

QUA FARC

Franklin Amateur Radio Club Inc.
NZART Branch 10



June 2026

VOLUME 35 ISSUE 6

President: Steve Doell ZL1TZP
Vice President: Steve Spring ZL1SPR
Secretary: Tom McDonald ZL1TO
Ph. 09 238 8580 tom.mcdonald@xtra.co.nz
Committee Members: Mike Jane ZL1UOM, Ted Doell ZL1BQA, Gary Landon ZL1WGL
Examiners: Tom ZL1TO, Steve ZL1TZP, Steve ZL1SPR

Web page: <http://www.qsl.net/zl1sa>
Webmaster: Steve ZL1TZP

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/groups/1728559367541681/

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 next general meeting is Tuesday 16 June at 1930 hours. The business will include a short conference report, followed by sessions on FT8 led by Steve ZL1TZP, and practical session on programming Baofeng transceivers with Tom ZL1TO. There will also be an opportunity to preview offerings to come up at the Franklin Junk sale.

The radio operating room will be used for an examination, which is likely to be finished before the first members arrive for the general meeting.

NZART CONFERENCE

The centennial annual general meeting of NZART was held at Waipuna Lodge over Kings Birthday weekend. The organisers did a marvellous job coordinating the many events. The official photograph taken on Saturday morning by Matthew ZL1YOT is reproduced below.



The result of voting on remits was...

Remit 1: Digital Magazine & Membership Category - Failed on voices

Remit 2: Access to Digital TV Spectrum - Passed on show of Hands

Remit 3: NZART HQ Procedure Manual - Failed on Voices

Remit 4: Electronic Voting – Schedule A –Passed on show of hands

Remit 5: Constitution clause 4.3 change - Passed on voices

The outcomes were broadly in the same direction as members of our club preferred at our May meeting. Our vote on remit 3 was split and not in the same direction as conference decided.

Council pre-empted the move for a digital magazine by announcing at the outset a \$20 discount to those who chose not to receive the hard copy magazine. This is equivalent to the saving on postage.

MAY MEETING



At the May meeting we had time put aside to deal with the business for NZART conference. Of those present nine have their NZART membership tied to Franklin.

Afterward Ted Doell ZL1BQA took us through some of the features of QRZ and various logging software. And then President Steve ZL1TZP led us through programs for POTA and a selection of amateur radio awards.

As you can see in the photograph we are squeezed for space as offerings for the junk sale are being stacked ready for their new owners.

FRANKLIN JUNK SALE



Our annual sale is back again. As we do cram into the clubhouse the sale is in a 'Conducted Sale' format. This year the Doell family remains the prime source of entertainment – but this year the conductor is Steve ZL1TZP.

The flier at left has an AI interpretation of the format, and the thumbnail pictures below are an unedited selection of items for sale. This year there are more items of test equipment than is usual.



AM BROADCAST MASTS AT HENDERSON BEING REMOVED

Significant repair and replacement work is currently underway at Auckland's major AM broadcast transmission sites in West Auckland, specifically at RNZ's Henderson transmission facilities on Selwood Road and Lincoln Road. This work is substantial enough to have caused daytime AM outages across the region.

Northern mast (Selwood Road) — 92 years old, is being taken down in sections using a 126-metre crane.

Southern mast (Lincoln Road) — 71 years old, top section removed by helicopter, remainder by crane.

Both towers have exceeded their 50-year design life and are being fully decommissioned by June 2026 on safety grounds.

A new single mast will be built on the northern site to continue AM broadcasting and emergency communications.



The AM transmission tower on Lincoln Road in Henderson is believed to have been Auckland's tallest man-made structure until 1999. Photo: DAVID WHITE/STUFF

Radio New Zealand (RNZ) is looking for a buyer for a block of land it owns in West Auckland to plug a financial hole and keep broadcast on the AM spectrum alive, at least for now.

The 7.4ha block in Henderson, metres away from the Lincoln Rd off-ramp, is home to the long-standing red and white transmission tower.

When RNZ's predecessor bought the land in 1934 it was a rural pasture, but it has long since been enveloped by urban sprawl. It has grown to a rateable value of \$6 million.

But, while the value of the land has continued to increase, the cost of the ageing AM transmission network has become a burden on the broadcaster.

A cashed up RNZ would then look to replace the Lincoln Rd tower on a new site.

It has already instructed a telecommunications contractor to apply for resource consent for a new tower on a property at Āwhitu on the southern shores of the Manukau Harbour.

During Cyclone Gabrielle, AM played an important role in getting up-to-date information to far-flung reaches as the cellular phone network went out.



A VISIT FROM BOB ZL1BBZ

Someone (your editor) forgot to mention this in the May newsletter. On April 29 Tom ZL1TO bumped into Bob ZL1BBZ in the main street of Pukekohe.

We both had appointments in the next hour, so an hour and a half later the two of us met up at the clubhouse. Bob got to see the work that has been going on in the radio operating room and was able to look over his old clubhouse.

All in all, this was a pleasant meeting between two of the Club's life members.

Bob is now receiving the newsletter again. It is emailed to his son, David, for David to print and deliver a hard copy.

FLYBY OF ASTEROID 2026 JH2

On May 18 a newly discovered whale-size asteroid made a pass 91000 km above planet Earth. The 35 metre wide asteroid came closer than some artificial satellites. Its size is on a par with the meteor, which spectacularly exploded above Russia in 2013 and is the largest space rock to have entered Earth's atmosphere in nearly 120 years.

At right is a picture of the 2013 Chelyabinsk fireball from a dashcam recording. The sonic boom injured 1500 people, mainly from flying glass.

2026 JH2, was discovered on 10 May by astronomers at the Mount Lemmon Observatory near Tucson, Arizona, who also spotted the superbright Comet Lemmon last year. The space rock, circles the sun every 3.7 years on an elliptical orbit that takes it as far out as Jupiter.



The next sizable space rock that will get this close to Earth will likely be the "God of Chaos" asteroid, 99942 Apophis, which will fly within 32,000 km of Earth on April 13, 2029 — potentially making it visible to the naked eye. Apophis has the potential to cause serious harm to our planet at some time in the future because it is over 340 m across.

After Apophis, the next major flyby will be from the "city killer" asteroid 2024 YR4, which will zoom past the moon at a minimum distance of around 21,200 km in 2032. This space rock made headlines last year, when it was temporarily predicted to have a roughly 3% chance of hitting Earth and then a 4% chance of striking the moon. Scientists are now confident that 2024 YR4 will not impact either body.

All of these flybys are a reminder of the potential risk asteroids pose to our planet and highlight the need to seek them out and continue to work on ways of stopping them, if needed.

There could be scope for amateur radio to become part of the early detection of close flybys. Now that we have access to very good time and frequency standards there must be some way that we can help. After all, work on tracking thunderstorms in real time and putting up a case for the track of missing aircraft MH370 have originated in the amateur radio circle.

GRID SCALE BATTERY COMMISSIONED IN FRANKLIN

A new grid scale lithium-ion battery has been commissioned at Glenbrook in May of this year. The batteries will store electricity generated by New Zealand's hydro, geothermal and wind power stations when there is low demand. Without this storage this electricity would otherwise go to waste. Then, when demand is high, the battery will provide stored power to the national grid, delivering electricity when it is needed most. The idea is to only use the battery during times of high demand, to assist with peak load, rather than running it constantly.

New Zealand currently has about 435 MWh of grid-scale battery storage operating, with a further ~600–700 MWh firmly committed and several gigawatt-scale projects in the development pipeline.

Grid-scale batteries operating now (mid-2026)

Site	Power (MW)	Energy (MWh)
Rotohiko (WEL Networks)	35	35
Ruakākā (Meridian Energy)	100	200
Glenbrook–Ohurua Battery 1 (Contact Energy)	100	200

Batteries under construction or firmly committed

Project	Power (MW)	Energy (MWh)	Expected
Huntly BESS (Genesis Energy)	100	200	Due late 2026
Glenbrook–Ohurua Battery 2 (Contact Energy)	200	~200–400*	2028
Stratford BESS (Contact Energy)	100	(not stated)	Consented



Above: The Glenbrook installation near the junction of Glenbrook Beach Road and Mission Bush Road.