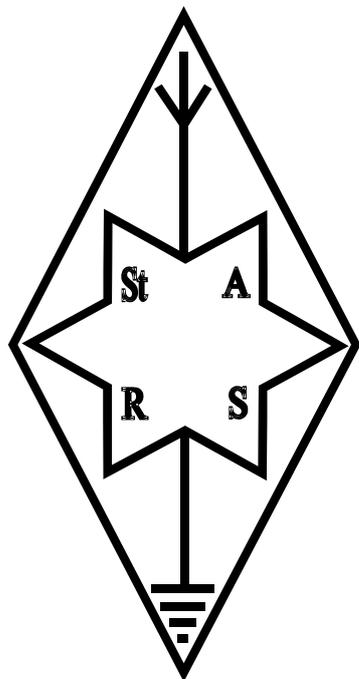


STARLITE

G6OI
1938

The Newsletter for Members and Friends of
**Stourbridge and District
Amateur Radio Society**
incorporating
Old Swinford Hospital School Radio Club

G6SRS
1938



G4CVK

1969

ISSUE
05/2011



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Visitors always welcome

MEETINGS

The Society holds its full meetings on the

1st and 3rd Monday of each Month at

Old Swinford Hospital School

Heath Lane

Stourbridge

(8.00pm – 10.00pm)

Additionally the shack is open during the same times on the intermediate Monday's

All correspondence/enquiries should be addressed to the

Hon. Secretary:

John Clarke M1EJG

(01562) 700513

honsec@g6oi.org.uk

STARS Web Site

WAP enabled ??

STARS

C/O The Mill House

21 Mill Lane

Blakedown

Kidderminster

DY10 3ND

www.g6oi.org.uk

www.g6oi.org.uk/wap/index.wml

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the May edition of Starlite for 2011. During April we were given an interesting talk by John Scott on the Stars Web site and its development and management. All John's knowledge was gained by sheer hard work and from a base of no experience in Web Site Management. Thanks also go to Malcolm and Jim for this months articles.

As always I would be interested to receive contributions and feedback on any of the articles. I aim to make Starlite available for the first day of each month.

Regards

Adrian Bryan (G0NLA)



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E-books and E-book Readers

Introduction

This article is intended as an introduction to the above subject. I have written the article in the form of FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions).

Clarification

I can not find an authoritative spelling for e-books. There seem to be numerous variations such as E-Books, e-books, eBooks. I suppose to some extent we have the iPad, eBay and iPhone to blame for this dilemma. For the purposes of this article I am going to settle for e-books and e-readers and E Ink. If e-book or e-reader start a sentence I shall use E-book and E-reader

What Technology is used?

Irrespective of manufacturer all e-book readers seem to mainly use Linux, Android and to a lesser extent a Microsoft Windows variant as the underlying operating system. Presently e-book readers or e-readers can be considered as falling into two categories of device – dedicated and non-dedicated devices. Dedicated devices tend to display in black on white and use E Ink technology. Non-dedicated devices tend to use Liquid Crystal Displays (LCD). Dedicated devices are often available from book distributors with Amazon as market leader with the Kindle e-reader. E Ink technology is far less demanding on battery usage than LCD devices as it uses reflected light. E Ink is also much easier on the eye than LCD technology. Other suppliers of dedicated e-readers are Barnes and Noble, (not sure if B&N are still trading?), Borders and Waterstones.

One minor distraction of E Ink devices is that the background display turns to black briefly prior to a screen refresh and then back again to the regular white background with black lettering. On initial introduction E Ink devices were noticeably slow in operation for page turn and page refresh times. With more recent models this is no longer a problem.

The Market Place

Tablet computers and e-readers seem to be the current “hot item” and although it is too early to pick any clear long term winners, Amazon currently seem to be market leader with it's Kindle e-reader.

Market Share for main e-book readers

Apple iPad versions	35%
Amazon Kindle	40%
Sony e-reader	20%
Others	5%

The above figures for the iPad skew the figures as its function as an e-book reader is not its main strength, although three quarters of iPad users use their iPad to read books. There is also a viewpoint whereby it feels like false economy to buy a dedicated e-reader device when for a little extra it is possible to buy a more capable device. Whilst I do not own an E Ink based device, I would be wary that the dedicated e-reader may be less capable of being updated than an iPad or Android based device. Possibly the iPad's ability to additionally function as an e-reader is an additional factor for



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purchasing an iPad although the iPad's battery life makes it less desirable as an e-reader.

What are the demographics of e-reader ownership?

I found the table below interesting with regard to the 55+ age group and I would have expected to find this group more likely to purchase conventional printed books. A possible explanation may relate to which age group spends time reading books, with disposable income as an added determining factor?

Age Group	10-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Percentage	5pc	7pc	11pc	7pc	6pc

What is the price of an e-book

Often the first chapter of an e-book can be downloaded at no cost. If the book is of interest you can go ahead and purchase it and download the entire book.

The good news is that some books which are out of copyright are available for free download and in excess of 500,000 titles fall into this category. There is no doubt that many e-books are available at lower prices than the printed equivalents, however there seems to be some rumblings of discontentment over the pricing of some top selling books. There are cases where e-books cost far more than their printed equivalents. This disparity could for example be caused by discounting. For example a supermarket may undertake to buy a large number of a particular book from a distributor and discount it within its stores. Publishers are able to charge whatever they like for ebooks and competition is less evident. The situation is such that the EU and the Office of Fair Trading are investigating the situation for possible irregularities.

UK book pricing in general is distorted as there is not a large difference between the cost of production of a hardback and a paper back, but the retail price of a hardback is often two and sometimes three times higher than the paperback version.

Current Top Ten Kindle Edition Books

£.071	The Basement	Steven Leather
£1.00	The Hanging Shed	Gordon Ferris
£4.49	One Day	David Nicolls
£2.74	The Girl with the Dragon Tatoo	Stig Larsson
£2.44	The Gril who Kicked the Hornet's Nest	Stig Larsson
£2.74	The Girl who Played with Fire	Stig Larsson
£2.51	Room	Emma Donoghue
£2.90	Never Let Me Go	Kazuo Ishiguro
£0.70	Once Bitten	Steven Leather

What is the price of an e-book reader?

Newly introduced “must have products” such as the iPhone4 have the luxury that the would-be purchaser has the attitude that “this is the price I have to pay for this item” (however inflated or unrealistic). The e-book reader seems to be moving from this role of “must have fashion item”. There is an increasing number of e-book readers available and this is introducing much needed competition and causing a lowering of price. The physical size of more recent e-book readers is



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larger than an iPhone with prices increasing for larger models. Some examples of price are:-

Kindle with 6" screen	£112
Sony eBook reader (5" screen)	£149
Android tablet PC (7" touch screen)	£75-£125

It is not possible to make direct comparisons between models as some models do not include battery chargers and there are variations in the amount of memory installed. Lower prices for e-book readers must have an effect on the public's willingness to adopt e-books. Expect to see more and more book stores start to discount their e-book readers to improve market share and loss leaders are more than likely.

E-book Storage Formats

Do e-books have similar data formats? No they definitely do not. A brief look in Wikipedia indicates that there are 28 different storage formats for e-books. Commercial publishers are particularly interested in proprietary formats. The main problem for e-book publishers is the potential for piracy. A conventional book can be purchased and passed on to friends and family to be read again and may end up in a charity shop, whereas current e-book purchases are typically read only by the purchaser.

Miscellaneous

This heading is for items not already included but which may affect the decision to purchase an e-book reader.

Some e-book readers offer a 3G connection to allow independent book downloads away from the home whereas most e-book readers include a WiFi facility. Web browsing is possible from some models of e-book reader, albeit with some restrictions on what can be displayed. E Ink offerings may not display moving pictures. The placement of page turn buttons on some e-book readers can be a source of annoyance and inadvertent page turns are more likely on some models than others. Some read out text to you, although in a somewhat robotic tone with increase/decrease in frequency to simulate male or female voices. This feature is dependant on e-book publisher and not necessarily by e-book reader model. As expected some e-book readers can switch to working in landscape or portrait mode as per the iPhone, and touch screens are available. Where a keyboard is provided it is not suitable for entering large amounts of text.

Conclusion

The e-book reader and e-book market place is far from settled. Recent reports from Amazon indicate that its e-book sales in the USA have recently exceeded paperback sales. The premium paid by early adopters for e-readers is starting to become less evident as prices are being driven down by competition. It will be interesting to see what develops from the Office of Fair Trading Investigation and European Commission anti-trust inquiry. A clear winner or winners needs to emerge from the numerous e-book storage methods, possibly there could be a split in format along the lines of free books and paid for e-books. E-books offer an outlet for self publishing with lower costs compared with conventional books. It will be interesting to see how the e-book, e-book reader marketplace evolves.

Adrian Bryan – As usual any errors in this article are mine.



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NEWS FROM DOWN UNDER

Jeff's Walk Across Australia

APRS (Automatic Packet Reporting System) tracking is popular among the Aussie club members as they go out camping for long weekends in their 4 wheel drives plus trailers and all meet up in the most remote places and just set up camp. There are absolutely no little luxuries as in most UK camping expeditions. The guy doing the walk is an amateur from Queensland and walking East – West. You will see what I mean about the APRS tracking from the map below.



It is difficult to relate just how far the distance above is, but in terms of a walk within Europe, the walk is the equivalent to a trip from Paris to Moscow and back!

For those of you with Internet access, look on Youtube for “jeffswalk”.

The Youtube link also has some interesting bits too, the chap he is talking to on the radio is a club member in Oz, they are all out camping.

Please Link to :-

<http://www.jeffswalk2.com/jeffsprogress.html> and

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TX0EvdCgD4&NR=1>



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ANZAC Field Day Photo from Jim's Club in Australia



ANZAC Field Day – dishes for 23 cms one for Earth-Moon-Earth and a dish in the background for terrestrial DX, plus the TH-3 HF antenna.

Many thanks to Jim Kimpton for the articles and photo.



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NEWS FROM OUR ROVING REPORTER

Starlite April/May 2011

I guess being a roving reporter for Starlite and for the George Formby Society, Shropshire Theatre Organ Trust and for the Press and Uke.Society of Great Britain, I am always on the look out for news to feature in my reports, seven in total as far as Starlite is concerned. This month I am not short of news and in fact I have had to carry some into the next edition.

So I will start with some news I received via the telephone on 31st March from my fellow volunteer on The Severn Valley Railway, Bernard G1BJS who informed me that Gordon Hall G3LZT had become a silent key in his early 70's. I first came into contact with Gordon in the 1950s when I used to occasionally visit the Wolverhampton Amateur Radio Society. Like most amateur radio clubs at that time it was doing well and their meetings were held at Neachells Cottage Tettenhall Wood. Being a SWL in those days I used to hear Gordon on Top Band [160 m] it was in 1961 when I was staying at my Aunt and Uncle's in Tipton as I was waiting for our House in Longfellow Rd to be completed, because my then home address was still at Leominster where parents, sister and my wife Glenys lived. As I was working at our main Works of Contactor Switchgear in Wolverhampton, I often used to take a walk round the area and this night at the end of the road where I was staying there was a car parked with a loaded whip attached. I had to investigate and it was Gordon G3LZT. Gordon was visiting his fiancée who lived at the end of the road. He later married her and moved to Trimpley near Bewdley. Every time I came into contact with him at radio rallies and visits to STARS, I used to remind him of that night. Gordon was a member of the Kidderminster Amateur Radio Club and he was the auctioneer at their surplus sales. He was very much into antiques. It was only last year while I was passing through Tipton from the Rail Station that I photographed the corner shop in Menin Road that his mother and father-in-law used to keep. I was going to send them to him and his wife Ann, but never got round to it. I was hoping to see him at The Wythall Radio Rally; I now know the reason why he was not there. He had been ill for some time, our condolences are sent to his XYL Ann. I would have attended the funeral which was held on Monday 11th April at Bobbington Church , but I could not get there due to transport problems - the car was in for its annual service.

Moving on now to the first main meeting after the AGM. I was at a funeral in Rotherham of our former president of the George Formby Society on Monday 18th April.

In April, John, our treasurer gave a very good talk about the STARS website and the problems that he encountered when he revived the site after our previous President Malcolm had become a silent key. It was not an easy task for John but with perseverance, he as made the site what it is today. Well done John from us all at STARS. I was at this point intending to feature my final memory of 50 years ago when Glenys and I first moved into Longfellow Rd, but I have decided to feature it in the next edition of Starlite [It could have been a Tragedy] I received a phone call on Easter Monday morning from Vera the XYL of a friend of over 33 yrs Len G4HCZ and was to say that Len had passed away on the Saturday. He was into his mid 80s and had not been well for nearly two years. Glenys, Vera Len and myself have visited many Radio Rallies together over the years and done a lot of bargaining with traders to bring costs down of items, we hoped to purchase. I used to go out for a drink with Len and Ron G4NME and Peter G3WWR [who became a silent key some years ago], that was on a Friday Night. Our Friday night lasted for over 25 years and it started when I used to visit the Dudley Amateur Radio Club which in those days had a Radio shack at The Old Windmill in Upper Gornal, where later on, Windmill Wireless was started by a small group of Radio Amateurs including myself . it was good site for 2 and 70cm. Our condolences are sent to Len's XYL, daughter, son-in-law and family.



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Something on a much more lighter note Glenys and myself celebrated our 50th Wedding Anniversary on 3rd April by being treated to a meal at The Engine House Highley which was paid for by our son Andrew. It was great travelling on the carriages I helped to restore and it was the first time Andrew had been on The Severn Valley Line. I can recommend the meals at the Engine House.



Looking back 50yrs to our wedding day there were two licensed amateurs at our wedding; Stan G8SR and John G3LGL and it was held at Leominster Priory Church Herefordshire where I was living at the time.

Finally, I am through to the finals of Wordsley's Got Talent which will be held at The Richardson Hall Wordsley on Sat 21st May.



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Pictured above photo taken at Waseley Hills Country park not far from Halesowen Left to Right John G4IVJ [Who passed away some time ago] Robert G4XOM who was at the STARS on John's talk & Frank who used to be a member of STARS, Malcolm G8BOP (sic)

It was great seeing Robert Egan G4XOM at the April Meeting after a few years absence, Robert and his late father Dennis who passed away this year and who used to edit Starlite.

Well That's All for now

Best 73s Malcolm G8BOP

Your Roving Reporter



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YOUR COMMITTEE

Hon. President	JAMES	G7HEZ	
Vice President	ADRIAN SIMMS	M3HBA	
Hon. Secretary	JOHN	M1EJG	(01562) 700513
Hon. Treasurer	JOHN	G8UAE	
Committee Members	ADRIAN BRYAN	G0NLA	
	MALCOLM	G8BOP	
	ANDREW	M6APJ	
	RICHARD	M1DEC	

CALENDAR of EVENTS

It should be noted that the Shack will be open every Monday evening unless shown otherwise in the Calendar

April	Sat 30th	10:00 Meet at School - Roof work on aerials
May	Mon 2nd	No Meeting due to Bank Holiday
	Mon 9th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter and Committee Meeting
	Mon 16th	Main Meeting - Not yet arranged
	Mon 23rd	A Talk on PICS by Mike Ferriday
	Mon 30th	No Meeting due to Bank Holiday
June	Mon 6th	Informal - On air or natter
	Mon 13th	Club BBQ at the Sheepwalks
	Mon 20th	Karl Truby - Soldering in the Aircraft Industry
	Mon 27th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
July	Mon 4rd	Informal - On air or natter
	Mon 11th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
	Mon 18th	Main Meeting - Not yet arranged
	Mon 25th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
August	Mon 1st	Informal - On air or natter
	Mon 8th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
	Mon 15th	Informal - On air or natter (no main meeting)
	Mon 22th	Informal - On air or natter
	Mon 29th	No Meeting due to Bank Holiday
September	Mon 5th	Informal - On air or natter
November	Mon 21st	Club Surplus Sale

