

Gordon's little bit

Welcome to 1999. Hope that you all enjoyed the Xmas break and are now fully recovered and many thanks for your all cards. Sorry we didn't manage to send cards from the Society but didn't get things sorted in time

Having cancelled the Xmas festivities, at the suggestion of Hon. Pres., December was a relatively quiet month as far as club activities were concerned but several members have been turning up regularly each Monday and Wednesday. There have been more QSO s logged during that period, apart from SESs, than I can recall in the 5 years that I have been a member of the Society.

GB60I was QRV during October and November but **Wayne LLT** has suggested that it be resurrected as, due to poor conditions on the bands, not as many contacts were made as were envisaged.

Was chatting to **Tony M1CZH** recently about the requirement to pass the 12wpm Morse test to qualify for an "A" licence and be allowed access to the HF bands. As most of you are probably aware, the RSGB is suggesting that the speed is reduced to 5wpm or the test abandoned altogether. This has caused quite a lot of controversy, especially amongst the CW fraternity, and, according to a message picked up by **Bob G4EEM** on Packet, has resulted in the resignation of the Chief Morse Examiner, Roy Clayton, and his Second in Command, on the grounds that the examiners had not been consulted on the matter. No doubt many of the other 300 odd examiners will follow suit.

I would hazard a guess that less than 1% of "A" licensees use CW on a regular basis, so it does seem a waste of time, but what is the alternative?

Well, I don't claim to know the answer but I seem to remember **Eric IVQ** telling me that in days of yore, when he first got his licence, one was **obliged** to use CW for a year before graduating to fone.

However, as we all know, there have been many new modes of communication by radio introduced over the past 50 years and I think we should recognise that CW isn't the be all and end all in deciding whether one is a competent and responsible operator or not.

By all means retain the RAE if only to instil the licence terms, provisions and limitations (in plain English please) and the basics of good operating procedures: and deter the undesirables who simply want to buy a licence from the Post Office.

Any road up, Tony, a Class "B" licensee, is allowed to work HF as long as he is supervised by an "A" licensee and, being a member of a club, gets ample opportunity to practice the necessary skills and procedures. So why not introduce a practical test comprising setting up the rig correctly and conducting either a live or simulated QSO after a probationary period of, say, a year on the air under supervision?

The bands would be overcrowded? Don't think so, have a listen around the bands, most of them are underused and when was the last time you were on the air? I hear more QSOs on CW at the lower ends of the bands than on all the rest put together.

But some of the higher frequencies are unusable? Not so. Just have a listen when there's a contest in progress.

So what about all those folk who have had to go through the mill to get their "A" licence? Well, they already have the world at their fingertips but maybe they could be given the incentive to gain a more prestigious sounding licence like "A" (Class 1) say with a 20wpm Morse test ... hi or perhaps by demonstrating keyboard skills and using Packet or whatever. Mind you, dunno how one would be able to differentiate between one class and another without messing about with the callsigns. And, in the end, does it really matter? This is supposed to be a hobby and, as long as we can pursue our own individual interests without interfering with others and

exercise a modicum of restraint and consideration, what difference does the class of licence you hold make, apart from boosting your ego?

Wonder if you recall the report I gave on **Arthur's (G2DVI)** talk on RADAR? (September '96 issue, I think). There was one tale about the chap who accidentally wandered off into the desert but eventually arrived back at camp as he had walked in a complete circle due to one leg being shorter than the other. His nickname was "Fairy" and I intimated that I thought that this was probably "fairy tale". However, Arthur assured me it was the gospel truth and showed me the annual report for 1998 which is sent to surviving members of the M.S.S.U. (Mobile Signals Service Unit ?). The author recalls the occasion when the lads were celebrating Hogmanay 1945 in Ravenna (Italy?), in the traditional manner, and were a bit the worse for wear by the end of the evening. It was a very cold night and on departing they found one of their fellow revellers lying in the middle of the carpark with his clothing actually frozen to the ground! Must have been some party! Ok Arthur, I promise never to question the authenticity of your "tales" again.

THE CODE BREAKERS

Are you any good at solving crossword puzzles? I was reading an article in *The Daily Telegraph* recently about how staff were recruited to work at Bletchley Park. It seems that the majority were eccentric academics and university graduates but there were still insufficient bodies to tackle the problem of cracking military intelligence codes.

Toward the end of 1941 *The Telegraph* published its 5000th crossword (a milestone) and there was a spate of correspondence from readers commenting on how they enjoyed the daily challenge and how quickly they could complete the crosswords. The chairman of the Eccentric Club wrote to say that he would donate £100 to the Minesweepers Fund if it could be demonstrated under controlled conditions that anyone could solve *The Daily Telegraph* crossword in under 12 minutes!

Subsequently, *The Telegraph* was asked to organise a competition to which all the correspondents were invited and this took place at their Fleet Street offices on Saturday January 10th. 1942. Twenty-five readers had taken up the challenge and the first to complete the puzzle handed it in after 6 minutes 3.5 seconds but was disqualified as he had misspelt one word. Another four completed the puzzle within the 12 minutes, the fastest being 7 minutes 57.5 sec.! The reward for their efforts was a cup of tea in the chairman's office and the memory of a pleasant way of spending a Saturday afternoon.

Unbeknown to those who had taken part, the competition had been suggested as a recruitment test by military intelligence and they were all asked later if they would be prepared to take on "a particular type of work as a contribution to the war effort". Those who agreed were sent to the Government Code and Cypher School at Bletchley Park.

The puzzle used for the competition was reproduced in the *Telegraph* 14th December '98 for the benefit of readers but I must admit that it defeated me and took a good 12 minutes just to read the clues. ... hi

"STATION X THE CODEBREAKERS OF BLETCHLEY PARK" BY MICHAEL SMITH IS AVAILABLE FROM TELEGRAPH BOOKS DIRECT (0541 557772 REF. PA557) FOR £14.99.

Whilst on the subject of Crossword puzzles, how about these anagrams snatched from "KEY NOTE" the newsletter of "FISTS" The International Morse Promotion Society?

Dormitory - Dirty Room

The Morse Code. – Here Come Dots.

Slot Machines – Cash Lost In Em.

Mother in Law – Woman Hitler

Snooze Alarms – Alas No More Z's

Alec Guinness – Genuine Class

Semolina – Is No Meal

Public Art Galleries – Large Picture Halls, I Bet A Decimal Point- I'm a Dot in Place

The Earthquakes – That Queer Shake

*Eleven Plus Two – Twelve Plus One
Contradiction – Accord Not In It*

And finally: -

“That’s one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind”. – Neil Armstrong

Thin man ran; makes a large stride, left planet, pins flag on moon! On to Mars.

James A. Michener”

Well it fills in the gaps dunnit ?

73 Gord G0TZV

My window on the world

Through my antenna I can watch the world go by. This is not just a gimmick start, nor am I some sort of insect - although that has been suggested before now. The simple fact is that my recent change of QTH left me aerial-less for 8 months and with Christmas and the G-QRP Club Winter Sports coming up fast something had to be done to put G0THX back on the air.

The new QTH is in blue rinse country, so crossed Yagi's at 70 feet are definitely out. In fact any thing drawing attention to the presence of a 'ham' at this early stage is undesirable. Although first steps have been taken in the form of a new pole which raises my TV aerial well above the rooftop and which quite coincidentally, just happens to include a halyard.

A modest vertical perhaps? Well, maybe as a next step. But the philistines around us still fail to appreciate what a thing of beauty a 33 feet guyed mast can be.

An indoor aerial? In the loft? But my loft is crammed full of those indispensable items that we have carried around for the past 45 years and which have always lived in our loft and in any case my loft is now only 10 feet

above local ground level and only about 7 feet above the roadway outside my bungalow

What about an invisible dipole. From my new TV pole to the very handy tree which is just about 66 feet away? Probably one day that tree may need a supporting wire or two but I think not an invisible aerial because any thing strong enough to resist the local seagulls is going to result in my garrotting a large proportion of the local avian population.

What about a LOOP? Very handy things are loops. Very High Q so good rejection of out of band signals, hopefully fairly TVI free. Fairly tolerant of nearby objects and in small sizes – say about 1 meter diameter – supposedly portable. I had used loop aerials quite a lot in my previous existence as a SWL and had often been impressed with their receive capabilities. My reading seems to suggest their use as radiators of RF is more doubtful so, bearing in mind my preference for QRP working, would they work for me? As with so many things radio, the only answer was to suck and see!

The next step was the acquisition of a loop and here the choice is between £350 for a work of art or a spot of home brewing. It was definitely 'No contest'. A quick survey of my Radio Rubbish Pile – XYL's definition of my prize junk box, produced a 10 foot length of 10mm copper pipe and a wide spaced 100pF variable and this, with about 6 feet of 50ohm coax and a camera tripod soon produced a 39 inch diameter loop which tuned both 7 and 10 MHz and signals of S9 plus showed definite Rx possibilities. It also showed a widely fluctuating SWR apparently due to flimsy construction so TX tests were a definite no no whilst even 39 inches, plus tripod proved a bit of a handful in the shack.

Next stage was a re-vamp and it was at this point that, sitting in my shack watching the linear car park called the A22, it occurred to me that one wall of the shack which was free of 'apparatus' was the window. Suppose a copper pipe were run around the top of the

pelmet, down the sides and just under the window sill? Total length about 7.5 meters or just about a quarter wave on 30 meters. Bound to be losses so close to the wall and centre height is only about 6 feet AGL but what have I got to lose?

That's about it really. The mark 3 version is now in place, 7.56 meters of 15mm copper pipe tuned with a 25pF of wide spaces variable tunes 10.1Mhz whilst added fixed capacitors of 43pF and 250pF get me QRV on 7Mhz and 3.5Mhz (RAE question, what is the probable Loop inductance?)

BUT DOES IT WORK, As always the answer is that it all depends ... It certainly doesn't rival a quad or tribander at 40 feet but it seems to compete with the dipole at 25 feet that I was using at the old QTH and in any case I have put a couple of pages in the log in November which are the first since Feb. A quick analysis shows nothing very marvellous worked but most of Europe covered with 2 way QRP to Munich and to Eire on 10Mhz. On 7Mhz another Munich DL station gave my 4 watts QRP 2S points down on his 100 watts whilst 25 watts QRO raised EW and EC7 amongst others. I have heard the States on 7Mhz – morning greyline- but couldn't raise them, of course. Overall, my mainly QRP activities seem to be about 1S point down on incoming reports so it seems probable that my 4 watts RF is giving something like 1 watt ERP. For me the important thing is that I am back in action in time for the Christmas fun and I have also had a good bit of fun along the way. Total cost, less than £10 of copper pipe. Oh, by the way, all QSO's on old fashioned, outdated CW of course. Try doing it in any other mode!!

Vic G0THX

Answer, about 8 micro Henrys to resonate 70pF on 7Mhz and 275pF on 3.5Mhz so 10Mhz would be about 30pF and since 10Mhz tunes with about 15pF there must be about 15pF stray capacity about, OK?

(reprinted from AIRTIME, Southdown Society, December 1998) Vic has now worked QRP with KP2AD (US virgin

The Uke Man!

With Christmas time over and no doubt an enjoyable time to relax and indulge in all the various events that go on at this time of year including amateur radio. I did make it to calling CQ on the air Christmas day but did not get any replies despite several attempts. I then had thoughts of having a listen on the station receiver (FRDX 400) which has not been used since G4DFE, Bill was in Australia, which was some 10 years ago. But by this time it was time for the Christmas Lunch, after lunch I tried again on my 2m handheld only to discover that the battery was flat. However Boxing day, with the battery fully charged I had another attempt from home and also on route to Hereford to visit my mother in her nursing home, but still no contacts. How things seem to have changed since the thirty years ago since I was first licensed

Back at the end of November I visited the Wolverhampton Radio club who were meeting at the Scout HQ in Sedgley and had a most enjoyable time. The purpose of the station will be given away by the call signs used, being GB6CIN and GB4CIN, Children in Need. In the end over £200 was raised. I was asked if I could help for the event way back in August at the Telford rally, but did not commit myself until November at the Remembrance service at the Civic Hall. I attended for most of the weekend and enjoyed operating the stations and made about 30 contacts on 2M. I was running about 25 Watts into a mag-mount on a biscuit tin on the roof of the scout HQ. In the evening I was invited to the club's Christmas meal at the Bulls Head, Bilston St, which was followed by 2 hours non stop entertainment from Tony M1BSU and myself on the Uke, Tony sings Folk Music along with his guitar. Everyone who attended said they enjoyed themselves, Tony and myself are now open for any bookings! On Jan 12th I am giving my first talk at the Wolverhampton Club on my 50 years in Amateur radio, so Gordon I am open to bookings for that as well!

73 to you all, Malcolm

PS I am looking for a location to house a 3 manual 5 rack chritie pipe organ, local to Dudley, any thoughts???

Rig Mods

Hello and thanks for reading

Rob M1ATV here..

I am currently starting to Update my website and add a PMR modifications and conversion details Page to it.. I am looking for input for This if anyone can help articals required would be

- 1) 9k6 mods to PMR and Commercial Ham Radios
- 2) Connection Details for TNC<> Radio Pinouts etc
- 3) Conversion and setup info for PMR<>Amateur use

in fact anything Radio Conversion that Can be made available on The AmberNet-UK website and also by Reqsrv at GB7DIP

if you can help with this then please send to
 email: mlatv@gb7dip.freemove.co.uk
 Packet: mlatv@gb7dip.#23.gbr.eu
 if an artical is on paper and you do not mind contributing to this list then you can also send via post to me, I will scan it in and make it available for download
 Looking forward to your Input

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60 YEARS ON AND StARS STILL SHINES

STARS the short title for and District Amateur Radio Society founded 1938 by the late Don Rock. G8PR and myself, with strong support from the late G60I. Stourbridge lies about 12 miles SW. of Birmingham and several amateurs were active in that area in the 20s and 30's.

I attended a dinner of the Wolverhampton A.R.S. in 1937 and was very impressed with the spirit and friendliness there. Why not a society at Stourbridge? Eventually in 1938. Don and I took positive steps to get things started and G60I was on hand to give advice to us youngsters. WW2 closed us down as both Don and I were in the C.W.R. and in uniform at the start of the war.

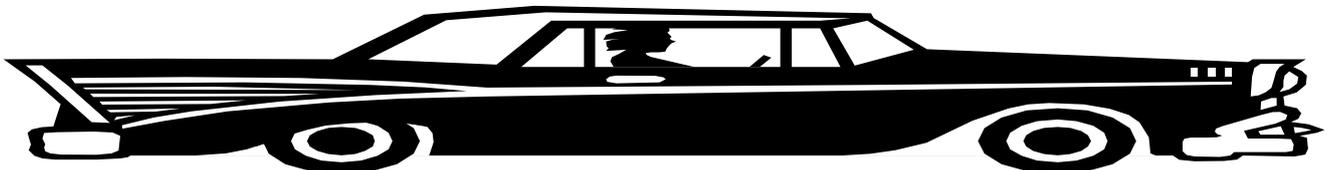
Early in 1946 we restarted and I found that our Bank Account held the princely sum of £5 so that the Society had never become defunct! Since that time the Society flourished and has maintained a membership of around 35 over the years.

Many successes were achieved in the contest field and HF NFD was won twice, 1961 and 62. G60I and myself served as RSGB Regional Representatives and John Clarricoats. G6CL and Arthur Milne. G2MI gave talks. Due to change of work location I left Stourbridge in 1975 but have always maintained membership (now a Life Member) and visited when I can.

During October. 1998. GB6OI (Oscar India) will be on air and myself. the sole remaining Founder will hope to attend the 60th Anniversary Dinner on the 30th October.

Alec, G8GF (0211).

(Reprinted from OTNews, Autumn 1998)



Picture Page!



Police Motorway Control Room, with plan of Motorway Network in background, camera monitors to the right and control computers in foreground.

“Low profile” Police Range Rover. Photos by Wayne G7LLT and his digital camera



Alec G8GF in his shack with:

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Alinco Handheld, Yaesu FT 757 GX, Kent twin paddle and Alinco 2M linear