Whats been going on then?

Whoops! Here we go again. Apologies to young **Tom Edwards.** Got his call wrong in the last issue. It is **2E1LHT** but he has already enrolled with **Frank RXO,** hoping to take the full RAE in December. Sorry Tom. Still haven't heard from young James Brown. Tom is QRV on 2 Metres and a wizard with computers and the Internet, has his own website www.amateurradio.cjb.net

James 2E1HMS is now armed with a 2 Metre Hand-Held, on loan from the club, so should soon be getting the hang of things. Still reluctant to operate the club rigs but think he will soon gain confidence after a few skeds with Tom

Also, in my spiel last month, I said that the EGM would be in October. Wrong again! Fortunately the notice for the meeting, published in the September issue, was correct. **Richard EWH** brought this error to my notice, no harm done, hopefully. Fourteen members turned up for the meeting (See minutes) and I did post a copy of "Starlite" to all members, who hadn't already collected one, on the Tuesday following the first meeting of the month. (Comforting to know that at least one member reads this stuff).

Don't think I have mentioned it before so welcome to **John Clarke** now **M1EJG.** John, retired architect after practising in Lower High Street, Stourbridge for 25 years, came along last year to enrol for the NRAE course. After quizzing him, I packed him off to see Frank RXO to take the full RAE John is a member of Old Swinford Hospital PTA having held the post of chairman until recently His youngest son attended Old Swinford Hospital up until this summer and is now at university. John has an IC 706 so obviously looking to the future and operating on HF VHF and UHF! Better get cracking on the old CW John.

After their recent adventures sailing off the SW coast of Ireland (see last months issue), **Stuart G7KKC** and **Chrissie** have decided to take a course in Sea Navigation, Should be a piece of cake for Chrissie, as a qualified helicopter pilot, but guess it can get a bit tricky when you can't see any further than the crest of the next wave and have to cope with tides and currents and no landmarks. Brave souls these sailors. Stuart tells me that Chrissie is just back from a trip to South Africa (Told you she was a busy lady).

Main meeting of the month was a demonstration of **SSTV** (Slow Scan TV) by **Wayne LLT.** Wayne and **James HEZ** were busy setting up the gear when I arrived at 7.00pm.and all seemed to be going well. However Murphy's law prevailed when Wayne connected up his rig and tried to contact **Tony G0SKG,** QTH Dudley, for a pre-arranged sked on 2 Metres. Seems Wayne had left the rig in his garage the previous night and it was suffering from ingress of H_2O. However there happened to be a Hot Plate from the catering dept. handy. The cover was removed from the rig and it was left "cooking" under this in the hope that it would dry out in time. Come 8.00pm there was a short delay whilst the scheduled EGM was speedily dispatched.

As with Richard's demo on Packet, we were once again to be treated to a "Big Screen" presentation thanks to the loan of a digital projector from one of Wayne's pals, **Drew G7DMO**. The rig was still giving problems so **Dr. Bob VPE** "volunteered" to pop off home to collect his "290". Meantime, Wayne introduced us to the subject of SSTV with on screen illustrations of the various modes and software used. He then booted up the SSTV programme and described the various components of the "Window" and how to import pictures and add text (callsign, CQ etc.) ready for transmission, which system to use from the several available, (in this case it was "Martin 1,") and how to recognise the different components of the signal making up the picture and colours.

Finally, the acid test. Wayne decided to give his rig one more try and Hey Presto! It worked. A quick call to Tony (F3E) and we were QRV. Pictures were sent and received

and he demonstrated how to synchronise the signals to "straighten" up the transmitted picture. He concluded the demo by taking a photo of those present and sending it to Tony. A truly fascinating demo and talk. Many thanks to you Wayne, and to **Tony SKG** for his co-operation.

Software and interface kits are available from Wayne. If you missed this talk, keep your ear to the ground 'cos think he may be asked to do it again in the near future. It was a real cracker!

That's it for now folks, off on hols next week so nothing from me next month BCNU73 de Gord.

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 20TH. SEPTEMBER. 1999 AT OLDSWINFORD HOSPITAL (THE SCHOOL)

ITEM. 1. OPEN MEETING. The President opened the meeting at 8.00.p.m.

ITEM. 2. THOSE PRESENT.
Gordon G0TZV, Tony, M1CZH, Eric G3IVQ, Malcolm G8BOP, Bob G4VPE, Jim G4WAO, Robert G3ORI, Wayne G7LLT, Richard M1DBC, James G7HEZ, Eric G7JWJ, Dennis G0HTJ, Alan G7AXW, John, M1EJG

Visitors , Drew G7DMO

ITEM. 3. APOLOGIES.
Peter G0TKT, Don G0ESR, Bill G3HMD, Richard G0EWH, Arthur G2DVI, Stuart G7KKC, Doug G4FYQ, John G3SNY and Alec G8GF.

ITEM 4. RATIFICATION OF RULE CHANGES
The President explained that this meeting had been convened
To ratify the committee's recommendations that: - (I)"THE SOCIETY CREATES A NEW OFFICER POST OF VICE PRESIDENT" Proposed by Bob G4VPE. Seconded by Richard M1DBC, Agreed unanimously

(II)

THE AMENDED RULE CHANGES TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEW POST BE ADOPTED.

Proposed by Tony M1CZH, Seconded by Dr. Alan G7AXW, agreed unanimously.

Item 5
This being the only business of the evening, the President closed the meeting at 8.10pm.

Roving

How the year has passed!! We are already in October but at this point I am returning to August bank holiday Sunday and Monday, when Glenys and myself were at the Shropshire steam fair for our second year at Onslow park. We were on the Shropshire Theatre Organ trust stand, along with another committee member and his companion. Although I had the handheld with me I had no success in having any contacts on 2M. I was informed later that Mike (M1CWM) was at the fair and was also from Dudley (M1CYS) and an SWL visited the stand so Amateur Radio was not really too far away. A good two days was had and we are looking forward to next year, all being well.

The following Saturday the 4th Gordon, James and myself were on air from OSH for the Helen Ley appeal, I had several local contacts but could not manage to be there on a Sunday because of two free tickets, to visit the Black Country Museum. Not being there for 20 years, Glenys and myself decided to take advantage of the offer, and see the additions since we were last there, Charles Nock (2E1AMT) was not on duty he had had a fall at the museum early in the week, and was off work. Perhaps you may recall Charles gave a most interesting talk to the

G6OI Memories

Dear Tony *(M1CZH)*

I am writing to thank you for the GB6OI QSL card which arrived this morning with its photo of Alec Higgins and the Old Swinford Hospital school.

I don't usually indulge in nostalgia but I confess that I did this morning. I remembered my mentors, John Timbrell and Fred Westwood, G2HDF and the clouts I used to get from Fred when my morse performance operating his station at Lye on 20 and 10 fell below the standard he required!

I took the first morse test at the GPO, Birmingham when I was 14 years after Fred had tutored me for about 3 months. I failed! Fred was not happy with me! He was certain that I should have passed. At his insistence my Mother agreed to let me go to the Home Office Radio and Accommodation Branch in London, for another go a few weeks later. Morse tests were then only conducted once each year in the provinces. So Fred took me to London early one Saturday morning. I did the test in a little cubical with a Radio Officer. This time I passed. Fred scolded me for wasting his time and train fare! I was about 14 and 6 months. I received an "Amateur Radio Certificate" about 3 weeks later and from then on I regularly operated Fred's G2HDF on CW on the DX bands in 1946 and 1947 working VK/ZL etc on 56Mhz in the sunspot maximum that year before Channel 1 TV took the frequency. When I was about 18 years old operating was interrupted by National Service in Korea and Hong Kong. I did some operating in Hong Long as VS6BJ but. unfortunately I was a bit busy with a war and didn't get organised until a couple of months before returning to the UK late in 1952.

I didn't do the RAE until 1953 and KFD was born about 6 months later (KFD was chosen to represent KingswinForD).

The Key that I used at G2HDF and G6OI (which was "rescued" from the turret of a Sherman tank which was being broken up) is sitting about a foot from me now and it has a little brass plaque inscribed with those callsigns and mine. My Bug key (which I was forbidden to use by Fred.for the first 2 years.he then relented) sits along side it. They now get used on 17M (though it has my home-made electronic keyer connected to it).

I owe Fred much for setting the standard for the hobby that it has been my pleasure to enjoy for the past 40 odd years. It is still as fascinating as when I first met it in the science block at G6OI. Fred taught me to learn a subject and apply my learning with craftsmanship and determination., as he did not only in the hobby but in everything that I do. He was my second father and I have much to thank him for.hard taskmaster as he was.

Thank you again Tony for remembering the QSL card.

Best wishes for the future of GB6OI and SARS. long may it continue to benefit those . who like me... will find the pleasure and happiness in a great hobby.. Amateur Radio.

73 CUAGN SN Derek G3KFD

Hotmail "Service Issue"

How bad was the Hotmail crash? According to Microsoft's letter to its users, it was simply a matter of "service issues" that "generated questions about security."

But we thought stronger words might be used, since Sm@rt Reseller writers, during the service's vulnerable period, had to resist the temptation to read Microsoft President Steve Ballmer's personal e-mail. Everyone, but everyone's, Hotmail mailbox was compromised.

The security problem has been fixed, but the question remains: How could such a thing happen? As Sm@rt Reseller has found after an investigation -- all too easily.

Some reports suggested that a hacker group named "Hackers Unite" uncovered the security hole.

However, the person cited most often for finding the hole is Michael Nobilio, a programmer at the Swedish Web design company PIPE. Nobilio saw his discovery as a mechanism for Hotmail users to easily access their accounts -- without considering that his discovery would also leave the door open for intruders. Nobilio then wrote a program, Hotmail Login ID Storage Program 1.1, to enable users to easily access their e-mail.

Nobilio, however, isn't a cracker. His program was slightly modified by others to exploit the hole. The Hotmail vulnerability was the equivalent of a hole in a wall big enough to drive the proverbial Mac truck through. The code needed to exploit the hole requires only five lines of Common Gateway Interface (CGI) HTML.

This skeleton "key" code looks like:
http://207.82.250.251/cgi-bin/start? curmbox=ACTIVE&js=no&login=username &passwd=eh

According to Network Solutions records, the system behind the IP address is, to no surprise, wya-pop.hotmail.com, an important Hotmail gateway system.

To go through this hole, you didn't even need Nobilio's program. All you needed to do was put the above code in a Web browser and replace username with someone's Hotmail user name.

That's it. No computer voodoo required, no hackerish expertise needed.

Once the hole was known, at least half a dozen sites implemented the code in simple Web pages. This enabled even novice Web surfers to use a browser to simply type in someone's name in a field to raid their mailbox.

So, what caused the Hotmail security hole? It has nothing to do with a fundamental flaw with Hotmail software, the operating system or the architecture. There's also no evidence that the security vulnerability was a "backdoor" left in the Hotmail program to enable programmers to sneak peeks at users' mail.

Search for safer e-mail

No, the problem exploited by Nobilio's script, was the result of sloppy CGI coding. By implicitly trusting information sent in the above Uniform Resource Locator (URL) data and format, and not requiring any further user password check, Hotmail's security door was left wide open.

Microsoft addressed the problem on Monday. By Monday evening, the hole had been closed.

Still, the vulnerability may have been known for several days before it was reported to Microsoft by a Swedish newspaper on Sunday morning.

Today, that's history. Still, given Hotmail's history of security holes, the ease by which this one could be exploited, and the scope of just what a huge hole it was, resellers and users cannot be blamed for looking for safer e-mail systems.

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Year 2000 - ever closer

New Zealand will be a canary in a coal mine for the year-2000 glitch.

At midnight on New Year's Eve in New Zealand, an extraordinary U.N.-backed emergency watch will kick off on the Internet to keep tabs on how the world is faring as it enters the year 2000.

Greenwich Mean Time will be 13 hours behind, the US East Coast 17 hours. That lag, the system's planners say, could help others deal with any year 2000-related failures that pop up in New Zealand, the first industrialised country to roll into the new millennium.

The real-time, comprehensive Web-based view of the so-called year 2000 glitch, and any havoc it may be wreaking on essential services anywhere, is the work of a World Bank-funded outfit known as the International year 2000 Cooperation Centre. Using a standardised reporting format, the centre plans to collect data from 170 or more national year 2000 coordinators. Its Web site, www.iy2kcc.org, will flash colour-coded reports on everything from energy and communications to financial and government services and air, land and sea transport.

Anyone with access to the Internet will be able to monitor, country-by-country, the status of the technology-challenging date change -- assuming the Internet itself does not go haywire. One goal is to prevent panic and rumour-mongering .

The year 2000 problem stems from an old programming trick of using two digits to represent years, like 99 for 1999. Unless fixed, computers may read 00 as 1900, not 2000. That could trip critical systems and boggle gizmos with embedded timing devices such as elevators, medical equipment and traffic lights.

The Washington-based centre's stated mission is to minimise disruption to the world economies and societies. One key approach has been to coax out as much disclosure of year 2000 readiness information as possible. "In the absence of information, markets will assume the worst," Bruce McConnell, the centre's director, said in an interview in a rented, fifth-floor office that could be considered ground zero for international year 2000 mission control.

"We don't know whether this is going to be a '1' on the Richter scale or a '7,' " he added. "What's particularly challenging about it is that whatever happens is likely to happen a lot of places at once."

The centre, which operates on a $1m (£620,000) budget and was set up under United Nations auspices in February, has been stitching together regional discussions to deal with cross-border issues, swap data and prepare contingency plans.

The emphasis is on national "self-reliance" in dealing with any disruptions, said McConnell, who is on loan from the White House Office of Management and Budget, where he served as chief of information policy and technology. "The year 2000 emergency, if there is one, will be widespread and simultaneous," he said in written testimony last month to a US Senate special panel on the year 2000 problem. "Normal bilateral and multilateral assistance programs may be highly stressed in this environment ."

One plan in the works is to set up "help desks", primarily on a regional basis. Australia and Japan, for instance, have identified electricity-generating experts who could talk others through any fixes if they prove necessary during the rollover.

New Zealanders seem to like the idea of being a kind of global early-warning station. They already gave the world one warning -- had anyone been watching -- when the failure to account for the 1996 leap year caused computers to shut down at their Comalco aluminium smelter. "Two hours later, an identical plant in Hobart, Australia, experienced the exact same failure," said Clare Pinder, director of New Zealand's year 2000 Readiness Commission. "This time, we're going to have the eyes of the world focused on us," she said in a telephone interview from Wellington.

As the canary in the year 2000 coal mine, New Zealand is working to head off the danger that its telecommunications circuits could be swamped by calls from those seeking word on how the date change went.

"We're all working together to make sure that we're not put at risk by being first," Pinder said. She said the International year 2000 centre, for instance, would reroute traffic from the New Zealand Web page (www.y2k.govt.nz) to sites that "mirror" it on servers in the United States and Europe.

But McConnell acknowledged that whatever early warnings it may give, New Zealand is probably not the best indicator of year 2000 trouble in the making.

"If there are problems in New Zealand, then there are probably going to be problems elsewhere," he said. "If there are no problems in New Zealand, that doesn't necessarily mean that of some of the less-prepared countries will not have problems."

No problems reported from the 9/9/99 bug, but issues might take time to show up.

New Zealand said Thursday the arrival of 9/9/99 -- a potential pre-cursor to the millennium bug -- had not caused computer problems, but glitches might take time to show up.

"A number of utilities and organisations took the opportunity of 9/9/99 to test aspects of their processes for managing Y2K, said Basil Logan, chairman of the Y2K Readiness Commission said Thursday.

New Zealand was the first industrialised country to experience the 9/9/99 date because of its proximity to the International Date Line.

The spread of nines could disrupt systems because some old computers are programmed to read "9999" as a command to shut down. The millennium bug also arises from old programmes using only two figures to denote the year, creating the danger of computer chaos when clocks tick from "99" to "00" at midnight on 31 December, 1999.

But Logan said so-called "four 9s day" had gone smoothly overnight and so far there had been no reports of incidents at major utilities. "However, the commission cautions that issues might take some time to show up," Logan said. The commission plans to issue another statement on 10 September.

Asian countries, including Japan, also got through the early hours of the day without problems, according to reports.

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club about the Black Country Museum about two years ago. Glenys spotted a RSGB sticker on one of the narrow taking passengers into the tunnel, even though we had booked to go through it was not on the same narrow boat so I waited until our trip was over, before getting into converstion with the driver of the boat the stickers were on. It was Duncan (G7WED), his father licensed (G8WSF) from Pensnett it's a small world, Amateur Radio not being too far away. I still remember before the museum was constructed when John Etheridge (G4DKP [G8ELO]) myself and a party of students made the trip through the tunnel to Park Head it was a complete sun shine, but was raining when we came out. I had the car parked at my aunts so I got a mac whereas John had no mac and so got soaked.

To get back to date most interesting meeting to do with Computers, SSTV by Wayne on the Monday the 20th of September as I get more familiar with computers I will put this on computer *("Instead on me" - the Typist (Tom))*. On Saturday the 25th of September I went to Leicester radio rally at Castle Donnington, with Len (G4HCZ) unlike last year Glenys was not with me. The exhibition hall is an ideal venue for the Leicester arriving back home after about 7pm thus ending a great day out apart from the vintage communications fair at the at the NEC on Sunday. That's all the radio rallies this side of the Millennium.

For speedway enthusiasts a reunion for Cradley Heath supporters will take place at the Crystal Leisure centre on the 26th of November for details call Andrew on 01384 350638.

73 Malcom G8BOP

Wednesday evening 5 wpm Morse Classes
at Old Swinford from 8:30 to 9:00
for the new M5 callsigns