



Russell Radio is weighing anchor after 3 years at our little house in Church St. The committee were extremely grateful to Jack Phillips when he allowed Russell Radio to take a lease on his premises and we'll miss our friendly neighbours but it's time to move on and we're really excited.

So where will you find us - on The Strand in the Swordfish Club building.

This move will lift the profile of Russell Radio and in a way it's history repeating itself. Russell Radio was in the Swordfish Club building for many years when Jack (Father) Brittain was the President.

Russell Radio is a voluntary organisation which is based in Russell. It has served local and offshore vessels since it was started by a small band of local fishermen shortly after the war.

By 1979 Russell Radio had become an Incorporated Society with a committee and a constitution. The organisations' legal name is "The Bay of Islands Marine Radio Association" to reflect its service to the wider Bay area. But it will always be "Russell Radio".

Over the years equipment improved along with the level of services and has expanded to cover SSB for trans-Tasman and trans-Pacific yachts and localised VHF channel 63 coverage for the Bay of Islands. Overseas visiting yachts can call on Channel 16 or 63 and directions will be provided for the right course for the "Q" berth and the Customs dock in the Opuia Marina.

The Russell community and boating fraternity mourned the sad loss of Ritchie Blomfield in March 2005. Ritchie's lifelong association with the sea and local knowledge of the Bay of Islands' climatic intricacies made him a legend. Many vessels owe their safe homecoming to his quick actions and his wealth of local knowledge.

The committee made the move from Ritchie's house and recruited a full time Station manager, Stewart Irvine. Trying to keep someone on the end of a microphone for 84 hours per week is a huge undertaking. Stewart managed it by doing long hours, himself, and with the assistance from several volunteers and committee members giving their time freely. With Des Renner deciding to go his own way, the swallows leaving and less volunteers around, last year, it was decided to employ another full time radio operator, Bev Craig.

While this decision does impact on the finances the decision was made so that the station would remain on air and an operator listening to the boating public from 8am to 8pm every day.

Des Renner's actions caused a lot of confusion for the boating public. Des decided to disassociate himself from "Russell Radio", yet he continued to call himself "Russell Radio". Unfortunately, the committee were left with no alternative and won a court order to stop Des from calling himself "Russell Radio".

During the year some of you might have experienced difficulties with Channel 16. This was because Radio Spectrum brought in new regulations to do with their licences. Russell Radio has a repeater station in Titore Way which now has to have its own licence and an engineers' certificate to comply with the regulations. As Channel 16 is a free to air channel it was decided to write to the politicians for help. Divers diving on the "Canterbury" were at risk as Deep Water Cove is a black hole for radio signal. Our local Mayor, Wayne Brown, was very helpful. He arranged for Kordia to contact us and they solved the problem. Kordia have upgraded our equipment, free of charge, arranged an engineer and paid all the licence fees for this year. We are all extremely grateful for their help.

In this newsletter we would have liked to let you know that we had been successful in the funding applications that have been lodged to purchase much needed new radios and aerials. We will continue to seek funding to make this happen. The experts advise us that the reception will be awesome and with this project in mind we ask if the members can give a donation with their subscription this year.

Stewart and Eldon Jackson have been busy preparing the new premises so that we can shift over very shortly. All the gear will be moved along with the maps, charts, brochures, books, flyers and stickers on marine safety. So when you're next in the vicinity pop in, have a look around, have a chat with Stewart and Bev or give them a call - phone 09-4037218. You might have the time to become a volunteer and chat with everyone that is lucky enough to be on the water.

“Russell Radio” operates on VHF Channels: Hours 0800 to 2000 - Daily

VHF Channel 16	Listening
VHF Channel 63	Working
VHF Channel 03	Commercial
SSB 2182	Listening

Coverage area: Tutukaka in the south to Knuckle Point at the northern end of Doubtless Bay, encompassing the Cavalli and Poor Knights Islands.

Blue Water Cruisers can call on SSB on the following frequencies and Sked times:

4417 daily	1900 - 1930
4445 daily	1830 - 1900
6516 daily	By Request Only
13101 daily	By Request Only

Daily Weather reports on VHF Channel 63 at: 0800 – 0930 – 1330 and 1750

If you wish to become a member of “Russell Radio” please call in to see us or visit our website www.russellradio.org.nz and get a membership form.

The committee and radio operators are extremely grateful to all the supporters of Russell Radio. For the donations of much needed funds and for the equipment and furniture for the new premises. Our volunteers – without you it would be extremely hard to continue. It is always hard to name everyone but these volunteers deserve our gratitude for consistently turning up at the station and spending a few hours each week on the radio. This allows Stewart and Bev a chance to catch up, recharge the batteries and carry on.

Chairperson: Keith Turner

Secretary/Treasurer: Dianne Davey

Committee:

Rod Haines, Eldon Jackson, Graham Taylor, Gaeleen Turner, Vera Warren, Graeme Whiteman.

Radio Operators: Stewart Irvine & Bev Craig.

Keep us informed of your movements on the water and stay safe

PO Box 108 Russell

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VHF SSB

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