amateur radio operator than just inside the main gate (where the dedication plaque can be found). Maps courtesy of the SA Government.

### Contacts

I operated on 40 metres. I did briefly listen on 20m and decided not to stay! I was on the air at 05:25 and enjoyed the following contacts:

05:31 VK2GAZ/P, Garry in VKFF-0544 (Park to Park contact) **Woolemi National Park**

05:35 VK3FLCS

05:43 VK5PET/P Peter in VKFF-0784 **Mount George Conservation Park**

05:47 VK3NBL

05:50 VK2VW

05:52 VK3AWG

05:53 VK3DQW

05:57 VK3EMI

05:57 VK5GJ/QRP

05:59 VK3PMG

06:00 VK3TKK/M

06:02 VK5FLEX

06:04 VK5PET/P Peter in VKFF-0784 (P2P) **Mount George Conservation Park**

06:07 VK5NRG

06:10 VK3YAR

06:14 VK5FANA

06:18 VK5GY/M

06:19 VK4RF

06:21 VK4HA

06:25 VK5AKK

06:30 VK3PF

06:31 VK3FPBI

06:38 VK7NWT

06:41 VK2FROD

06:44 VK3MCK

06:46 VK3YB

06:50 VK5PET/P5

06:57 VK2IO

07:00 VK3HRA

07:02 VK5YX



07:10 VK5KLV

07:12 VK5EE

07:13 VK5KPR

07:25 VK2FROD

07:16 VK5AW/P5 Adrian in VKFF-0372 **Murray River National Park**  
07:19 VK3JK

VK5PAS/P5 Paul in VKFF-1029, **Ettrick Conservation Park**

Thanks to the operators in VK2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 who gave me a call. And a special thanks to those who spotted me: it makes a great difference to the activity!

## 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](mailto: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 Hamspots.....

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

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

Paul VK5PAS.

Very slim pickings in January. The bands have been quite poor.

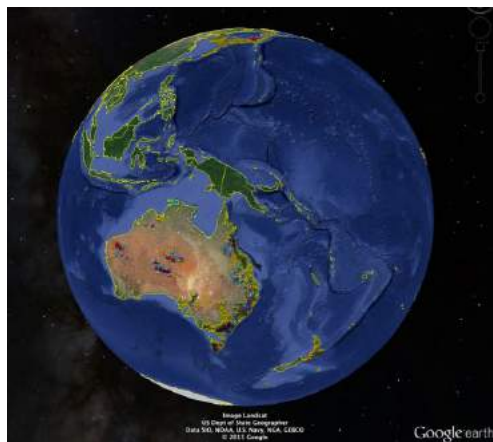
- IZ1NJA/p, Italian Abbeys & Italian Castles Award (30/1/2016)
- ZL2AJ/p, SOTA ZL1/ WK-195 (29/1/2016)
- ZL2AJ/p, SOTA ZL1/ WK-151 (29/1/2016)
- ZL2AJ/p, SOTA ZL1/ MW-113, (6/1/2016)
- ZL2AJ/p, SOTA ZL1/ MW-113, (5/1/2016)

## Full list of summits around the world

By Paul VK5PAS

Should you like to download a KML file of all SOTA summits from all across the world, you can do so, by heading to the following.....

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Summits/files/Maps/summits.kmz>



### **Stuart VK5STU, Portable Amateur Radio Equipment**

<https://youtu.be/4U617s6ODWM>

### **Theo VK5MTM and Gary VK5FGRY at Morialta CP.**

<https://youtu.be/cWJatojCyVo>

### **Col VK5HCF – operating table.**

[https://youtu.be/3TD\\_vQwk7V4](https://youtu.be/3TD_vQwk7V4)

### **Stuart VK5STU, Mount Gawler**

<https://youtu.be/8GmadN4xk6o>

## **Latest videos**

By Paul VK5PAS



If you have put together a You Tube video, or spotted a video of interest somewhere, please let me know.

### **Tom VK5EE & Col VK5HCF at Douglas Point Conservation Park.**

<https://youtu.be/RCsV-avDCqk>