

SATURDAY GETAWAY

tribes of sydney



Each Saturday we peel back the veil to reveal Sydney's societies. From groups of just a dozen to organised clubs with hundreds of members, these associations go unnoticed by the majority of Sydney residents. Until now.

MANLY-WARRINGAH RADIO SOCIETY

These guys are a chatty bunch, albeit slightly nerdy. They like to twiddle a few buttons and surf the airwaves until they bump into other enthusiasts on the other side of the world. They also listen in to other conversations such as astronauts chatting to enthralled schoolchildren.

WHAT: They're passionate about anything to do with radios. At their meeting place in Terrey Hills, they have a radio studio with a 50m-high tower and a 5m antenna. Once a week, they'll get together to use the equipment. They don't have a licence to broadcast shows to the public but if they pass an amateur radio operator exam they are allowed to have two-way chats. Airwave etiquette includes avoiding topics such as politics, religion and sex. At meetings, they'll also help each other with their various equipment-building projects. Member Richard Muman, a 45-year-old computer programmer, is building a gadget to attach to his car's GPS system, which will transmit his location to his family. The members also support emergency services by boosting communications in disasters, such as the 1994 bushfires that swept across Sydney. Club membership is \$25 a year.



WHO: About 60 members, mainly men in their 30s to 70s. "It is a bit of a nerdy hobby. A lot of us are techies in some way," says Muman.

WHY: "I like meeting new people," he says. "You can learn so much about the world. We speak to a lot of people from the US, as well as from Russia and Japan." Muman has been fascinated by radios since his parents gave him one for his 10th birthday. He says: "I was amazed by being able to talk to my friend, who was half a mile down the road. I thought there was something magic about it."

WHERE: Warringah Volunteer Services Centre, Thompson Dr, Terrey Hills

WHEN: Wednesday evenings from 7.30pm

More details on the Manly-Warringah Radio Society, call 9450 1746 or go to www.mwrs.org.au

If you're a member of a Sydney Tribe you think we should know about, write to: Jennie Jones, The Daily Telegraph, 2 Holt St, Surry Hills, Sydney, NSW 2001 or email sydneytribes@dailytelegraph.com.au

91—THE DAILY TELEGRAPH,

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