



## Gympie Communications & Electronics Group Inc. Newsletter

**Editorial** by Greg VK4VBU

**1st Quarter, 2016**

Welcome to the first newsletter for the year. The storm season is well and truly upon us and we have already suffered some damage on Mt Boulder with our 2-metre repeater knocked out of action for some time but now repaired and running fine again. A temporary 2m repeater and the club 70cm repeater filled in for communications around the town which was great. Many thanks to all the members assisting with the repeater repairs, your help is very much appreciated. We have also had a visit from Magne LA4BNA (Maritime Mobile) who a few of the members spoke with on his journey into Australia. I was very surprised when he turned up in Emerald and it was great to show him around the shack while he was here. Roger has contributed a story on Magne later in this newsletter.



### **Builders Corner – Frequency Counter Crystal Tester**

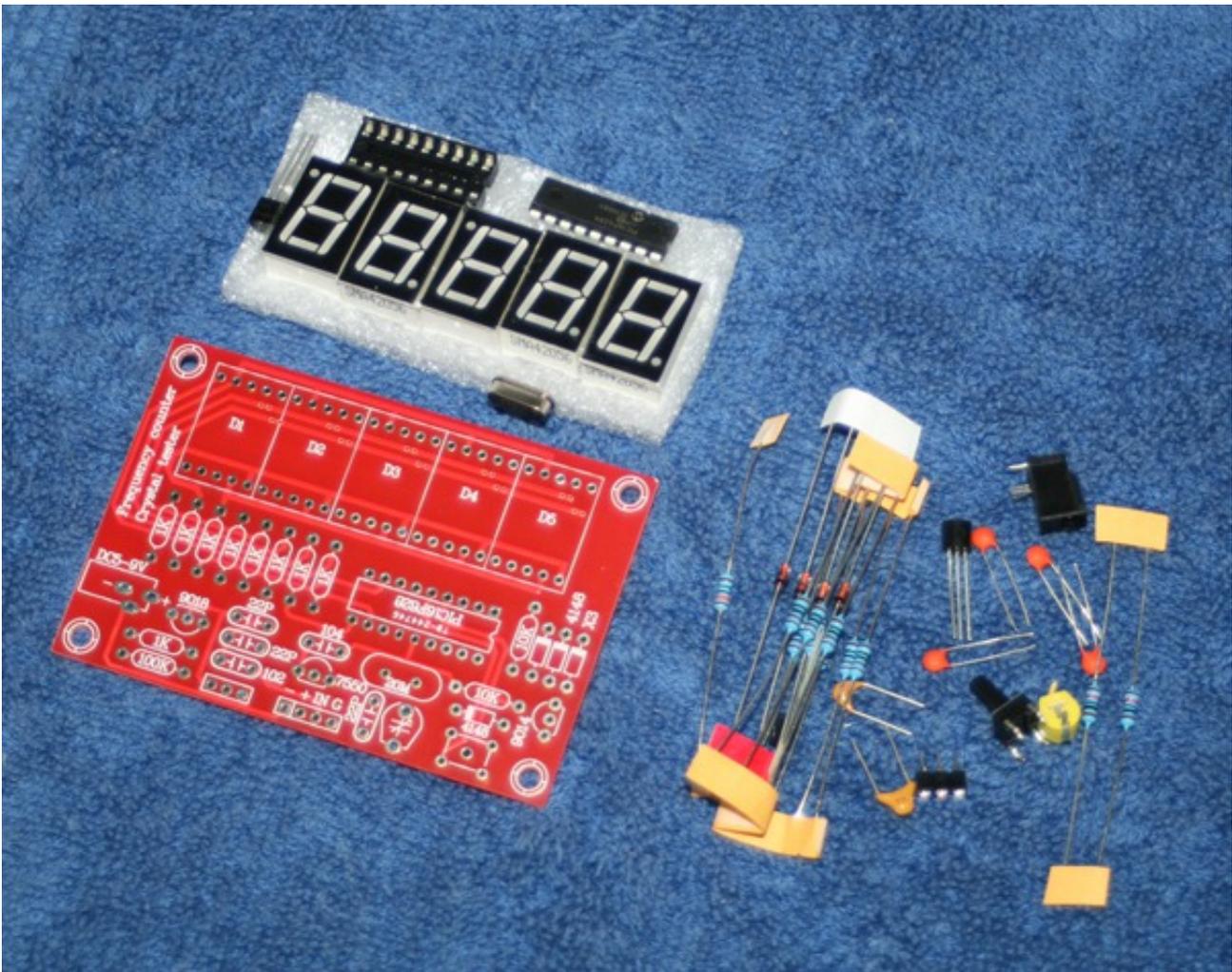
This newsletter we are short of contributions for Builders Corner so I have put something together myself. I have decided to build a Frequency Counter Crystal Tester kit and it's available from E-Bay for less than \$10.00. The kit is very easy to put together however a good set of eyes or glasses are a must when checking the values of the components. I would like to keep this segment going for a while so please contact me if you would like to contribute to this segment of the newsletter.

#### **GCEGinc. OFFICE BEARERS**

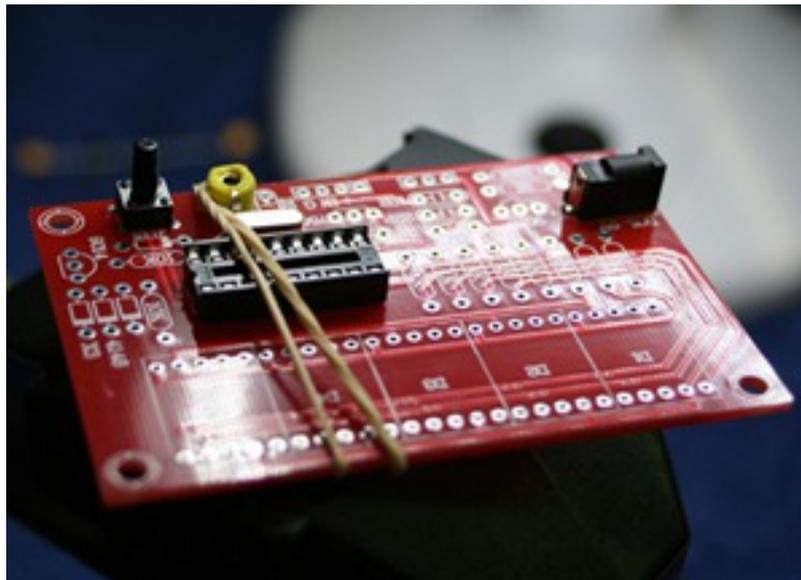
PRESIDENT: Tony Van Lysdonk VK5WC [president@gceginc.org.au](mailto:president@gceginc.org.au)  
VICE PRESIDENT: Roger Stierli VK4BNQ [vicepresident@gceginc.org.au](mailto:vicepresident@gceginc.org.au)  
TREASURER: Rhonda Bruce VK4FRDB [treasurer@gceginc.org.au](mailto:treasurer@gceginc.org.au)  
SECRETARY: Geoff Nelson VK4ZGF [secretary@gceginc.org.au](mailto:secretary@gceginc.org.au)

Snail-mail to PO Box 679, Gympie, QLD 4570



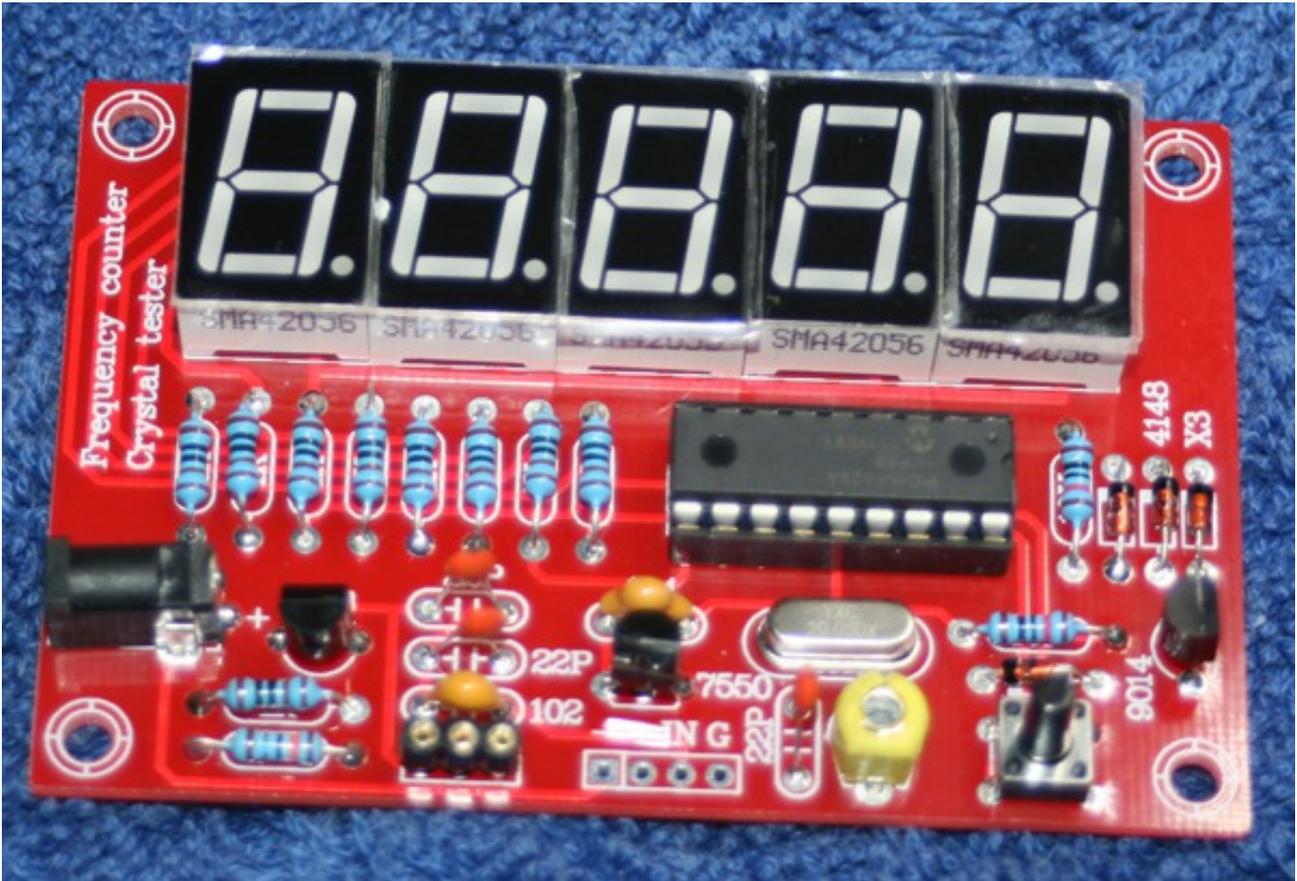


The kit has no directions so it's a matter of reading the board and checking the components before soldering. I also used an elastic band to hold some components on the board, this makes things easy when you are working on your own.

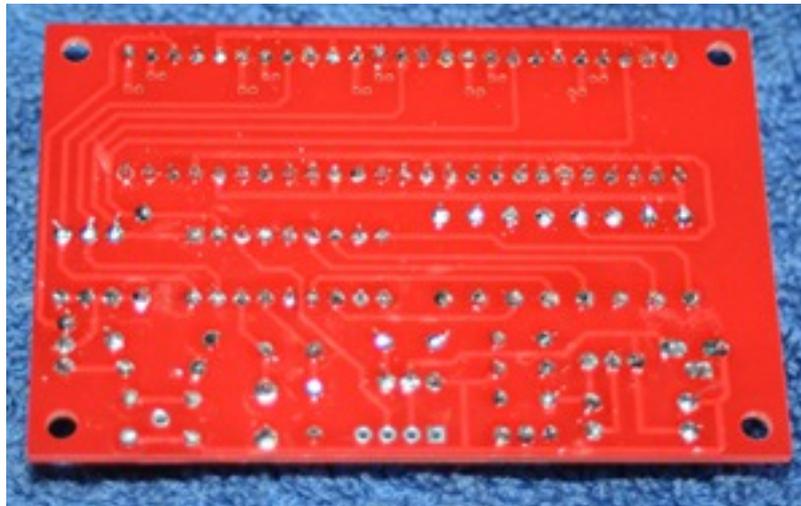


This kit took me a couple of hours to put together but that was with some

interruptions. I'm still yet to power it up but I'm confident when I do, all will be fine. Below is the completed kit all ready to be tested.



Here is the rear view so you can see my soldering skills, or lack of 😊



## D-STAR UPDATE – VK4RDS C

The Sunshine Coast now has a reliable D-Star repeater VK4RDS C which is owned and operated by Kyle Communications. The repeater located at Maleny is connected to Reflector “DCS028C” and the system is working very well. Neil VK4FMMM said he could hear the repeater (146.7375) loud and clear at Kenilworth, so it looks as if this repeater has a good signal range. Of course you need a standard licence to use the D-Star network but Neil said he has started studying to do just that, good luck.

The DCS028C Reflector is becoming a very popular reflector on the east coast and the following repeaters are now connected to DCS028C:

VK4RBY B – Black Mountain Mackay 70cm node 438.600 mhz

VK4RUS B – Sarina 70cm node 438.450 mhz

VK4RBD C – Blackdown Tablelands, Blackwater 2 meter node 146.6375 mhz

VK4RBX C – Ipswich 2 meter node 146.7875 mhz

VK4RDS C – Maleny Sunshine Coast 2 meter node 146.7375 mhz

There is also a number of nodes & hotspots connected to the DCS028 reflector, please follow the link to see the latest connections:

[http://dcs028.xreflector.net/dcs\\_rptstatusQ.htm](http://dcs028.xreflector.net/dcs_rptstatusQ.htm)

This following link will show you what call signs and who have been and/or currently connected to DCS028Q

[http://dcs028.xreflector.net/dcs\\_userQ.htm](http://dcs028.xreflector.net/dcs_userQ.htm)

If you have any questions on the exciting world of digital radio please contact Greg VK4VBU, or if you are down on the Sunshine Coast have a talk with Dave VK4UN, Noel VK4NL or Richard VK4RY as they are all very active on air.

Emerald Hotspot – Greg VK4VBU plans to get a D-Star hotspot up and running by the end of February which will be great news for anyone travelling through Emerald. There is also a hotspot being setup at the Gemfields west of Emerald and that is due to come online in the coming months.

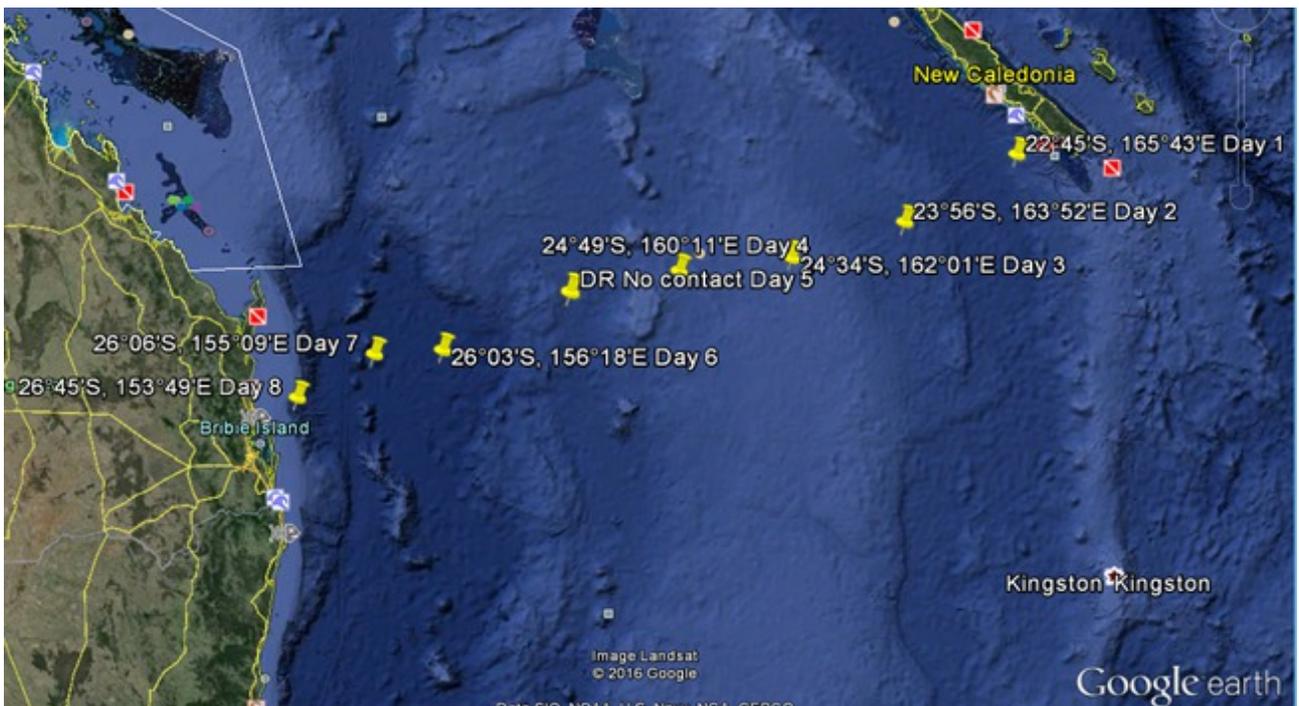


# LA4BNA Maritime Mobile - Noumea to Brisbane

Contribution by VK4BNQ



As most members would know from the forwarded email from our Secretary, at the end of November 2015 the Club received an inquiry from Magne LA4BNA /MM who was planning to sail his beautiful yacht the VAHANA from Noumea to Brisbane. He was looking for a HF



safety sked along the way to keep a watch over them for the journey. I responded and a sked was made initially on 20m and later when closer, we switched to 40m.



Contact was made before they set sail and apart from day 5, contact was possible every day for the entire journey. Neil VK4NHT and his father George VK4HGT in Brisbane also joined in and assisted with the skeds and we also heard Greg VK4VBU as well. As you can see from the Google Maps plot, the journey took 8 ½ days. All positions plotted were from Lat & Long received via radio from Magne. Day 5 was a Dead Reckoning plot and on day 6 the

20m band became too long. With a bit of fiddling we re-established contact in the late afternoons on 40m. On every sked I checked welfare and took their position and passed on weather information. I must say, Magne had timed this trip perfectly, with perhaps the only problem being that the wind had dropped a little too much for the last couple of days. I was becoming concerned about evening storms that were approaching from the west and sure enough, with their actual time of arrival being one day later than estimated, storms did appear on the last night. The storms impacted to the south, west and north of them so they were lucky as one of those storms was the very bad one that did a lot of damage at the Gold Coast and South Brisbane areas. The follow day, they made it into the Brisbane River and checked in with Customs. After that, we talked again on 40m and they motored to their initial mooring point in Brisbane. They plan to stay in Brisbane for about 3 months.



After the Christmas/New Year period, Magne travelled up to visit our Club on a Wednesday morning. Many of the members were able to meet and have a chat and a nice lunch was had in town with Magne, Tony & Carol, Rhonda, Neil, Graham and myself. We hope to hear and see Magne again soon and will probably set up another sked for when he sails to Cairns after our summer wet season. Thanks to Neil and Genney for allowing Magne and friends to stay in their home overnight. No doubt many tails of the sea were shared over the table that evening. A little more about Magne LA4BNA, contributed by Neil VK4NHT:

Magne wanted to thank everyone for making his visit to the Gympie Communications and Electronics Group, such a wonderful experience. He very much enjoyed the club meeting, lunch afterwards and then Tony's tour through the WoodWorks Museum.

He is a very interesting person to speak to. He is a qualified Master Mariner and Tall Ships Navigator, so has many nautical stories to tell. He is multi-lingual and has served with the UN and Save the Children organisations etc. as an interpreter. One of his tasks was to set up emergency education centres for children in Lebanon, because the kids normal schools were being destroyed during the fighting that's going on there. This required him to live in Lebanon and to learn to speak Arabic .. no mean feat. Within about 6 months, he organised a group of people and trained them to the point that they could take over from him. He wasn't sorry to be leaving the "war zone" as it was very stressful.

73,  
Roger - VK4BNQ



Magne LA4BNA & Roger VK4BNQ at the GCEG Clubhouse





Magne LA4BNA & XYL Naoko visit Greg VK4VBU's shack in Emerald Qld



## Club Net Rosters ( Feb - May 2016)

### **2m Net Roster** Monday 19:30 EST

22nd February	Ed VK4ABX
29th February	Jim VK4NAG
7th March	Neil VK4NHT
14th March	Dale VK4FZZW
21st March	Roger VK4BNQ
28th March	Rhonda VK4FRDB
4th April	Paul VK4YPM
11th April	Bob VK4MR
18th April	Owen VK4FAAQ
25th April	Geoff VK4ZGF
2nd May	Greg VK4VBU (via AllStar)

### **80m Net Roster** Wednesday 20:00 EST

24th February	Ed VK4ABX
2nd March	Dale VK4FZZW
9th March	Chris VK4BX
16th March	Rhonda VK4FRDB
23rd March	Neil VK4NHT
30th March	Op Required
6th April	Greg VK4VBU
13th April	Barry VK4KKN
20th April	Geoff VK4ZGF
27th April	Jim VK4NAG



## Interesting soldering videos to watch on YouTube

### Peoria Area Amateur Radio Club High Altitude Balloon

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvOSBnfAQBY>

### Repair of an old 1933 Zenith table radio

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vH2PVx2vPUE>

### Tube Amp Repair

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eH8SCELXSY>



Next Newsletter is due out around the end of April 2016.

Please submit articles to [newsletter@gcegin.org.au](mailto:newsletter@gcegin.org.au)

Club meetings are held at 7:30pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month except January.

The Clubrooms are open for social meetings every Wednesday morning

from around 10am. The location is the northern platform at

The Old Gympie Railway Station, Tozer St. Gympie.

Full information on the website.

