



February 2007 Issue #14

This newsletter is sent out to all who have called in on the AWA net and who have email facility, and those who have paid for mail envelopes, with the hopes that it will encourage you to call in again and help to keep the AWA net alive and well.

Should you not want to receive any further publications of this newsletter, drop me a note and I will take you off the mailing list. Should you prefer to receive a hard copy via snail mail, please send an SASE for the period you would like to receive these and I will process for you.

Happenings:

The date for the AWA open day at Rand Airport has been confirmed for Saturday 21 April. This being pretty close to Marconi day (28th April), it was felt to be quite appropriate.

Make a note in your diaries to come and join us at the Rand Airport should you want to. Any one looking for a lift, contact us and we will see if we can organize with someone who may be coming from your area. It's always cheaper if you can get someone to share petrol costs. Hopefully this year we will manage to get the flea market on the go too with lots of antique goodies to whet your interest. Should you want a table to display your wares, please let me know well ahead of time and we can certainly see about making the flea market a success. I will keep reminding you via the newsletter.

Thanks to all who have sent me photos of their shacks and collections for inclusion in the newsletter, we will certainly publish them all at some time. I don't want to make the newsletter too big for those who have dial up at home.

AMATEUR RADIO – A LIFELONG HOBBY- Gary ZS5NK

I first became intrigued with radio at an early age watching a technician repairing the family radio.

My Dad worked with the late Arthur Coetzee who was trying to get him interested in ham radio and this brushed off onto me listening to how hams were engaged to monitor the air waves during the last war to report any messages from spies or enemy transmissions that they might receive. He also gave my Dad the morse code and a practice oscillator which was my first introduction to CW.

I read all the adventure books with radio as a theme from the library. I joined the SARL as a listener member when in fifth form at school and converted an old Pilot receiver by adding an extra IF stage and a variable capacitor in parallel with the existing one to give bandspread. This was used to monitor the ham bands and conditions were good and the Ws were pounding in .

My Dad was still interested in radio and took a correspondence course from the States which I devoured.

Wally Gray the Collins agent lived 2 doors away and I used to listen to him and could see him working on his beams. From him I first heard SSB albeit interfering with LM radio on our broadcast receiver!

My elmer, the late John McCoy ZS5JM / ZS6JM lived nearby and I would cycle to his house and watch him working DX or building equipment. The bug now had really bitten.

At that time one had to be 18 years old before getting a licence and I took the test on reaching that age receiving the call of ZS5NK.

Then ham radio had to take a back seat while I attended university. After I qualified, marriage and setting up a home took all my time only allowing brief times to operate.

Once we had our house, antennas were feasible and with a 10 meter quad a great time was had working DX on AM.

My Dad finally took the test – with a lot of prompting and slow morse from me- and became ZS5UC.

Side band was now the way to go and after struggling to make a crystal filter from war surplus crystals gave up and built a transmitter using a 9mHz McCoy filter which together with a Hallicrafter SX 101A served me until a Collins “S” Line was acquired. This was used until a friend lent me a Yaseu FT 7 to try and saw the advantages of no tuning and the other bells and whistles that now were available. An Icom 751 was then added to the station and used to chase the DX. Hence my change from antique to solid state radios.

I still have a lasting admiration for Collins equipment and have added KWM-2s and a 75A4 to my collection which get a weekly airing on 40 meters on ZS0AWA net.

The magic of radio is still a fascination to me and still get a thrill in chasing DX or contesting and am still looking for that antenna which will put my signal head and shoulders above the opposition.

ZS0AWA/CW.



The CW net continues along with very little activity over the past month probably due to band conditions. Heard on frequency this last month has been Barrie ZS6AJY, John ZS6ABJ, Ian

ZS5IAN, Clive – ZS6AVP. Join us on Saturday afternoons at 14:00 SAST. The net is run at 12 wpm and so should meet the needs of all interested in CW. 7020 is the frequency.

I often hear of hams out there that are trying their hand at CW again, so if you know of anyone wanting to work CW, then tell them about the net and let them come up and join us.

AM Net:

Please come up and join us if you have the time and the inclination. 19:30 Wednesday evenings on 3615. Where only the brave hang out after dark. And if you have heard the conditions we have had the past few evenings, Willem would agree with that statement. We have been called crazy, stupid and all sorts of other unmentionable names, but the AM net goes on. Churchill would be proud of us.

Having listened around on the bands, there still seem to be a few ardent AM'ers around. I know there are different times and frequencies these are happening, but if you happen to know of another AM net running, or come across one, let us know the times and frequencies that these happen so we can publicize them. I am sure there will be a few ardent listeners out there.

SSB Net:

Short skip seems to be taking its toll on the Saturday morning net, but for most times it is still well controlled by Willem, our intrepid net controller. We had a record call in during the month of 32 stations, which sort of rattled Willem's cage a bit, but he still performed quite admirably. The average seems to be between 16 – 20 stations on a morning.

Thanks to all who support us so regularly and do remember to let us know what rig you are using. A reminder which was raised by Rod ZS5RK again, you don't have to be operating an antique to call in, but you need to have an interest in the old rigs. That is what we are all about.

We appeal to all of you, when calling in on 40m, should you not be able to hear the control station, try letting someone know who you can hear and you know can hear the control station. It's better than doubling over everybody.

Promotions:

Remember to promote the AWA to any Hams you might know who have an interest in the old valve rigs. I have spoken to many at flea markets and other gatherings who are not really aware of the AWA and what it is we are doing. Remember, our mission statement says that it includes all "Like minded amateurs who have an interest in.....". We need to be looking out for those who have an interest in antique wireless.

The East Rand Club have offered me a table free of charge to put out some old magazines and odds and ends for the AWA. So if you don't have much to do on Saturday 3rd February, come along and support them. I will take the mobile along and try operating from there too. My antenna looks antique enough from all the wear and tear and gogga's so it could pass.

Restoration News:

We want to remind you again of the valves which have been collected. They are there for your use as a member of the AWA. We are not asking exorbitant prices for the valves, but want to

encourage the restoration of the old rigs by making these valves available to anyone who needs them. There have been a few requests for valves and we have been able to help most of those requesting them.

All we ask is that you make a donation to the coffers of the AWA, which help for the costs of our annual license and any small sundry items that may creep in, and pay for the postage.

Brian ZS2AB, has also said he has a collection of valves and anyone wanting valves which may not be on our stock list, should contact him.

Shack News:

Gary ZS5NK sent me this picture of his Collins Rigs.



Ian ZS5IE also sent some pics of his Collins Rigs.



Ian ZS5IE's collection of valves etc



Gary ZS6YI Hallicrafters Collection



Swap Column:

Any swaps or items for sale in the antique line ? Let me have the details and we will advertise it here.

Jannie ZR6BBX from Lichtenburg contacted me with 2 items for swap/ sale if any one is interested.

The first is a Daylight Electric Signaling Lamp, Mark II - 1918 made by Joseph Lucas Ltd Birmingham. The second is a Wireless set No22 with supply unit No4 MkI.



Anyone interested can contact Jannie at badenhorstja@telkomsa.net . Unfortunately that is the only contact info I have for him.

There is an online swap shop on the website of the Highway Amateur Radio Club for ALL amateurs and interested parties to use - it is not restricted to members only. We have been invited to make use of this facility too. Should you want to, use the link to the HARC at the end of the page to take you to their website.

If you would like to forward this newsletter to any other interested parties, please feel free to do so. Print it out and put in on your club notice board, or give it to someone interested in valve radios. If you know of any who report in on the net but don't have email, print it out and give them a copy.

Net days and times:

Saturday 08:30 SSB net - frequency – 7070Mhz

Saturday 09:15 AM net – frequency 7070Mhz

Saturday 14:00 CW net – frequency 7020Mhz

Wednesday 19:30 AM net – frequency 3615 (-5 for QRM)

This, and past copies of the AWA Newsletter can be downloaded from <http://members.harc.org.za/newsletters/AWA/>. Our thanks to the Highway Amateur Radio Club in Durban (<http://www.harc.org.za>) for providing this service to our members and other interested parties.

Thanks for the bandwidth.

DE ZS6ADY FOR ZS0AWA