



South African Radio League Amateur Radio Hall of Fame



Brian Austin, G0GSF ex ZS6BKW Inducted in 2016

Brian was born in Johannesburg in 1945. He and his father took their CW tests on the same day in 1962. Brian was too young to get his own callsign, but in terms of the Radio Act at that time, could operate his father's station ZS6BIQ under supervision. In



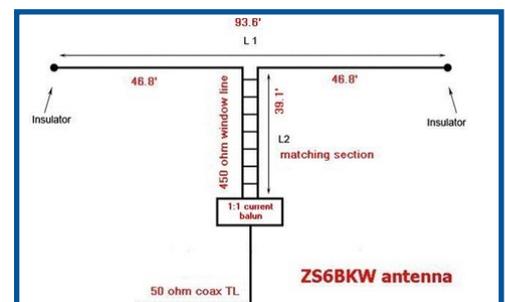
November 1963 he passed the first RAE ever held, receiving Radio Amateur Operator's Certificate number A05 and the callsign ZS6BKW. After completing his BSc (Eng) at the University of the Witwatersrand, he became a design engineer in the Electronics Division of the Chamber of Mines Research Organisation in Johannesburg.

Contribution to Amateur Radio

Brian taught his colleagues CW. Four of them sat the RAE and three subsequently obtained their full licences. Brian was an active member of the SARL Johannesburg Branch and gave a number of talks at its meetings. The first was on the 'Third method of SSB', a topic completely new to most amateurs at that time. He began teaching the RAE course for the Branch in 1973 and continued to do so for seven years. For this contribution to amateur radio, he received the Jack Twine Merit Award in 1978.

In 1977 he became Regional Coordinator of Hamnet Witwatersrand. Hamnet's proficiency was soon recognized by the SADF, with whom they collaborated closely.

In 1980, Brian became an academic in his former department at Wits. In 1987, he emigrated to the UK as G0GSF. Over the years he has given numerous talks to various UK amateur radio clubs and has contributed a number of articles to RadCom, the RSGB journal. His first publication was in Radio ZS in 1972 where he described how to go about correcting a design fault in the Yaesu Musen FTDX100, one of the earliest hybrid SSB transceivers. He received a letter of thanks from Mr Sako Hasegawa, the President of the Yaesu Musen Co. Ltd. Over the years he was a regular contributor to Radio ZS on topics from antennas to QRP operating, and served as its Technical Editor for a short time in the late 1970s.



At the University of the Witwatersrand Brian Austin, started an antenna research group that specialised in numerical modelling. During this time, he also designed an improved version of the G5RV multiband dipole antenna. This research predates the availability of modelling software such as NEC, and he wrote his own software and developed techniques based on the Smith chart to analyse and design what became the now-ubiquitous ZS6BKW multiband dipole. This antenna is featured in the ARRL Antenna Book.

Brian was awarded an MSc(Eng) in 1977 and a PhD in 1986, both from the University of the Witwatersrand. He has published widely, including a biography of Basil Schonland.

Brian led the team that developed the world's first handheld SSB transceiver for underground use in mines. This specialised equipment went into production in 1978 by a military electronics company in Pretoria under the direction of David Larsen ZS6DN.