

21st Australian Scout Jamboree

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The cover photo depicts Nathaniel Ballinger VK3FNAT, who attended the 21st Australian Scout Jamboree at Elmore, in central west Victoria in early January. On this page, we see his homebrew two-metre antenna, and a glimpse of part of the campsite.

Nathaniel fitted his Scout group out with a homebrew two-metre quarter wave ground-plane antenna which he constructed with the help of Scout leader Ash Clark VK3SSB.

Nathaniel reported excellent coverage from his Scout portable QTH, with 5/9 signals into all local repeaters.



Photo 1 and 2 (above and above right): Nathaniel with his homebrew quarter-wave vertical for the 2-metre band.

Photo 3 (right): The entrance to the troop's campsite –the mast and antenna is just visible to the right of the entrance gate

The 21st Australian Scout Jamboree AJ2007 – *Get in the game* Sleepy Elmore invaded by 13,000 energetic youngsters

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On 2nd January 2007, the quiet Victorian country town of Elmore had a population explosion by a factor of about 10 as it became host to around 13,000 Scouts and 8000 leaders and assistants attending the 21st Australian Scout Jamboree called AJ2007. The 12-day Jamboree, held at the Elmore Field Day grounds, came complete with its own police station, hospital, fire station, FM radio station, multiple rock stages, and of course hundreds of amazing activities for 13,000 energetic Scouts.

Taking prime location near the centre of the Jamboree site was the Scout Radio and Electronic Service Unit's amateur radio station VI3JAM. Visually locatable from just about anywhere within the site (due to its enormous antennas and masts), visiting Scouts kept VI3JAM active and on the air since early Tuesday morning. *The Jamboree had only just started and we had so many contacts within Australia and overseas, it was fantastic. All the station equipment is working perfectly and the Scouts have just been having a ball* said station manager Hayden McManus VK3FRST.

The Radio and Electronic Service Unit constructed four individual operating positions within a large modern air-conditioned Atco hut. Each operating position was fully decked out with state of the art radio and computer equipment kindly donated by Icom Australia and BKB Internet. Outside, the antenna farm constructed by the Service Unit was very impressive. Independently rotatable beams were in place for 2 m and 70 cm,

10/15/20 m, and 6 m, as well as a series of dipoles for operating on the lower HF bands.

VI3JAM was on the air, on the usual calling frequencies for all bands 160 m through 70 cm .

Encouragingly, a number of Scouts attending AJ2007 and visiting the VI3JAM station had already heard of the new Foundation Licence. A number of young Scouts attending the Jamboree already had Foundation call signs and were spotted roaming the Jamboree with 2 m or 70 cm handhelds strapped to their belts.

All Scouts visiting the VI3JAM station were given information on amateur radio and the new Foundation Licence by way of promotional material provided by the WIA. The material included the WIA's new colour brochure "Calling CQ", which outlines the many enjoyable and interesting aspects of the hobby. Also included in the promotional material was a listing of contact details for the group leaders from the various radio

clubs providing Foundation training and assessment. The promotional material also included a follow-up form, which could be filled out to request follow up by the Radio and Electronic Service Unit with more information on how to become a radio amateur. Also on sale at the VI3JAM station were copies of "Your entry into Amateur Radio", the Foundation licence manual, for anyone who was keen to purchase a copy and start studying.

A highlight for the Jamboree, and the VI3JAM station, was when the 20 lucky Scouts who had entered the "What would I ask an astronaut" competition via the AJ2007 website and were selected to pose their questions in person to Suni Williams KD5PLB in an ARISS hook-up with the International Space Station (see the following story).

A commemorative QSL card is being issued to all stations who have worked VI3JAM. The WIA website has a series of photos taken around the Jamboree and VI3JAM station sites.