

Soon be Christmas

Since the last report most of my attention has been diverted towards the computer, which developed a fault after the last report was dispatched. I was unable to get into Windows at all, this lasted nearly a week until with help from members of the computer club windows 98 was taken off & all the programmes & just win 98 reinstalled. I tried everything but without success even taking it in turns through out the night when I had the defrag. Running to see if any info came on the screen which I could act on. It ran for 20hrs & still did not work, That's when computers really get to you.

While on the subject of computers along with a neighbour, on Monday 17th Sept I had a most interesting visit to the R.A.C HQ .at Bescot. The amount of computers they have is unbelievable, its a 24 hr operation 7days a week, next year will be improved with global tracking & thus shorten the time on getting to accidents, after seeing how the system works one cant afford not to be a member of a motoring organisation tried to arrange either a visit for the club or even a talk but they don't do anything like that now. Experts are on hand to diagnose any problem while the patrol man is on route to the break down. It is already known to some of the members that Malcolm Sparrow became a silent key on Fri.14th Sept after a long illness. He was 68. I first came into contact with Malcolm who was then G6KQJ that was over 30yrs ago. He was a co-director in the family steel business of Robert Sparrow & Son steel stock holders Wombourne until a take over by GKN. It was Malcolm's long interest in amateur radio & amateur TV. At first that he will be remembered for. He enjoyed constructing his own equipment & having the satisfaction of it working which was all part of the hobby in those days. He was on the committee of the British Amateur TV Society. When Windmill Wireless was formed with a group of amateurs form the Gornal area in the early 1970s,

including myself, Malcolm was on the committee. It was also around this time that QM 70 was started who manufactured electrical products for both amateur & commercial markets. Malcolm was a co director along with Dave G8EPR, Mervin G8EPC & former STARS President Brian G3ZUL. Malcolm was also a founder member of the Sedgley & Wombourne Rotary Club & was still on the committee. With amateur radio had regular contacts with other Rotarians over the air. He was also Treasurer of the West Midlands Amateur Computer Club up till the time of His death along with His wife Jill. He was a popular figure and not only with St. Benedicts Church Wombourne, but also with life in the village & fund raising through Rotary. The funeral service was at St Benedicts on Mon 24th, the church was packed by all the members of the societies & clubs. I have mentioned if I have missed any out I must apologise, I came into contact after the service with several amateurs who I have not seen for some time, & some had travelled a distance Cardiff, Lancaster etc such was his popularity. To sum up A Big Man With a Great Heart, our condolences are extended to His wife Jill & family 73 MJP G8BOP.

On the sat before the funeral along with Len G4HCZ I was at my final radio rally for this year it was The Leicester one at Castle Donnington. It was a full day looking at all the many bargains which I purchased a few, & meeting people. On Sun again I was at the vintage communications fair at the N.E.C. Not to much to be purchased there to interest me. It rounded off a week end of Radio, at the Leicester Rally Dave GOHMP has been nominated for chairman of the R.I.A.I.B. Finally the MARS rally 18th Nov & the Worcester Rally on 8th Dec at Perdiswell Leisure Centre.

Best 73s Roving Reporter Malcolm G8BOP

yet another meeting!

Report of committee meeting held on 10th September 10th 2001.

Having now obtained the use of the room adjacent to the "shack" on a permanent basis, tea / coffee making facilities together with biscuits are now available at no charge to members (and guests) at Monday evening club meetings.

Wayne confirmed that the Presidents Dinner which has been combined with the New Headmasters Dinner will be held at Old Swinford Hospital on Friday 2nd November. Full details will appear in Starlight and contacts for tickets given. It is hoped that as many as possible members, wives and guests will attend to make a successful evening. It was agreed that the "ex pats " from Zimbabwe (reported in previous minutes) should be invited to this dinner although Tony M1CZH did point out that the earlier report that they were radio hams was incorrect.

Investigations are still proceeding to ascertain a realistic valuation for the R107 military transceiver and anyone with knowledge on the subject would be welcomed if contacting a committee member. Enquires will proceed via the internet_. The checks in connection with the purchase of a new rig are still underway and it is anticipated that a report and recommendation will be submitted by Bob G4VPE shortly.

It was noted that although STARS had forwarded their program for the year to RSGB news, no reports of events were being broadcast. Hon. Sec stated that he would follow this up.

Press coverage for the Society is still being pursued by Wayne who is at present awaiting a reply from the Stourbridge News in connection with an article that he is to write for them. Hon. Sec reported that his discussion with RSGB revealed that their records were not

up to date and that they were not aware of STARS change of secretary (although they had been informed at the date of changeover). The back numbers of Radcom from April which had not been received were forwarded to new Hon. Sec and are now available in the shack.

A small setback in the updating of the chain of office occurred when two of the companies approached to provide a quotation stated that they could not carry out the work. Wayne confirmed that he has other contacts to approach and John G8UAE also indicated that he could assist if required. No problems are anticipated.

The treasurer reported that funds at the bank stood at 1250. 00 in credit, with four unpaid members, one who it is anticipated will make payment shortly and the other three he feels have now left the society. This will then give a paid up membership of 30.

Richard M1DBC produced QSL cards received from the last Guides Jamboree on the air but confirmed that he did not yet have details of the date for the next Jamboree.

The meeting was informed that Bill Webb G3HMD is now half way through a course of chemotherapy, all present wished him a speedy recovery and asked that Wayne should send him the clubs best wishes in a " Get well soon " card.

The internet gateway has now closed down due to the provider not being prepared to continue the service. Word on the street is that the service may be reinstated in the near future.

The final item raised by treasurer John was to inform the meeting that he had been approached by the widow of John Pearson concerning the sale of his radio equipment. He is to meet with her to view the equipment and will report back.

News from the south

Went to Brighton rally last July. The attendance was well down and only two major retailers there. Maybe the last one? Hastings repeater is now off the air for a few weeks due to re-siting to allow for building developments. GB3ES 145.575MHz. Been active on 40m CW/SSB where conditions remain reasonably good.

Daisy and I were at Llandudno last August and during our stay visited John and Kathy GW2OG. John is now an active 87 year old and we do try to keep in touch via the air waves. I recently received my Radio Old Timers association quarterly journal OT News and noted that Duke G3PLE, an ex pat like me, had joined the ranks. I haven't seen Duke (I knew him as David) for many years and it is difficult to appreciate that he is in the rather exclusive association. Time goes by!

On a personal note, I was interested in Malcolms report, that he had been on the Severn Valley Railway doing the 1940's weekend. Well we were on the trains on the Sunday, maybe our lines crossed? It was our first time too.

Daisy and I were due to fly to New York on 15th September to join our Canard cruise ship, up the North East coast of the US and Canada. As a result of the terrible events on the 11th September we were unable to fly to meet the ship and the whole trip had to be cancelled. It was the correct decision and we shall await a further opportunity perhaps elsewhere.

I read with difficulty these days but enjoy my large print STARLITE which is my main contact with the STARS

73 to all Alec G8GF, Eastbourne



Tony Davies M0AMP[tony is a member of the Magic Circle & being a committee member of the Telford Radio Society at past Rallies as entertained with a few of His Magic tricks] with me & the Uke there is a entertaining duo. Finally Fri 5th oct between 3-4 pm I will be on the Carl Chinn programme on BBC Radio WM being interviewed about George Formby,[will be a change from 144megs 2m] thats all for now. Malcolm G8BOP

Email Use

Email is now the number one source of office gossip and flirting, a report said. Men are the biggest culprits when it comes to chatting up colleagues with electronic messages.

They also use the system to gossip more than their female counterparts.

Women staff might not flirt as much as men on the email but they do spend a lot of time planning their social life.

A survey of more than 500 staff by email marketing firm edesigns.co.uk revealed the office grapevine is now well and truly online.

More than a third of men surveyed admitted spending at least 40 minutes a day flirting or gossip via email.

And 32% of the women polled using the system for more than 2 hours a week to arrange weekends with friends.

But while it all might seem like harmless fun and innocent chatting, experts have warned staff they could be breaking company rules on email use.

Hemails

FLIRTING 27%
GOSSIPING ABOUT STAFF 18%
CONTACTING FRIENDS 16%
FORWARDING SMUT 13%
SOCIAL ORGANISING 11%
SENDING ON JOKES 5%
FINDING A NEW JOB 4%
WRITING TO OVERSEAS RELATIVES 3%
CONTACTING PARENTS 2%
TRANSFERRING WORK TO EMAIL 1%

Femails

PLANNING SOCIAL LIFE 32%
CONTACTING SIBLINGS 18%
GOSSIPING ABOUT STAFF 15%
FLIRTING 13%
FORWARDING SMUT 7%
FINDING NEW JOB 6%
FORWARDING JOKES 4%
TRANSFERRING WORK TO EMAIL 3%
CONTACTING OVERSEAS RELATIVES 1%
WRITING TO PARENTS 1%

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BLUFF YOUR WAY!

A little wry amusement for those hardened PC users who should know better but remain addicted regardless...!!

ALPHA: Software undergoes alpha testing as a first step in getting user feedback. Alpha is Latin for "doesn't work."

BETA: Software undergoes beta testing shortly before it's released. Beta is Latin for "still doesn't work."

HARDWARE: Collective term for any computer related object that can be kicked or battered.

CPU: Central Propulsion Unit. The CPU is the computers engine. It consists of hard drive, RAM, interface cards and a tiny spinning wheel that is powered by a running rodent - a gerbil if the machine is an old 486 and a ferret if it's a Pentium.

RAM: Fuzzy creature horns that likes to eat. The rodent is not a fitness buff. It's running to get away from the bytes of the RAM.

PRINTER: A joke in poor taste . A printer consists of 3 main parts: the case, the jammed paper tray and the blinking red light.

INPUT/OUTPUT: Information is input form the keyboard as intelligible data and output to the printer as unrecognisable junk.

REFERENCE MANUAL: Object that raises the monitor to eye level. Also used to compensate for that short table leg..

USER FRIENDLY: Of or pertaining to any feature, device or concept that makes perfect sense to a programmer.

An example of user friendly is **HELP:** The feature that assists in generating more questions. When the help feature is used correctly, users are able to navigate through a

series of help screens and end up where they started from without learning anything.

PROGRAMMERS: Computers avengers. Once members of that group of high schools nerds who wore tape on their glasses, played Dungeons and Dragons, and memorised Star Trek episodes; now millionaires who create "user friendly" software to get revenge on whoever gave them noogies.

DEFAULT DIRECTORY: Black hole. The default directory is where all files that you need disappear to.

FILE: A document that has been saved with an unidentifiable name. It helps to think of a file as something stored in a file cabinet - except when you try to remove the file, the cabinet gives you an electric shock and tells you the file format is unknown.

SCHEDULED RELEASE DATE: A carefully calculated date determined by estimating the actual shipping date and subtracting 6 months from it.

USERS: Collective term for those who stare vacantly at a monitor. Users are divided into three types - novice, intermediate and expert.

NOVICE USERS: People who are afraid that simply pressing a key might break their computer.

INTERMEDIATE USERS: People who don't know how to fix their computer after they've just pressed the key that broke it.

EXPERT USERS: People who break other people's computers.

