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The highlight of this years activities has to be the refurbishment of the Crafers repeater site. The tower was in a very poor state and would have fallen down if nothing was done to repair it very soon. A massive effort was launched by Barry, VK5BW and Dean VK5HMV, Lofty Coaches who also share the site with AHARS, and a dedicated band of helpers who got down to the dirty work of cleaning the rust from the tower, repairing its many damaged sections and then applying very special protective coats of paint that will make it last at least another 20 years. Much of this work was carried out over the coldest part of the year, a very big thankyou to all the folks who carried out this work, too many to name.

We had a good mix of topics presented at the general meetings and at the Shack Technical sessions. Thank you to all the folk who did these.

The Social morning on the second Saturday of each month were well attended as was the technical sessions on the fourth Saturday. The social mornings are not just an excuse for a coffee and a chat. At each session, at least one attendee brings along something interesting to show and tell and I am pleased with the depth of technical knowledge there is in the AHARS membership.

Numbers are steadily growing at the second and fourth Friday lunches at the Blackwood RSL. Even though we have to travel from Modbury to Blackwood to attend, Pat and I have becoming a regular attendee.

Thankyou to the members of the committee for covering for me while Pat and I travelled round Europe for six weeks this year and spent some time in Hong Kong. Gerard, the vice president, was also away for much of this time and the rest of the committee had to take over the executive tasks running the meetings and other activities.

Hong Kong was very different to what it was like twenty seven years ago, the last time we set foot in this part of the world. Many years ago you could buy almost any electronic or radio related item from a vast complex of stores but this has changed and it is difficult to find even one store that knows anything about Ham radio. I found two that advertised they were ham radio stores but they did not stock the connectors and other items I was looking for. I came to the conclusion there was almost no local market for Ham radio equipment and radio parts. Any local who did dabble in Ham Radio construction bought their parts on line like most of us have to do now.

Again this year we seem to have been spared most of the Vandal attacks on the shack and the Girl Guides hall this past year. This being mostly confined to mindless “tag” paint attacks and rubbish strewn round the site. We have a kit of security cameras to discourage these attacks but have not had time to install them as AHARS has been pre occupied with repairing the Crafers repeater site, cleaning up the fire hazards and repairing the second shed.

The grass around the site did not grow any where near as much as last year and we are only now cleaning up the flammable material and disposing of it off the site. The first of these

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work bees was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of November and this included starting work on repairing the other shed as a secure storage site of the Girl Guides association. We had another clean up day on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November and the Girl Guides ladies made us lunch and one of the women spent a lot of time in the skip making sure we got their monies worth out of it. There will be a number of work bees on Saturdays in the new year to finish the work on the second shed for the Guides association.

The deceased estate auction/disposal process is run by John VK5EMI and in spite of being over whelmed with stuff , he is doing a good job at this task. Barry VK5BW is still doing a lot of the testing of items. Thank you John and Barry for your dedication to the cause and I am sure you can do with some help with this important task.

Training and assessment sessions at the shack have been carried out throughout the year by our team of assessors. These include VK5SN, VK5TR, VK5PH, VK5BW and VK5ZQV. Thank you to our small group of assessors who carry out this vital activity.

I must also thank Jim VK5TR and his small band of helpers who put the Antenna Analyser kits together and then posted them round the world. The money raised from this activity has meant AHARS subs have been kept very low for many years. This happy state of affairs will come to an end as Antenna Analyser kit sales have been eroded by a hoard of inferior low cost kits and assembled items available on the web. The ever increasing cost of Australia Post is also making our offering less attractive to Hams all over the world. Thankyou Roy VK5NRG for your effort dealing with the local Post Office and seeing the parcels got off to a good start, on their journey, often to the far flung corners of the earth. We have made the decision not to assemble any more of these kits and once the small stock we have is sold there will be no more. We may look at other alternatives for future kit sales.

I must thank Christine Southby who gets the supper ready at the general meetings. It is good to be able to have a coffee or a tea, and a cake or a biscuit while chatting with fellow AHARS members and visitors during the interval at these meetings.

Christine, VK5CTY, has finally decided to “hang up her pen, put away her keyboard” and give away the task of writing the WIA’s Amateur Radio notes after many years of doing this. Advancing years and the occasional ill health has forced this decision so thankyou Christine for many years of service to AHARS.

Let us not forget Paul, VK5PAS for his efforts keeping the AHARS web site operating and Trevor, VK5NIX who has taken over sending out the occasional mass email with urgent messages and item of interest to AHARS members. This is the only way we can send out our silent auction lists as these are only intended for financial AHARS members. As I have said many times, make sure we have your current email address and your current contact details.

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I have enjoyed this year as the AHARS President and thank my dedicated committee for their efforts and the members who make the journeys to the general meetings, shack events and other social events each month.

Phil Storr VK5SRP President AHARS 2018 year.