



EAST RAND RADIO CLUB

Newsletter

June 2025

Amateur Radio



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INTRO

Hello members and friends of the East Rand Radio Club, with this the 3rd of our newsletters for 2025, we wanted to showcase the club, and let you know, We are alive and Well. And playing radio more often than you think.

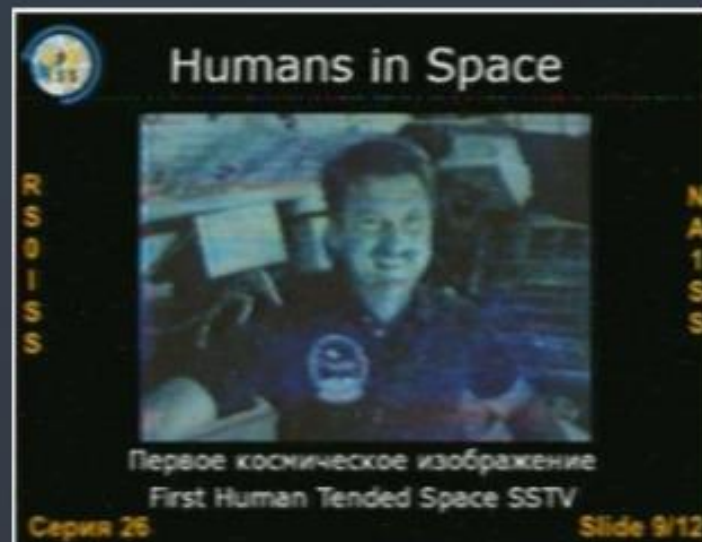
Between the months of April till end June, Wayne was studying to get his ticket, we met Timothe, we did HF assessments, took part in Kontiki, took part in contests, and had a lot of fun at our club house. Hope you enjoy reading our quarterly newsletter.

On 5 April, the club took part in the SARL QRP contest, Frank ZS6FN, Mario ZS6TAN and Stephen ZS6SKY took part in the contest, with Wayne assisting us to find those pesky low power stations, using his SDR receiver.

We also made some contacts on FT8. Wayne completed his HF Assessment on 12April, assisted by HF Assessors Guy ZS6GUY and Stephen ZS6SKY.

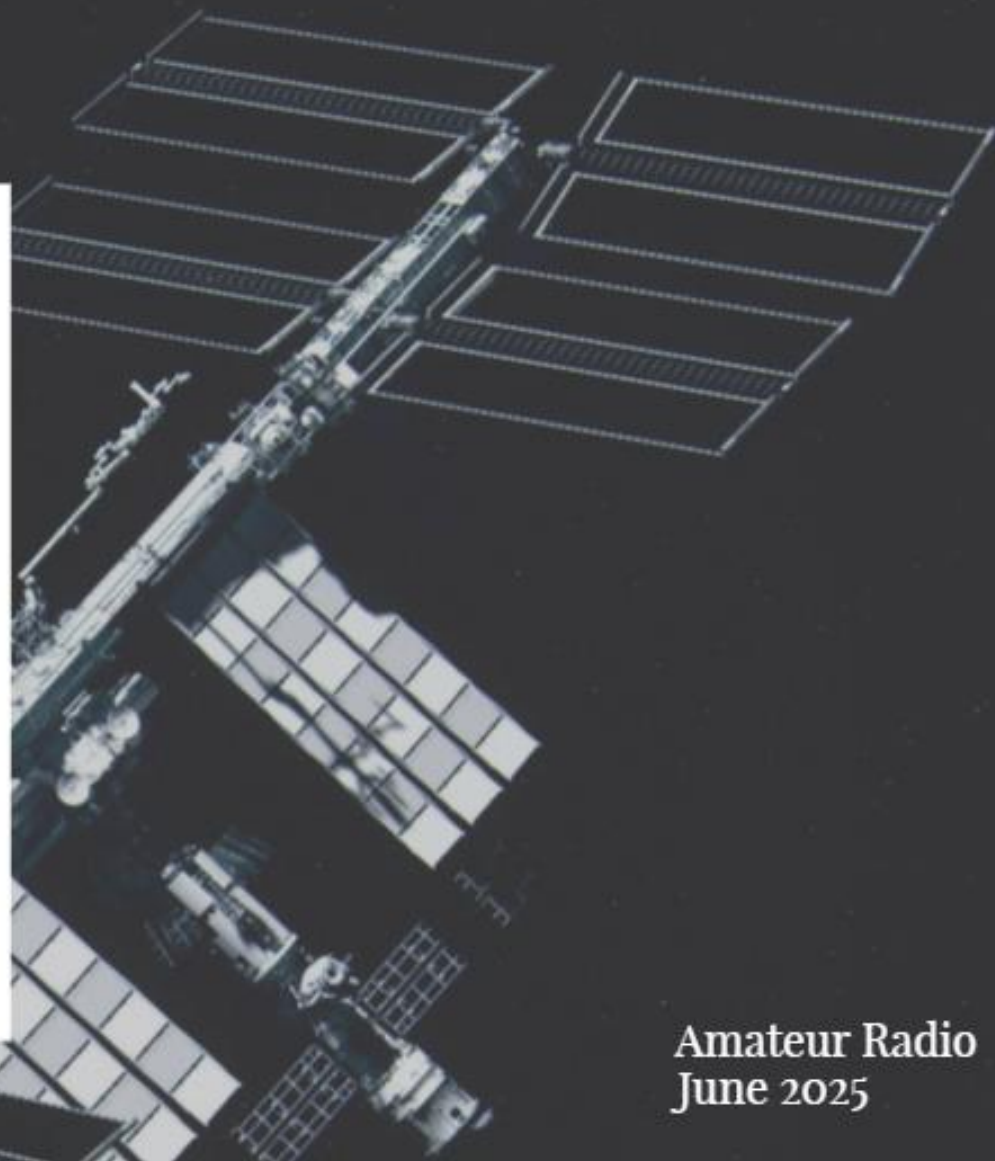
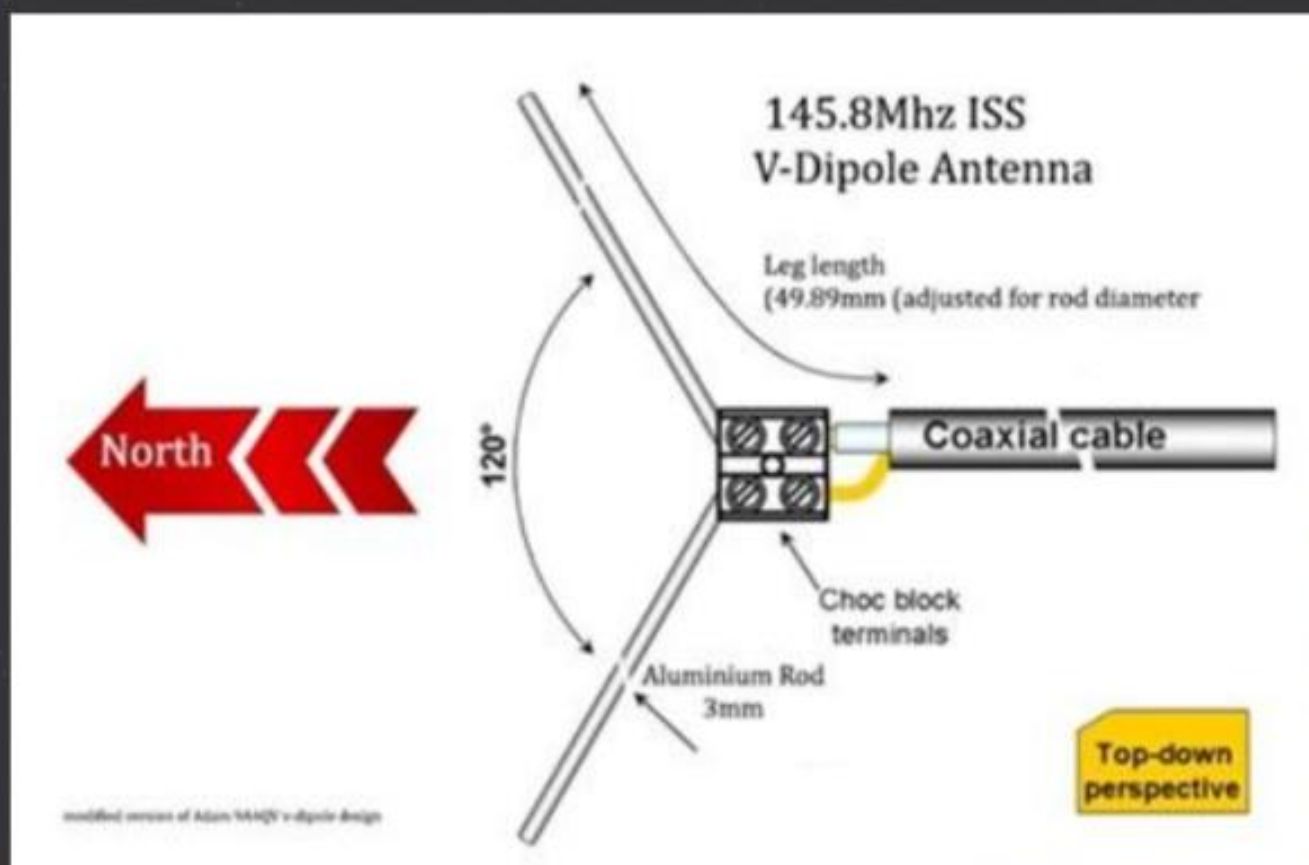
Newcomer Timothe, also had some first time on air contacts.

On 13 April, Wayne received SSTV pictures from the ISS, the signal received, was travelling at 28,000 km's per hour, and at a height of 402 kms, well done Wayne.



ISS ANTENNA BUILD

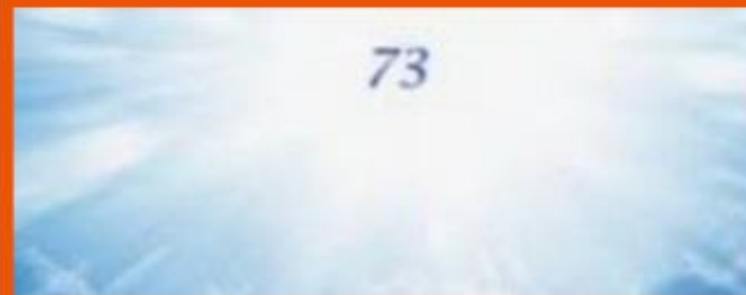
Here is a simple build for the ISS:



SILENT KEYS

It is with great sadness, that we learnt of Joey van Rooyen's passing on 11 April, Joey was the XYL of OM Bill ZS6VRB. We pass on our sincere condolences to uncle Bill and family.

It was heart breaking to hear of the passing of Tommie ZS6THM Tommie's key fell silent on Sunday 1 June at the church where he collapsed just after singing the Lord's Prayer. He leaves behind his wife, two teenage daughters and a very big circle of friends and colleagues who all miss him dearly.



ISS IMAGES AND SOUNDCARDS

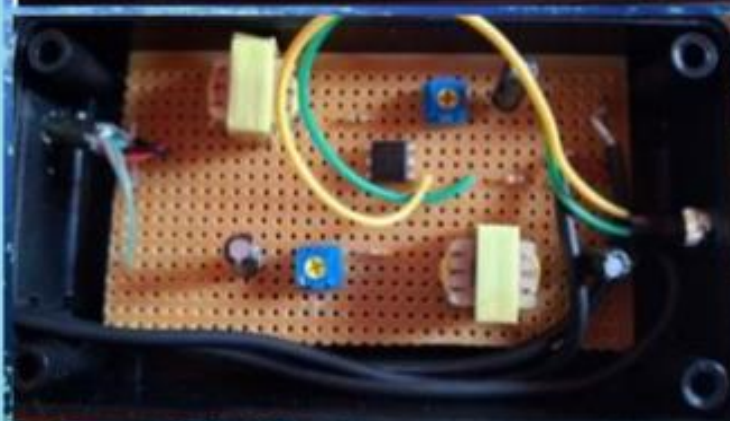
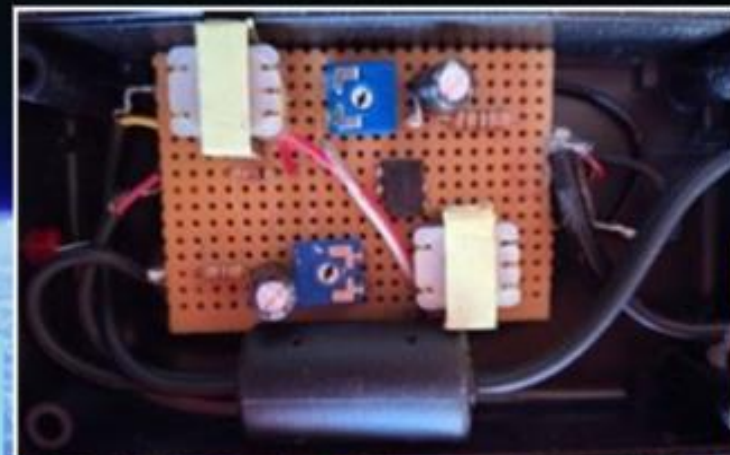
Wayne submitted his received SSTV pictures to the ARISS web site, using the ZS6ERB Call Sign, and we received the below certificate.



Meanwhile Stephen was busy making up another soundcard interface. The top one is the one Stephen uses for digital communications using his Kenwood TRC 70 radio, and the bottom picture is the new interface, planned for someone wanting to try out FT8

The choke on the right is molded on to an old VGA video cable, with lots of them around, they make for a good audio cable.

Wayne continues to perfect his own version of his sound card digi interface, complete with CAT control, using direct USB connection, the board also features a cw control circuit, and galvanic isolation, and uses 2 opto couplers



CHRIS ZS6COG'S TOWER

On 1 May, OM Chris ZS6COG let us know that his tower is finally up, after a 15 year wait. Well done Chris, and we are looking forward to hearing you on the airwaves soon.



THIS OLD RIG STILL SINGS

Insert by Dave ZS6AAI From Dave Bingham (Oupa's) perspective:

"This Old Rig Still Sings"



When I think back, it's hard to believe how it all started. I was still a boy, just a school kid with more curiosity than sense. There was an old fella down the road, a real wizard with that radio of his. I'd stand in awe as he tapped out Morse with one hand, spoke to some fellow halfway across the world, and still found time to chat with me. He made it look easy. I thought he was part magician.

By 1981, I'd caught the bug properly. I passed my exam and got my first call sign - ZR6AEL. Later that year, I earned my ZS6AAI license too, sending Morse at 15 words a minute. That little shack of mine became my haven. Wires everywhere, the soft hum of the rig, QSL cards tacked to the wall like badges of honor—it was a simpler world, but it felt vast through those speakers.

Come '89 or thereabouts, life asked a bit more of me, and the radios got quiet. For years they sat gathering dust while I went about the business of living. But they waited for me, patient as ever.

Then, like a whisper from the past, 2022 rolled in with a surprise. My grandson, Timothé - sharp kid started poking around, asking questions. I saw that same wide-eyed wonder I once had staring at that old man's radio. I told him, "You get your license, and these radios are yours too."

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THE HAM JOURNEY

From Timothe Gourdain's perspective

My first encounter with ham radio came through my Oupa. I remember him sitting for hours in the garage, headphones on, completely absorbed by the static and distant voices that crackled to life. It was like watching someone communicate with the world from a spaceship. I didn't understand much then. I was only in Grade 4 – but something about it stayed with me.

That same year, a student at my school was called up on stage during assembly. He had earned his ham radio license. While most of the room clapped politely, I was stunned. A kid, just like me, was already talking to people across cities and maybe even across the globe. That moment lit the spark.

Years later, I decided it was time to take the plunge. I started studying about four weeks before the exam, cramming every chance I got. I took the test alongside someone working on their A license – I felt like a rookie among pros. The following weekend, I got the call. Steven's voice crackled on the line:

"You passed." I had a call sign. **ZU6TG**. It felt official. Real.

My first radio came from Oupa – a dual-band Baofeng UHF/VHF handheld. I couldn't always reach the repeaters, but just being able to listen felt magical. Every Tuesday night, Oupa and I would tune in to the local bulletin, catching up on the news and hearing familiar voices chatter across the airwaves.

Now, I've stepped up to HF. I bought a second-hand Yaesu and started making real contacts – brief conversations, but thrilling every time. I'm still new. I still fumble with call signs and frequencies. But each time I key the mic, there's a rush. A sense that anything – or anyone – could be on the other end.

This is just the beginning of my ham radio journey, and I can't wait to see where it takes me next.



KONTIKI 2025



On the weekend of 17 – 18 May, club members Stephen, Michael and Wayne assisted Hamnet with Kontiki 2025.

Hamnet being tasked with providing communications for the event, and responsible for the overall safety and smooth running of the event. Various Hamnet members worked in shifts supported by ERC club members on Saturday and Sunday, to provide communications for the various teams of Scouts, Judges, Safety personal, SAP's and medical personnel.

From Stephen's perspective, it was great to get involved with the scouts again, having been a scout in his early years, and having taken part in Kontiki whilst staying in Cape Town, this event brought back great memories. You know what they say, once a scout, always a scout. It was nice to catch up with Marc ZS6MDH and Tommie ZS6THM now (silent key) Marc and I slept over in the Info tent.

We attended the camp fire on Saturday night, and had supper with the scout judges in the mess hall, it was great hearing and signing along at the camp fire.



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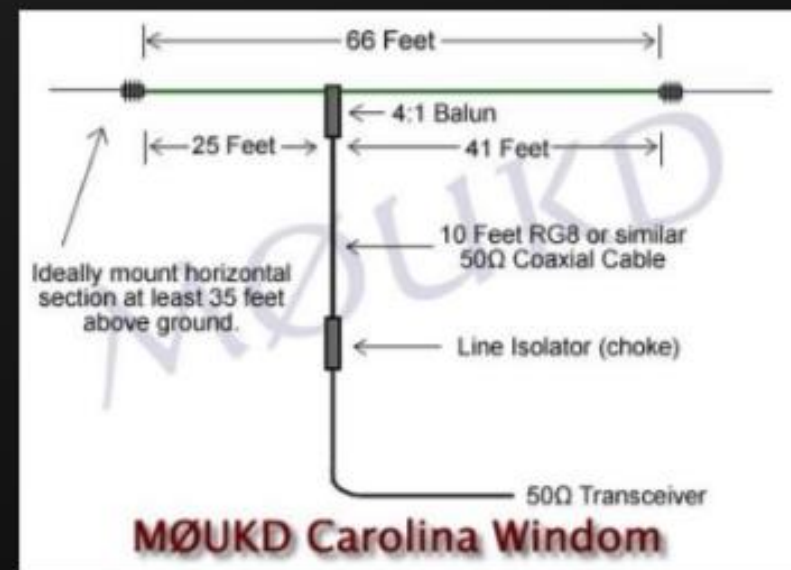
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HF ANTENNA & QUEENS OF THE MOUNTAINS

On 24 May, we met at the clubhouse in the afternoon, Stephen built himself a 40 meter inverted V antenna, same as the club's one. Mario and Wayne were on the air on 40 and 20 meters. Marius and his son came round to meet us, Marius is keen on finding out more about the hobby, a most enjoyable afternoon followed.

Saturday 31 May, the club was open again,



QUEENS OF THE MOUNTAINS 2025

Saturday 7 June:

Timothe and Wayne made contact with the Queens of the Mountains on the SARL's SOTA event, both gents will be receiving certificates, which we'll include with our next newsletter.



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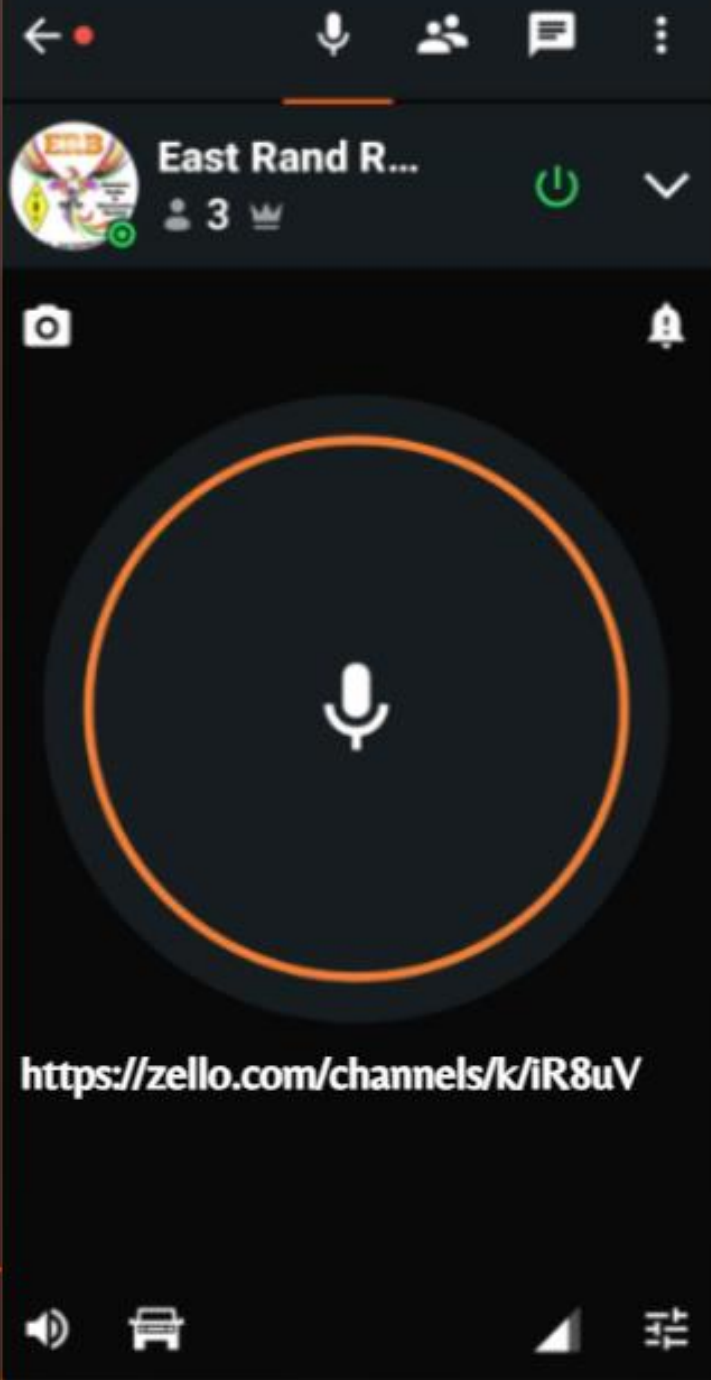


REMAINING PROGRAM 2025

Check out our program for the rest of the year

5 July	SARL Newbie QSO party
26 July	SARL 40-meter Club Contest (3)
16 & 17 August	Lighthouse Weekend – Making contact with Lightl
6 September	SARL National Field Day contest (2) and SARL V
13 September	Africa FT4 DX Contest – ZS6ERB will be part of t
4 October	Flea Market
11 October	Club Meeting
18 October	Radio Amateurs Exam ** in the morning - 9am ti
25 October	CQ Worldwide DX SSB Contest
8 November	Club meeting
22 November	SARL 40-meter Club contest (4)
13 December	Year End meeting, and ARRL 10-meter contest





INTERIM REPEATER PLAN ZELLO

Join us - Zello group channel:

Monday night's at 7pm - Weekly news broadcast
Interim plan while we get our Repeater back on the air.

Zello via Google Play Store or iOS market place:

1. Once installed, click on the link, to connect to the East Rand Radio Club Zello channel, or search for us under channels,
2. Select channels, then Add a channel by name, then type: East Rand Radio Club (Exactly as seen) otherwise you will not find it
3. Channel password is: ZS6ERB all capital letters

<https://zello.page/AgzatFb8VXfFegho7>

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HF ASSESSMENT TRAINING & DIGITAL

On 26 April, Timothe joined us again for more HF assessment training.



On 3 May, 13 year old Timothe completed his HF Assessment, in the morning, under the watchful eyes of Stephen ZS6SKY and Wim ZS6WIM.

In the afternoon the club hosted the Hamnet guys, who were there to check their equipment ahead of Kontiki the next weekend, and to do some training on using digital modes for communications.

Johan ZS6DMX and Stephen ZS6SKY demonstrated Digital communication in the afternoon with the Hamnet team members

Modes demonstrated were JS8Call and Vara HF



Wayne and young Timothe wrote the RAE on 10 May.

Wayne writing at the NARC and Timothe at the Alberton Radio club.

Both Timothe and Wayne passed, Timothe receiving ZU6RG and Wayne ZS6ORB, well done to both candidates.

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BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays and anniversaries 10 May Club Elder Glynn ZS6GLN celebrated his Birthday Happy Birthday Glynn, from all of us at the ERC club.

On Saturday 8 June, Harry ZS6HHH celebrated his Birthday, Happy Birthday Harry, from all your friends at club 675.



EAST RAND RADIO CLUB

Newsletter

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Till next time



ERC

Amateur Radio & Electronics Society

P.O Box 1284
Heidelberg
1438
Clubhouse @ Arrowe Park
5 Ebenezer Street
Arrowe Park, Benoni 1503

Tel: 082 568 4019 (ZS6SKY)
079 167 2925 Wayne
083 543 5668 (ZS6COG)
064 543 7252 (ZS6JDY)
e-mail: zs6erb@gmail.com
url: www.zs6erb.co.za

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