

Don't panic, Don't panic,

I'm still here, just about. Had a bit of a shock whilst trying to change the panel light on the cooker last Thursday (240V for about 10 sec before I could let go of the perishing thing) Sure is gripping stuff! ... Hi. Last time that happened to me was when I was about 12 years old. Have worked on "Live" stuff many times in the past but that was when I *knew* it was "Live". This time had switched the power on and off several times ... must have been jetlag.

Any road up, you all seem to have been managing very well during my absence. James said the committee meeting went very smoothly, so no need for me to attend any more of those ...hi.

Malcolm's talk evidently went down OK and he did manage to keep it down to one hour according to James. Did he video it? Tony said that JOTA was a great success after a hiccup with the 2 Metre aerial (Eric JWJ?). His first QSO on HF was with a JOTA station in South America and he said that the new G5RV was doing FB. Also heard that Wayne was working SSTV. Now that's a turn up for the book! Seems that Tony had a QSO with a G4 on holiday in Tenerife who wanted to know where I was staying but doubt if we would have met up 'cos we were in the north and he was in Playa Las Americas which is in the south. Would have been nice but don't think I would have been very popular with Maria. I did a bit of earwiggling with my little RX and heard an EA8 named Andy but he only gave his QTH as Tenerife. Sounded as though he was very near with the strength of his signal. Must try and take a QRP rig there next time. Its most frustrating being an SWL. Being an insomniac I guess I could get away with a bit of operating when Maria is in the land of Nod.

Would be nice to have a holiday with no mishaps though. The weather was fine, the hottest we've had in Tenerife in the many years we've been going there. The Hotel which we've stayed at on several previous occasions has just been refurbished after

being taken over by a new company and the name had been changed from Los Dogos (The Dogs) to Playa Canaria, (Must have realised what "Gone to the dogs" infers" hi), and it had disappeared from the holiday brochures; Discovered eventually that the only organisation one could book through was SAGA. However, they certainly look after their clients. No registering at reception, luggage delivered to your room, wine included with meals, real VIP treatment. We arrived at about 9.00pm and, after dining, Maria suggested a walk around the gardens. We had gone about 50 yards when Maria tripped and fell heavily, bruising her ribs. And this was before we had had a drink! She was on painkillers for the remainder of the holiday but still fairly mobile. On the Friday of the second week I caught a streaming cold which only started to clear up the day we were due to return home. But, to cap it all, on our last full day, there was a tropical storm and the balcony of our room was flooded. Whilst I was in the shower. Maria went out on to the balcony to rescue my pipe and baccy, slipped on the tiles and this time injured her back! The irony of it all was that she had just told the staf about folk slipping on the ramp up to the main entrance and they had put towels down to make it safer. She's still taking the pills!

What really got my goat, though, was when we arrived at the airport for the return trip. Five old biddies who'd been trotting around for two weeks like two year olds suddenly became invalids, wheelchair bound, and were wheeled up to the front of the queue to grab the best seats on the plane whilst poor old Maria, who could neither sit nor stand in comfort, had to settle for a cramped economy seat and a most uncomfortable 4 hour flight back to Luton. I reckon that the better seats should be reserved for folk who either have a doctor's note or carry an orange card.

Roving

Since my last report I have not been involved with that much with radio, apart from moving it around the house and even taking some stuff to the tip. I have been clearing equipment out of the loft in preparation for a long awaited rewire of the house. This has been put on hold for twelve years since I was last unemployed. I have also concreated the supports for my mast at home. So I am getting there, its all about being in the right frame of mind.

At the end of September our son took us for a day out, in his new car which previously belonged to John G7PVV. We managed to combine radio, cinema and computers with a visit to Eddie G4PQX in Drotwich. After twelve years of been in contact with him I discovered that he had a shared interest in cinema organs. Before hand we visited Webbs at the foot of the Drotwich transmitter which bought back several memories of visits there. Eddie is also into Packet and SSTV but my main interest was the visit to see his organ. Unfortunately Eddie can no longer play it because of his arthritis and confined to a wheelchair. I did my party piece on it, wishing I had the room to have it, as it is currently for sale. Eddie had to hire a folk lift truck to get it into his house. On the 21st of May it's the next three counties rally which Eddie organises. Also during the visit and during the JOTA weekend I found out a bit more about computers. Again this year it was held at the Scout HQ at Alderman Tye centre, in South Road. It was the first time in about twenty years that I had ventured back into the building. During the weekend I was in conversation with Peter Ashford a SWL, who's brother Alan was a former StARS member.

The main event of October was the StARS meeting with my first talk to the society, it seems like yesterday that I attended the first meeting in the Science Labs at King Edwards. Perhaps in a future meeting I could

show slides and cine film which I took in the 50's and 60's. There was even more memories when I attended the Vintage Communications Fair at the NEC. It was packed within ten minutes of opening. There is always a contingent of radio amateurs at these events among the far away visitors. Although I did not purchase anything Len and myself both enjoyed our day out.

73 Malcolm. G8BOP

A few items For Sales, the items will be brought to the Surplus Sale next month as well together with other items.

1. Sinclair DM235 Digital Multimeter - £10
2. Advance J1 Signal Generator, 15Hz-50kHz - £5
3. Trio 2200 2M FM Portable, 1&4W - £20
4. Micowave Modules MMT 432/144 10W Transverter - £60
5. SMC Plarphaser II, 2M - £10

Richard G0EWH

Stuart Newsham

[newsham@envillevillage.freemove.co.uk]

Tom Edwards

[tomedwards@iname.com]

Richard Newton [rjnewton@clara.net]

Phil Johnson

[phil@bearmore.freemove.co.uk]

Gordon Bryant

[G.Bryant@btinternet.com]

Richard Carroll

[Carrolls@sheraton30.freemove.co.uk]

James French [french2@iname.com]

Wayne Mcroft

[wayne@stars60.swinternet.co.uk]

think that is about all the members and friends with email, let me know if there is anyone else out there..

from the archives

An early experimenter in wireless, in fact, the first recorded transmitter in the Midlands, was Mr. H. Littley, of West Bromwich. Howard Littley, sometimes referred to in print as Rudee Littley due to the company name, was a real old timer. Experimental receiving and transmitting commenced in 1909. In those days only a few coastal stations and Eiffel Tower could be heard. Before transmitting, one had to make arrangements for someone to listen out. The receiver tuned circuits were a replica of the transmitter as an aid to tuning.

Early experiments were connected with 'spark transmitters' and with a very simple coheror receiver it was possible to ring a buzzer at the opposite side of the room. Improvements to the system soon extended the range to several hundred feet. This was in 1908 when Howard was about 16 years of age.

The first actual wireless transmission took place on April 19, 1910, when Howard transmitted Morse signals from his home in Lodge road, West Bromwich, to the family iron foundry at Swan Village. At the premises of Rudge Littley & Co., Phoenix Works, Swan Village, was stationed Mr. H. Clark, a young man trained by Howard to operate the receiver. I have received your message loud and clear, heartiest congratulations on the result of your experiments" he reported to Howard and a reporter from the 'Chronicle' for West Bromwich and Oldbury.

A report in 1912 shows a picture of Howard's station: also pictures of his steam-driven generator, 76ft. high mast, and 520 volt lead acid battery. Details were also given of the aerial system, one end supported by a 76ft. high guyed steel tower. The top 32 feet of this mast was formed by a steel tube which could be lowered down through the mast. The mast itself was about 2ft. square and had a 4ft. square by 3ft. 6in. deep concrete foundation. It was from the top of this lattice construction, 40ft. above ground level, that Howard watched a Zeppelin bombing parts of the Black Country in the 1914-18 war.

A short time after this war commenced all transmitting and receiving equipment was confiscated. At one stage it was thought the mast

would have to be demolished. An offer of co-operation in wireless matters was rejected.

In 1920, and after a lot of delay, new transmitting licences were issued. Howard was now known as 2NV, but unfortunately there is no record of the pre-1914 call sign. In the post-war era much use was made of war surplus equipment, also assistance was given in the construction of a wireless receiver to obtain accurate time signals from Eiffel Tower.

In 1938 the 'Express and Star' ran a series under the heading of 'Their Hobbies'. On Friday, March 4th, it was the turn of 2NV in an article entitled "Mr. Littleys house is truly Radiohm". Howard by this time had left Lodge Road, West Bromwich, and was living at Radiohm, Bridgnorth Road, Stourton. The wireless station had now been rebuilt and a second 76ft. steel mast constructed.

At this new house, AC. mains were available for power supplies, but the old 520 volt battery was retained for emergency supplies— stored in a bathroom, of all places!

Found by Tony in the archives.

FOR SALE

Intel Pentium P133, 850Mb Hard Drive, 16Mb RAM, 2Mb Diamond Video card, Sound Card, 8 speed CD ROM, Samsung 14" monitor, Keyboard, mouse, Windows 95, plus software, desktop case.

£225, further details from James

ARCHIVES. Tony is trying to locate a Yearbook compiled by Alec G8GF and covering the history of the club from 1938 up to in 1978. . Anyone know where it is?

Correspondents

Letter from John Hogg GW2OG

Dear Gordon,

On behalf of Kitty and myself, I send sincere thanks to the Society for the excellent congratulation card which you sent on the occasion of our recent sixtieth wedding anniversary. To the instigator, Alec G8GF and all the signatories of the card, together with all involved with the design and preparation, once again, many thanks for a very pleasant surprise.

Inevitably, there are a few names on the card from my hey days with S.T.A.R.S but I send my most sincere greeting and 73,s to all those with the mysterious new Callsigns and hope that they get as many years of pleasure from the hobby as I have already had. I am still keen as ever, with my main interest in CW on 80 and 40 Metres but very much restricted in the matter of aerials due to a small garden. However, a bit of wire on the fence just about keeps me in touch with the hobby.

Historically, have just been checking on my old records and note that, as BRS1292 and 2 BJC, I sent regular reports to G6OI regarding the Sunday morning "nets" on 160 Metre 'fone – that was in 1933-1934!

Am enclosing cheque for £20.00 - with compliments- to help the funds.

Very kindest regards,

73 John Hogg GW2OG

A few editions back of StARLITE, Gordon included an extract from a letter from me relating to the no CW and easier exam for obtaining a licence. In a recent edition of OT News (the quarterly journal of the Radio Amateurs Old Timers association) there was an article from a member on this very subject. I share his view that the changes in licensing conditions are unlikely to improve things – indeed there may emerge a deviser element. With the rapid changes in our communications environment our hobby faces great competition and I think our numbers are bound to decrease we must keep our hobby interesting in the light of changes and changing circumstances. I recall the great "boom" in the late 1940s when ex service radio ops were granted licences mainly based on their professional service. Numbers later fell away but we survived and kept abreast with our rapidly changing environment.

I have been a staunch supporter of the RSGB for 54 years and hope that they will stimulate and help to keep our hobby interesting in the sure knowledge that the membership is likely to decline. I am old but always prepared to accept change but am very sceptical about change for change sake.

It seems to me that the success of local clubs and societies is paramount as this is the medium for getting together to learn and discuss and above all enjoyment.

Alec G8GF.

Old Swinford Hospital 30th.ARC Anniversary Dinner.

Twenty-six turned out including guests Dave, and his good lady Alison, and the Headmaster Chris Potter. Dave sure did us proud, I thought. Made a superb job of the menu card and added an extra course to boot! Hon Pres. Eric, JWJ provided the dinner wine and Dave provided a few bottles of bubbly to start off with. Eric was in charge of proceedings for the evening and a fine job he did too. The Headmaster and Dave carved the joints of lamb and then we set to a really sumptuous meal.

Seem to remember from last year that some folk turned their noses up at the suggestion of bread and butter pudding for a sweet but I noticed all the plates were clean at the end of the meal!

Also there were a few moans about the dinner wine last year but I spotted at least one member carting away a two of unfinished bottles ... mebbe it tastes better when it is included in the price of the meal? (It was the same stuff as last year).

During coffee the headmaster entertained us with a few very amusing anecdotes about the lads at the school. It seems that he is a firm believer in "bribery" as a means of "encouraging" the boys to concentrate on their studies and produce good work. It works like this. A boy writes a good essay, for example, which merits recognition. He is invited to the Head's study. The Headmaster decides if the work is good enough and if so awards the lad a card. On earning four cards the lad is given £10.00 and his parents are obliged to match that amount. (Nice little earner if one is prepared to put in a little extra effort). And it seems it is very effective. On one such occasion a young lad in his first year was sent to see the Headmaster and handed in his essay and another paper on which was written.

"Yesterday, happiness happiness happiness.
Today, doubt doubt doubt.
Tomorrow, grief grief grief"

The Head thanked him for his work and as

the lad he was about to leave, having difficulty with doorcatch, added "By the way I like your poetry". The boy hesitated, turned around and said "Sorry sir, that isn't poetry, it's my spelling corrections!"

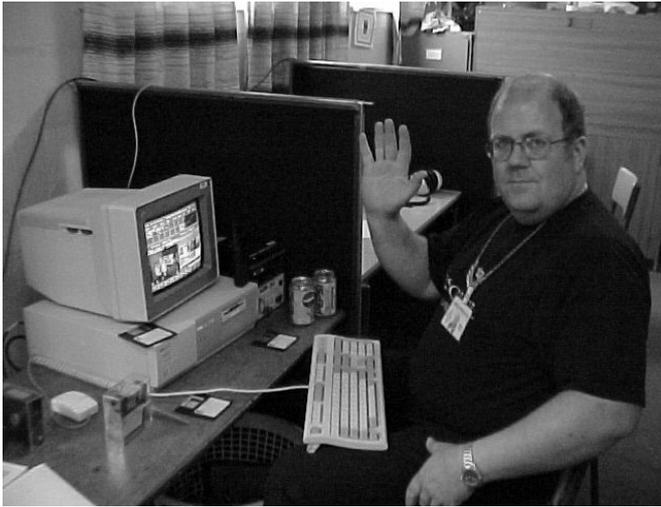
The headmaster then presented NREA certificates to James (Now 2E1HMS) and Tom (now 2E1HLT). Bit late in the day, I guess, but it was one way of persuading them to come along and was hoping to send a press release to the local rag. James HMS was the last to arrive and he boards at the school! In fact, everyone was waiting for him. Dave, finally, had to go and fetch him. Seems he was still doing his Prep. A very enjoyable evening.

Sorry that Richard DBC couldn't make it due to Chris being in hospital, hope she's on the mend by now. Give her our regards Richard.

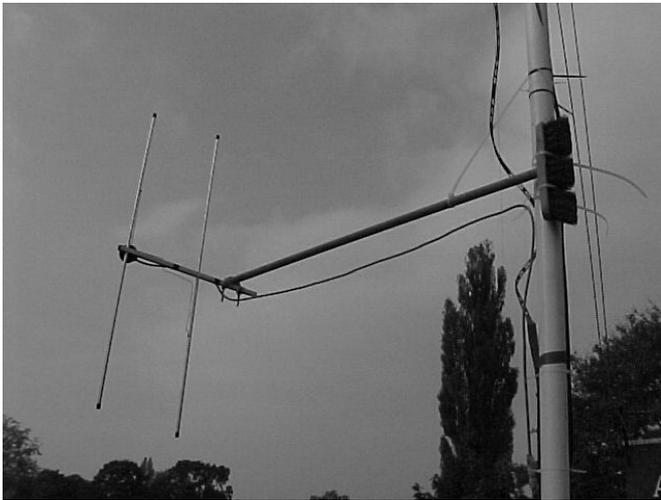
73 Gord.



many visitors to JOTA with Jim as op



Wayne in control of SSTV



Broomstick 2m HB9

Foreign Membership

Letter
08th.October. 1999.

Dear Sir.

I had the pleasure to read about your Club in the 2000 edition of RSGB Yearbook.

I have been an Italian active SWL and registered CB operator for the past 25 years and more, as I wish to have contacts with foreign OM, to have the possibility to get news from different operative situations.

I ask you to let me kindly know if there is the possibility for me to become a foreign associate member of your Club, in the spirit of UE, and if the answer will be positive, as I **really** hope, please let me have the application form and any other information that may be of interest to me.

Looking forward to hearing from you in the coming future, I thank you in advance for your kindness

Yours sincerely.

Signed
Giorgio Romanin.

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