

QUA FARC

Franklin Amateur Radio Club Inc.
NZART Branch 10



April 2026

VOLUME 35 ISSUE 4

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Committee meets on the first Tuesday of each month (excepting January) at 7.30 pm in the clubrooms.

Subscriptions: Individual \$30, Family \$40, due December

See club secretary for bank account number

Nets: HF Sunday 9 am, 3.700 MHz (Mike ZL1UOM); VHF Sunday 9.30 am, 146.900 MHz (Steve ZL1TZP); DMR on TalkGroup 5301, Wednesday 7.30 pm (Steve ZL1TZP)

Meetings: Club meetings are on the third Tuesday each month in the clubrooms, 19 Stadium Drive, Pukekohe, at 7.30 pm. Visitors welcome.

NEXT MEETING

The topic for the April club meeting is Portable Operation. We'd like to make it a more practical discussion with examples of equipment members are using and or are planning to use. There is of course, no one solution, so the more examples we have the better the discussion can be.

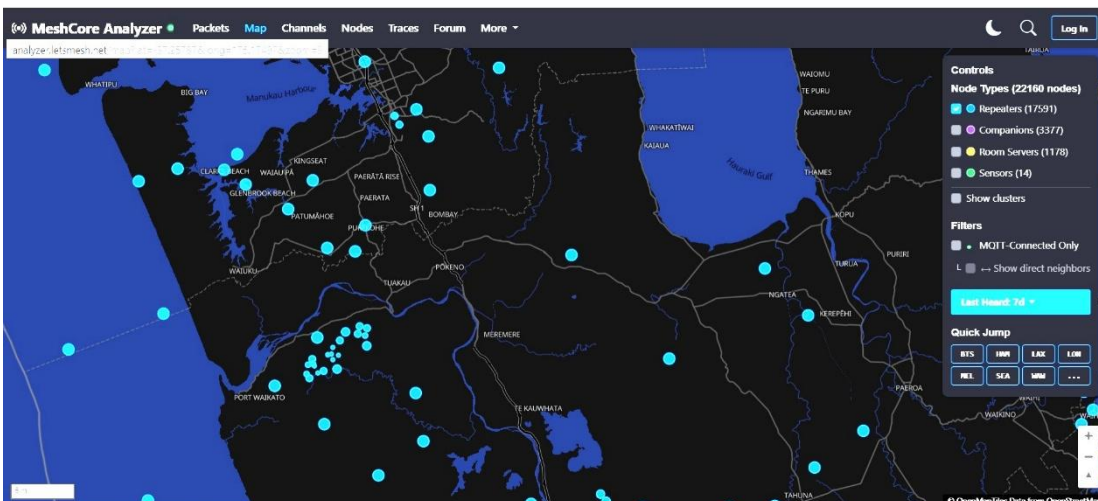
Please bring along

1. your portable setup for a show and tell.
2. equipment you are planning to use in the field, ask questions and get some help and/or advice from club members.
- 3 any questions you have to help you on the journey to portable operations.

MESHCORE

At the March meeting we were addressed by Simon ZL3XL and John ZL1HEX on Meshtastic and Meshcore.

When the meeting was over John ZL1HEX and a team set up a ladder to the club's wooden power pole and set up a solar powered Meshcore repeater on top. The repeater appears on the active stations map below.



Meshcore and Meshtastic are LoRa modes, around 915 MHz, that relay text messages from cell phone Bluetooth and/or a Companion near the cell phone and can continue operating even when the cell tower system is incapacitated. This becomes a way in which text messages can continue to be passed in an emergency. As encryption is allowed, messages can be private.



"MeshCore is rapidly gaining popularity, with connectivity from Whangarei, through Auckland, Waikato, BOP, Taupo. Users are working on expanding and connecting through to Taranaki, Hawkes Bay, Nelson and beyond - all on \$100 radios transmitting only 22dBm of power.

POTA/SOTA operators are even using MeshCore to coordinate their activations with chasers.

Above: Simon runs a PowerPoint presentation

LOW BAND ACTIVITY

The VHF low band contest will be on the 11th and 12th this month.

FRANKLIN JUNK SALE

This year the club has a considerable offering of used equipment and junk for sale. This means that the July junk sale is on again. Mark your calendar for Tuesday July 21. The sale starts at 7:30 pm and is in our traditional "conducted sale" format.

LANDSLIP HAZARD – AN UPDATE

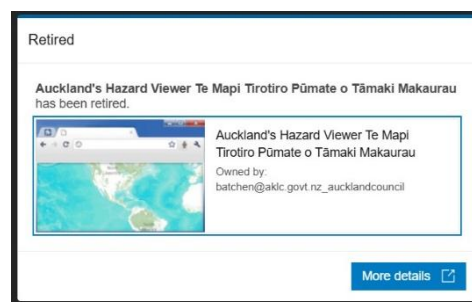
In February QUA your editor asked if anyone knew how to access landslip data for Auckland. It appears that Auckland Council introduced stronger planning rules to respond to natural hazards, including landslides, in November 2025. Introduced as part of Plan Change 120, Auckland's landslide susceptibility maps are now used to assess risk when considering resource consent applications in areas that could be prone to landslides.

The new maps give the council a clearer and more reliable view of where the risk may be. Resource consent applications for activities in these areas can be carefully considered and amended as needed to help manage these risks.

The Auckland hazard viewer appears to have been 'retired'. The new site is

<https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/en/geospatial/geomaps.html>

A guide on using the viewer appears on page 6.



NZART CENTENNIAL CONFERENCE 2026

For one hundred years, amateur radio operators across New Zealand have explored the airwaves, connected communities, supported emergency communications, and inspired generations of innovators.

The NZART Centennial Conference is a landmark gathering to honour our past, celebrate the present, and explore the future of amateur radio.

Whether you are a long-time operator, a new amateur, or simply curious about the hobby, this conference offers learning, fellowship, and inspiration in equal measure.

The Auckland Conference Committee wants to see as many Aucklanders as possible attending the conference. Your participation will ensure it is a success.

GARY GETS ON THE AIR

Committee member and past President Gary ZL1WGL had a significant birthday recently. The picture at right gives a clue as to what he gifted himself. For more turn to page 5.

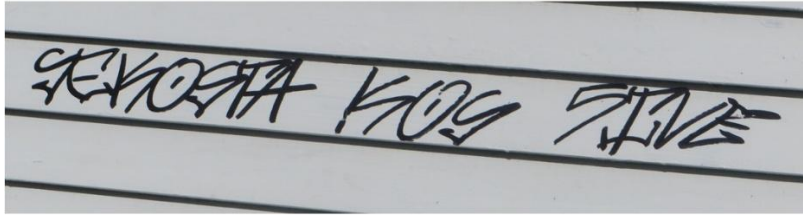


DAMAGE TO OUR CLUBROOMS

We have attempted to keep up to date with repairs to wanton damage being inflicted on our building. So far this year two broken window panes and the ripped blinds have been replaced in the radio shack. Graffiti, in particular with the tag GEKO keeps reappearing. Barge boards around the basement are a regular target and the remaining fence across the allyway has been demolished. Parts of that fence have been located in



Above: Scenes around the den, and damage around the clubhouse in the first three months of 2026.



Above in reading order: Skate Park patrons near the den; patrons on disguise; graffiti on clubhouse weatherboards and those same boards cleaned; graffiti using similar words within the park; graffiti on top of a repaint of the wooden fence near the den.

a “den” in the north eastern corner of the skate park where there are remains of shopping trolleys and evidence of other antisocial activity. It is pleasing to see that graffiti around the skate park itself is being promptly overpainted, and our members have not found it necessary to be the only ones reporting graffiti to Manukau Beautification. However some users of the den area appear to have a poor opinion of the council! Their writing is competing with efforts to maintain the wooden fence. Multiple breaks in the fence separating the skate park from the rugby stadium have been left unrepaired. The first breaks were made by youngsters trying to retrieve their bags which had been thrown over the fence by bullies. More recently fence damage has been purely gratuitous. And, there is no sign yet of the promised camera to picture suspicious activity in the immediate vicinity of the clubhouse.

To put things in perspective, the radio club has fared much better than the Performing Arts buildings.

AMATEURS ON THE WAY TO THE MOON

There have not been any direct two-way amateur radio contacts with the crew of Artemis II to date. While three crew members are licensed ham radio operators, the mission does not feature amateur radio equipment on board. However, amateurs can passively track Orion's transmissions.

- **No Ham Gear Onboard:** The Orion spacecraft is not equipped for amateur radio transmissions to Earth, ruling out direct voice conversations.
- **Volunteers Tracking Signals:** NASA has selected 34 volunteer ham radio operators globally to passively track signals from the Artemis II mission as it travels to the Moon, supporting public engagement.
- **Passive Monitoring:** These radio amateurs will use their own equipment to monitor signals rather than converse with the astronauts.
- **The Crew:** The picture shows at right astronauts Reid Wiseman (KF5LKT), Victor Glover (KI5BKC), and Jeremy Hansen (KF5LKU) who are the licensed operators on the mission.



For official communication, the crew uses the NASA Deep Space Network, not amateur frequencies.

ZL SPRINTS RUNNING THROUGH APRIL

Mark Sullivan markzl3ab@gmail.com has posted a reminder the ZL sprint series starts on Tuesday 7 April at 0800z (8pm NZST) and runs on every Tuesday in April.

As well as the usual 30min of CW followed by 30min of SSB and then 30min FT4 all on 80m, the sprints include an additional NZART branch competition. Simply send Mark your branch number with your log and the scores from each branch will be added together. Obviously the more points you gain the bigger the branch score. and a chance for club bragging rights.

Try to work as many stations as you can in any or all of the periods. Each mode is counted separately and you can work a station once per mode. Make sure you send your log in after each round.

Remember to send Mark your comments on each sprint with your score, with the best comments published with the results.

The rules are [here](#)

FULL NOISE

Gary's birthday present was a ride in 'Full Noise'.

Its a Yokovlev Yak-3 which has competed at a global level at the renowned Reno Air Races in the Unlimited Gold class and holds the New Zealand 3Km speed record.

Full Noise claims to be the only World War Two fighter aircraft available for adventure flights in New Zealand. Several Harvards would dispute the claim!



USING AUCKLAND COUNCIL GEOMAPS

Your Editor has obtained by artificial intelligence the following.

The most detailed way to see hazards for a specific address in Pukekohe town is through the Auckland Council's GIS viewer.

Access Link: [Auckland Council GeoMaps](#)

How to view hazards:

Open the "Switch Theme" menu (usually a stack icon).

Select "Natural Hazards."

In the Legend/Layers on the left, check the boxes for "Landslide Susceptibility" (both Shallow and Large-Scale) and "Land instability."

Search for "Pukekohe" or a specific street name to zoom in.

2. GNS Science Pukekohe Geological Map

In 2023, GNS Science released a dedicated 1:50,000 map for the Pukekohe region. This was the first map to use high-resolution LiDAR (laser scanning) which uncovered over 800 previously unknown ancient landslides south of Auckland, specifically around Pukekohe and the lower Waikato River.

What it shows: It highlights "fossil" landslides—slopes that failed thousands of years ago but could be reactivated by modern storms or earthworks.

View Online: [GNS Pukekohe Web Map](#)

3. Summary of Hazards in Pukekohe

Pukekohe's landscape is unique because of its volcanic (basaltic) soils and rolling hills. According to the 2025 Auckland Landslide Susceptibility Study:

Ancient Landslides: Many residential and rural areas in Pukekohe are built on or near large ancient landslide complexes that were invisible until recent 3D mapping.

Soil Type: The volcanic "red soils" are generally stable but can be prone to "debris flows" or "rotational slumps" on steeper gullies, especially during extreme weather events like the 2023 Auckland Anniversary floods.

Main Risk Areas: The steeper slopes leading toward the Waikato River and the gullies around the Pukekohe East volcanic crater are identified as having higher susceptibility.

[!IMPORTANT]

These maps are "susceptibility" maps, meaning they show where a landslide could happen based on geology and slope, not necessarily where one is currently active. If you are buying or building, always check the LIM (Land Information Memorandum) for that specific property.

Would you like me to find the specific "Natural Hazard" summary for a particular street or neighbourhood in Pukekohe?

Good luck!

CYCLONE VAIANU

The weather this coming weekend is predicted to turn to custard. Now is the time to batten down the hatches and get those batteries recharged. The *Windy* prediction for three days hence is pictured at right, with Vaianu tracking southward.

In anticipation, an AREC visit to Auckland Emergency Management on Saturday has been cancelled.

