

Branch 30 Shag Valley Station operation 11th to 19th October.

Planning and equipment preparation is well advanced for Branch 30's recognition of the 90th anniversary of Frank Bell (4AA) and Cecil Goyder's (2SC) historic first ever radio communication between the UK and NZ, an event that changed radio communication for ever as it established new and initially, little understood "rules" for short wave communication.

Working bees are being held to test antenna and equipment, much work is going on arranging and sourcing equipment and two reconnaissance visits have been made to our hosts at Shag Valley Station, Johnny Bell and his family, the 6th generation Bell family on the station.

Current plans see the main antenna farm installation starting on Saturday 4th October and possibly extending to the Sunday. Then the teams will be returning to the site on Saturday 11th October to complete the antenna installation and start installing the radio equipment. Operating on the various bands will start as each bands equipment is activated with operation from the site continuing from later on the Saturday (as soon as the workers are free to become operators) through the week until Sunday the 19th when the big dismantle will start.

Bands we anticipate operating are 80m, CW and phone as available. This is the prime band as it is close to the original frequency. It will be using a vertical mast.

We will have a quad hung from nearby trees for 40m, a tri-bander on a 13m lattice pole for 20, 15 and 10 and also 17m facilities.

An IRLP, node 6507 will be on the club's 690 VHF repeater with a cross-bander on nearby hills to give handheld access from the site. Similarly we anticipate access to the Mount Cargill National System node and we will have a STSP repeater operating nearby on 6625 to give incoming guidance to visitors.

Anybody is welcome to come and visit the station or assist with operating at any time during the week – just drop an email to president@ZL4AA.org.nz so we can expect you.

We are operating from the stations Shearers quarters where a limited number of beds with mattresses are available – please bring food, sleeping bags and pillows.

The big day will be early evening on Saturday 18th October with around 0630UTC or 1930 NZDT being the actual time of the original contact.

Media will be present on the final Saturday with Radio NZ'S Jim Sullivan preparing a programme for his Sounds Historical programme on Radio New Zealand National on Sunday 19th.

Those on site will be able to visit the museum where much of the original 4AA equipment is displayed as well as a fascinating range of scientific equipment that demonstrates the early Bell generations had considerable other scientific and experimental interests. A large range of Frank and Brenda Bell's original QSL cards are on site and make absolutely fascinating reading.

Further full and interesting information on the original "Trans-world" stations are available on the following websites:-

Branch 30 www.ZL4AA.org.nz Check under both the "90th Anniversary" tab and the "About us/History tabs"

RSGB http://gb2nz.com/?page_id=11

Kiwi DX Group <http://zm90dx.com/>