

Rally Visting

Since My last report seven members and myself of the West Midlands Amateur Computer Club had a most interesting visit to Computeach in Upper Gornal, the company was founded in 1966 in Birmingham and is involved in teaching students programming, they have students in different parts of the world, it is an international company.

With our wonderful summer weather which I thought at one stage had improved, I have been spending more time in the shack & computer room. I still have one or two problems which I get solved from time to time. With some help from a neighbour I have got a MGI suite on the computer. Again it is linked up with the scanner like it was originally. I am in the process of making another computer with a few items I purchased from the RGSB Rally at Bletchley which Len & myself were at on sat 7th April. Going there by train, I nearly did not go on arriving at Tipton station we were informed of a break down with a goods train between the NEC & Coventry. However there were coaches laid on to take us to Coventry and we were at the rally at about 10-30. On the morning part it was packed and difficult to see too much but it cleared after lunch. I found what I was looking for. On arrival the first person I came into contact with was Richard G0EWH & Stuart G0TBI. Len and Myself left at 3pm to return on the 3:40 train arriving back home at 6pm. It was a good day out and may be repeated on Sat 21st at the London Rally.

While drafting out the start of this report I was on public transport bus on route to Birmingham going along the Hagley Rd. What is the callsign of the guy who lives at no 23 that is where there is a 3 ele beam on the flat roof of a three storey building?

I thoroughly enjoyed the talk on fast scan tv. It was another part of our hobby I had plans to have a go at, until I got side tracked into other interests, I still have receiving equip-

ment, atv converter ready to bring into use, again perhaps one day I may brush off the cobwebs and get it working.

Remaining with atv I noticed in the April Rad Com that Arthur Bevington G5KS from Oldbury became a silent key 15th Feb. Arthur was very much into atv and used to have regular contacts with one of our former members Andrew G8MKK. I also noticed on the same page that L.Mcguire G4HXI became a silent key 2nd Feb. Mac as he was known from Woodgate Valley. He was a member of the RAIBC. Mac had not been in good health for a number of year. Before I became involved with other interests I used to have one or two contacts with him, I always was kept informed about him at the RAIBC stand at the radio rallies. I recall the work that he did along with the RAEN in the 70s during the Ambulance strike in keeping radio communication going through the Radio Amateur Repeater Network.

Finally with the foot & mouth restrictions still in force it appears that several outdoor rallies will be cancelled so it is best to phone first the rally organisers before setting out. Info can be found in Rad.Com. that is one of the reasons why Len & Myself decided to visit two of the rallies I have just mentioned and in any case the weather does not effect them,

see you all on the 12th May looking forward to the trip. Best 73s Roving Reporter Malcolm G8BOP

STOP PRESS

I was looking for A cpu 233 mmx processor to go with the motherboard I had at Bletchley also 2 -32m 72pin EDO sims at the right price for the other computer. I am making up, there may be something at the auction on Tues but the more I have looking out for some the better,

As mentioned regarding the London Rally Len and Myself were there on Sat even though it involved being up at 5-30am to travel on the 7am train from Tipton to Coventry to meet the 8am Silver link train to Euston. Then by underground to Wood Green & bus to Alexandra Palace arriving there at 11-11. As with Bletchley it was packed at first but by the time we were ready to leave at around 2-30 to leave on the 15-49 one could move around with ease. We could have stayed longer but because of local trains going hourly it would have been 21-30 before arriving home. This would have made it a very long day we were both tired as it was it was a good day out, even though neither of us spent too much. I find the prices much more in London than what they are at our local rallies. There were one or two new ideas so it wasn't wasted. If time had allowed I would have gone on the tour of the tv studios which is a museum. Now it is a relay station & for anyone who as never been to ally pally can see the reason why it was chosen to send out the first tv programmes, it is on a high on a hill over looking London & a good take off on vhf & uhf in all directions.

There was another interest there in the great hall which was locked up but I could see it through the glass it is a Willis organ which has been in there since 1875. The hall itself can hold 12,000 people. I have more info to bring along to the club.

Best 73s Malcolm G8BOP

Disgusted

From "Disgusted", Stourbridge

Dear Editor,

I have to write to express my disgust at the suggestion in "Starlite" that I should call a certain number from my Cellnet mobile. I am sorry to say that I could not resist such a recommendation from a normally respectable journal, and was quite horrified at the material which came to my ears as a result. This was about the very last thing I wanted to hear, and to compound my disgust, I realised that it had cost me a whole 10p for the experience. I am so appalled that I am thinking of binning my Cellnet phone and replacing it with one on another network, which hopefully will not lower itself to peddling such offensive matter.

Yours in shock etc.....

"Disgusted",
Stourbridge

FOR SALE
Intel Pentium II Celeron
333MHZ PC
Contact James G7HEZ
for further details

as requested!

As earlier reported Eric G7JWJ is selling his Kenwood 430S with FM board. the asking price being 350. 00 to 400. 00. The club will consider purchasing after Hon. Sec. has checked the present value and Bob G4VPE has checked if a " bespoke " chip used in this rig.

Confirmation still awaited from Bursar for use by club of adjacent room, this is being progressed by Eric.

Erection of HF beam scheduled for early July. The beam is to be inspected and serviced on 15th. May and the siting and fixing details will be inspected on the same evening by club members.

Trophies not yet awarded by the retiring President will not be awarded this year and the remainder of the year used in defining more accurately what each trophy is to be awarded for.

National Field Day has been cancelled due to the foot and mouth epidemic but it was agreed that the club should enter should that decision be reversed.

In accordance with AGM directive James French was elected to Committee as Editor of " Starlight ".

The store room cupboard is to be cleaned out on club night 15th. May. Any items of value will be advertised in " Starlight ". The military 105 receiver is thought to be of collectors value and a price is at present being obtained.

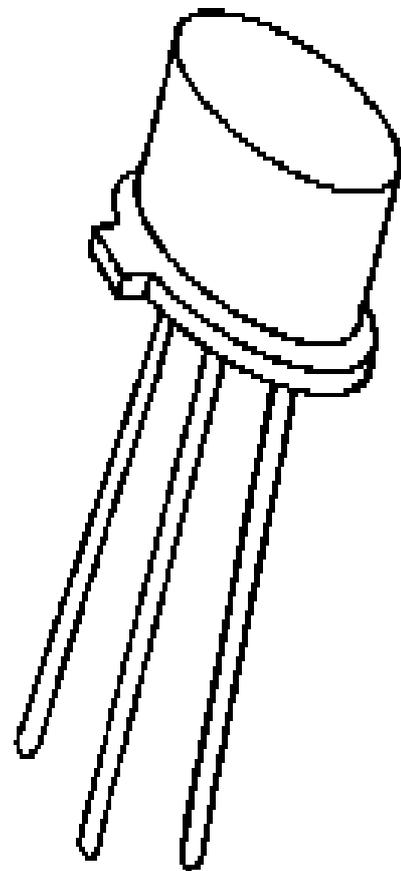
Date for clearout of items stored in Gordons' G0TZV garage fixed for Monday 4th. June. New Presidents Dinner will be on June 18th. Final details to follow.

Dinner on arrival of new Headmaster, 26th. October suggested date. Details to follow.

Christmas dinner, venue Old Swinford School. date and price to be confirmed.

Advertising in Stourbridge Library has proved impracticable and WayneG7LLT will attempt to obtain local newspaper coverage. Richard M1DBC will be placing posters around the School for the Novice Course and the club in general.

The President thanked Gordon G0TZV on behalf of himself and the committee for his work in organising the Novice Course and his past services to the club.



The Y service part II

In my story the Y service in April Starlite my footnote indicated that I would be visiting Bletchley Park on 14th April and so, accompanied by Daisy I did. Some of you will be going there on 12th May. I shall confine my resume to impressions and experiences of the day

On arrival we were set down in front of the MANSION a building of many "architectures" as you will see. The feature of the park I will remember also for its fine interior including the Ballroom. (with the floor now covered in carpet) On entry Daisy spotted a group of officials with appropriate badges. We introduced ourselves and showed my trust member's card mentioning that I had worked there in Air Intelligence 1944/5. Things then changed our anticipated plans for our 4 hour stay. We were in turn introduced to Peter Merrimen who was one of the originators of the Park Museum and Trust and the rebuilding of Colossus. Peter whisked us off for a coffee and wanted to know all about the 'Y service' and made a tape recording for archive purposes and that I would be included in the roll of honour. A feeling of VIP crept in. However during our subsequent chat I found that Peter was ex Navy Signals and also worked in the foreign office at Embassies around the world. The best was to come. Pete took us to see STATION X which is not available to the public. The BBC documentary gave the impression that Bletchley Park was known by that name. Well, before the code breakers maybe, because it was the X or 10th Radio Station, but was never used because of attracting enemy interest in the activities of the Park. The station is situated in a small room on the 3rd floor of the Mansion and is very reminiscent of a Ham Shack. The TX is a 40 Watt (CW) with 807 final fed to an aerial (not visible) by 600 ohm open wire. The accompanying RX was probably navy but there were other RX's, these included, I think, an AR77 and a Halcrofters Sky Champion. (was the latter the one

I sold to the Ministry in 1940?) The station was kept in working order by dummy load checks. Peter was enthusiastic about the station and sent a few bars of good CW on the side tone. Time has passed quickly and we left Peter to join a 10 pm tour where our guide was sprightly Jean Valentine who was at Bletchley Park in 1943. These guided tours leave the Mansion half hourly and you may meet Peter or Jean on yours. After our tour it was time for a late lunch and a walk to the lake. The huts are still there but I can not recall which number I was in – it is a long time ago! As a trust member I hope to receive a certificate granting freedom to the Park.

I intend to write to Peter and will, if the date is early enough, mention your visit on May 12th. Have a great day and I hope to see a report on Starlite

73 Alec G8GF

Travelling under the guise of 'Captain Ridley's Shooting Party', a small team of scholars-turned-codebreakers arrived at Bletchley Park in the summer of 1939. Their mission: to crack the Nazi Enigma cypher. The odds against them were a staggering 150,000,000,000,000,000,000 to 1. Their success in breaking this seemingly 'unbreakable' code was one of the greatest intellectual achievements of the twentieth century.

And in Colossus, they gave us the world's first computer, built to crack the Lorenz cypher used by Hitler and his generals. The work of Bletchley Park's pioneers secretly affected the fate of nations during the course of the war and helped shorten it by at least two years. Since then, millions of people have been influenced by what happened on and beyond this site.

It is estimated that over 10,000 people worked here at the height of the Park's wartime activity. Working conditions were cramped and spartan, and the work itself often arduous. But for many recruits, it was the time of their lives.

By March 1946 they were all gone, removing every scrap of evidence of their codebreaking exploits as they left. Their efforts in breaking those 'unbreakable' codes in the utmost secrecy caused Winston Churchill to coin the phrase "the geese that laid the golden eggs and never cackled". It would be decades before Bletchley Park would start to reveal its secrets

By 1991, the Park was deserted, its buildings facing demolition. The Bletchley Park Trust was formed with the aim of preserving the site for posterity. So began a long and arduous campaign. The Trust fought off hostile bids from property speculators and waded through a mountain of Government red tape to clinch a deal that saved Bletchley Park for the nation.

The few remaining telcos left in the local loop unbundling process may unite against BT in their effort to provide services

Energis is considering forming a consortium with the remaining unbundling players to share costs, after talks between Energis and BT broke down at the weekend with Energis calling the unbundling process now partially "dead".

Creation of such a consortium would reflect moves in the mobile operator market where licencees are considering sharing the price of rolling out third generation networks.

Energis director of regulatory affairs, Carl Gibson, said he was unhappy with BT's attitude at the talks -- mandated by regulator Oftel -- designed to increase competition in the broadband market. "As with many discussions with BT we argued about what we were there to discuss," he said. "BT didn't believe

that they had to offer an-end-to-end wholesale product." With wholesale prices three times higher than Gibson believes they need to be, the telco has taken its dispute back to Oftel. "It is terribly draining to have to fight BT at every turn and the more Oftel dithers the less appealing the process will be."

Gibson said that with a price tag of £150,000 per operator just to get into exchanges, unbundling is far too expensive and needs to be supplemented with a wholesale product. "With only four or five operators left, we are not going to be able to afford to get into every exchange," he said. Another telco, Redstone, has got around the cost of getting equipment into BT's exchanges by locating outside but this is not a viable option for most, according to Gibson. "It is very tempting but unless you are right next door you are talking about using another loop. The larger the link the more the service is diminished, so it is in our interests to get inside."

The [history](#) of unbundling has been a fraught one. It was originally seen as a way of ending BT's stranglehold of local phone lines and allowing other operators to offer cheap broadband services.

Now it is a shadow of its former self with only a handful of the original players still [interested](#) in the process. Energis has cut back its investment following months of frustrating negotiations with BT and now its attempts to thrash out a wholesale product has failed.

Meanwhile Gibson is sceptical the government has any chance of achieving its ambitious broadband goals and is sick of hearing about BT hitting its targets. "Every time I pick up a newspaper I see BT rolling out the same old line about hitting its targets but not one other operator is in its exchanges and not one customer has seen a service."

