



# Wythall Radio Club

## Wythall Contest Group

G1WAC G4WAC G7WAC G0WRC M5W



Wythall Radio Club meets from 8pm every Tuesday evening at Wythall House, Wythall Park, Silver Street, Wythall, B47 6LZ, near Birmingham. Visitors are very welcome. **Wythall Radio Club** is affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

### Officers

Chairman: Martin G8VXX  
Secretary: Chris G0EYO  
Treasurer: David G0ICJ

### Committee -

Chris G6KMQ  
Vaughan M0VRR, Deputy Chairman  
Lee G0MTN Contest Liaison  
Peter M5DUO Antenna maintenance.  
Mike G4VPD  
Mel M0MAJ  
Martin G7WBX  
Colin M0GJM QSL manager

### Chairman's Message

I thought I would share something different with you all this month. One of my past hobbies put me in a position of using radio professionally as both a pilot and as a parachute instructor. I remember as an instructor, standing in the middle of the drop zone, talking first time parachute students down under canopy. Basically this means telling them to steer the parachute right or left in order for them to land in the correct place. Inevitably there were some student who would land in completely the wrong place even though you would have been giving them very clear instruction e.g. "number three, pull on your right toggle and face the target cross" you would repeat this several times. They would end up landing in the next field some half a mile away. All this would have been preceded by a radio check on the flight line before they would get in the aircraft. They were given instructions not to touch the radios at all. Once they had left the aircraft and were under canopy you would identify that each student could hear you by saying on the radio "number 6 (or whatever number they been allocated) if you can here me open and close your legs" to find that they followed this instruction, but no others was a mystery, until that is, they had landed and walked half a mile with folded up parachute on a hot summer day. Once back to the correct place they would have a beaming smile on their face because of the adrenalin rush.

I would get round to the question of why they did not followed instructions, and one excuse that quite amazed me was "there are sheep in this field and I did not want to land on them" This was always covered in the landing hazards part of their course, believe me when I tell you a sheep runs very fast away from anything big coming at it from above. It just goes to show that some people have no concept of priorities when it come to their own safety.

Needless to say people like this were kept a very close eye on if they wished to continue in sport parachuting. *Martin G8VXX*



# Xmas Newsletter

## November- December 2008



### AGM Report—no fights, no bust-ups!

The club held its Annual General Meeting on October 7<sup>th</sup> at Wythall House with 21 members present and I am pleased to say that it was a cordial affair, no fights, no disagreements and actually finished earlier than expected. The minutes have been circulated on the clubs list to those with e mail facilities. Any member who wants a printed copy please contact the Secretary G0EYO. Thanks go to Vic M0AEJ who valiantly agreed to write the minutes for the meeting.

This is a brief extract of the meeting

**Election of Chairman.** Martin indicated his willingness to continue to serve as Chairman. There were no other nominations.

**Election of Treasurer.** David G0ICJ agreed to serve if there were no other nominations. He indicated his willingness to assist a new Treasurer during his first year. There being no other nominations, David was re-elected.

**Election of Secretary.** Chris G0EYO was willing to stand for a further year and there being no other nominations, was duly elected.

**Election of Committee.** The following six members agreed to serve on the committee:-

Lee G0MTN  
Vaughan M0VRR  
Chris G6KMQ  
Peter M5DUO  
Mel M0MAJ  
Mike G4VPD

All were elected *en bloc*. Pro-

posed by Martin G7WBX and seconded by Chris.G0EYO. Carried unanimously. There were three vacancies. The Chairman thanked Jim 2E0BLP for his work on the committee. The following members agreed to serve:-  
Martin G7WBX  
Neil 2E0TUX  
Colin M0GJM who was also willing to be to be QSL Manager.  
The three members were elected *en bloc*.

**General Discussion on the future direction of the club.** The first item to be discussed was the future of the versatower. The Chairman said that the tower was in need of a general overhaul. Martin G7WBX said that he was prepared to undertake the maintenance, upkeep

posed that the tower should be sold. There was no seconder. Vaughan M0VRR proposed that the tower should not be sold but left where it is. There was no seconder. The Chairman proposed that the club should accept Martin's offer. Seconded by Peter G4LWF. Carried by a majority vote. There was one vote against and one abstention.

David G0ICJ on hearing that the Archery club and the Dog trainers were jointly proposing having a building erected had made some enquiries. This had revealed that the proposed building would be long for indoor archery and would have a metal framework and cladding. This was totally unsuitable for any possible involvement of the Radio club.

A general discussion on the desirability of the club having a clubhouse at ground level took place. Vaughan suggested building near to the existing building and said that he knew someone who dealt with the funding of such projects and that he

was prepared to bring him to the club. The Chairman said that the first step was to consult an architect but Chris G0EYO said that we needed to speak to House and Parks first as they would know what was likely to be possible from a planning point of view. See page 5 for summary of Contest Group AGM held same evening.



and storage of the tower on his farm. He had workshops and did mechanical repairs. Questioned about the tyres which needed replacing he said that these were Land Rover tyres and this was not a problem. As regards security, it was agreed that storage on the farm was more secure than the present site. Mike G4VPD said that the tower was a liability and the club should sell it. The Chairman felt that if the tower was sold the club might regret it. Mike pro-

# Simple L-match ATU and SWR meter

Another exciting project  
from Barry's Bench



## Construction

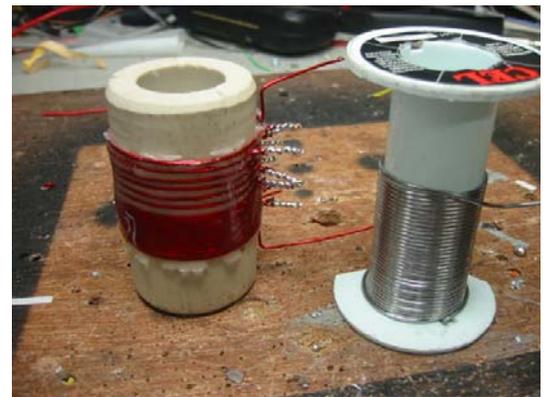
The ATU section was fabricated from what I had to hand. Construction is not critical; some gash aluminium was used for the case. A wooden case lined inside with tin foil would also work well. A small PCB was used for the SWR bridge, perforated board or dead bug style is ok too.

A 160A cartridge fuse was dismantled and used as the former for the coil; it is 37mm o/s dia. by 67mm high. Plastic waste pipe will also be fine. 20 SWG enamelled copper wire was used for winding the

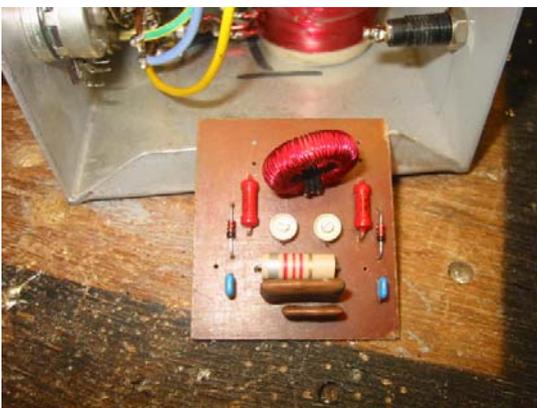
justment will be second nature. As with all antenna's, the higher the antenna the better especially on the lower bands (80 and 40m), ideally it is good to get the antenna at least half a wavelength above the ground but I have had good results with just 6m above ground on 80m (last October in Cornwall I was using 6 Watts of CW on 80m and worked all over Europe from a makeshift antenna using a fishing pole and 40m of

Described here is a simple but very useful ATU with a built in swr bridge. This was built primarily for use with an end fed antenna with a half wavelength at the lowest band of operation (80m in my case, 40m long piece of wire). This means that on 80, 40,20,15 and 10m (or any other multiple of a half wavelength) the antenna will present a high impedance load ( i.e. well above 50 ohms, anything between 200 ohms to 1K ish ) which is ideally suited to a L- match ATU. Another reason for choosing an end fed half wavelength/high impedance antenna is that it does not need a substantial ground

coil. Araldite was used to keep the windings in place once the coil was wound (I used a cable tie at each end of the coil to secure the winding while the glue set). Tapping points on the coil were found by experimentation, the number of taps dependent on the switch used, mine is a twelve way switch The first six taps on the coil are every turn and wide spaced to reduce inter- capacitance on the smaller inductance windings (zoom in on the picture bottom left). The variable capacitor came from the junk box and has a wide spacing between the plates. Do not use a broadcast spacing variable capacitor if you intend running more than ten watts or so, it will complain. The meter movement is an old audio VU meter with the scale redrawn, any meter with a sensitivity of 0.1mA FSD or greater will be fine.



wire). At home I use a 40m length of wire at 10m above ground and get great results (again using a simple L-match) and it is cheap and easy to make. Providing the antenna is correctly matched, there should be no problems with RF in the shack, the end fed at home comes straight into the shack (the attic) and regularly using 400 Watts I have not had any problems including TVI .The type of antenna you use at home is very dependant on the physical layout of the house and grounds, an end fed half wave is ideal for my particular location as the garden is long but narrow, even if your garden is not long you can always double back and put a few doglegs in the antenna run. It would be interesting to know what antennas / ATU's other club members use on the lower bands? Shown on the next page is the circuit diagram for the ATU.



## Setting up

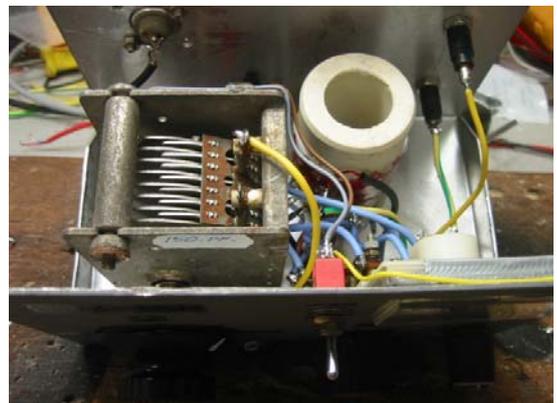
Once the SWR bridge has been built it will need balancing using the two trimmer capacitors. To do this, connect a 50 ohm dummy load to one end of the bridge and a HF transmitter to the other end. Apply no more than 20 watts of CW or FM at 20m with the sensitivity pot set fully clockwise for maximum sensitivity. Using the forward and reflected power switch set it to whichever shows the least reading on the meter then adjust the trimmer cap associated to that switch setting for minimum deflection on the meter. Next reverse the dummy load and transmitter ports of the bridge and carry out the same procedure again. The bridge is now balanced.

## Using the ATU

In use simply adjust the C and L to give the lowest SWR reading on the meter. On 80m a lot more inductance will be required than say 20m, once you become familiar with the approximate settings much of the ad-

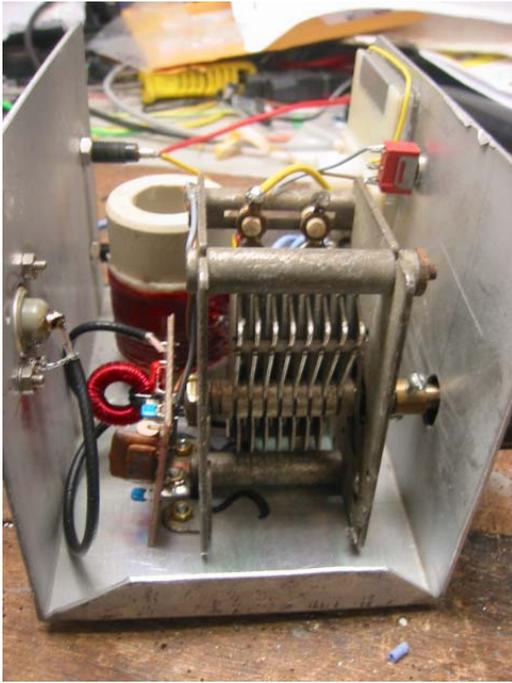
system to work well, a tent peg in the ground or short counterpoise is all that is needed. For me, it will only be used on 80 and 20m using my camping set, this is why the ATU and SWR meter are in the same enclosure. There is no reason why the units can not be built separately or only one of the two, an ATU or SWR meter on its own.

The SWR bridge came straight out of the ARRL handbook. One of the nice things about this bridge is that it is more or less frequency independent in the HF band (unlike CB meters which loose sensitivity and accuracy very quickly below 21Mhz, they are great for 2m though!) and it will measure from 1 Watt up to 100 Watts with accuracy, so it is good for QRP to not so QRP.



Screened coaxial cable should be used for the RF connections to and from the SWR bridge. Keep wires going to the switch from the coil as short as possible. The variable capacitor in the L match can be from 150 to 200pf, use wide spaced if using powers above 10 Watts. An SO239 socket was used for the input to the RF input to the unit and Banana sockets for the antenna and ground connections. The ATU should be mounted in an RF tight enclosure. The T68-2 torroid is available from the G-QRP club.

Barry M0DGQ



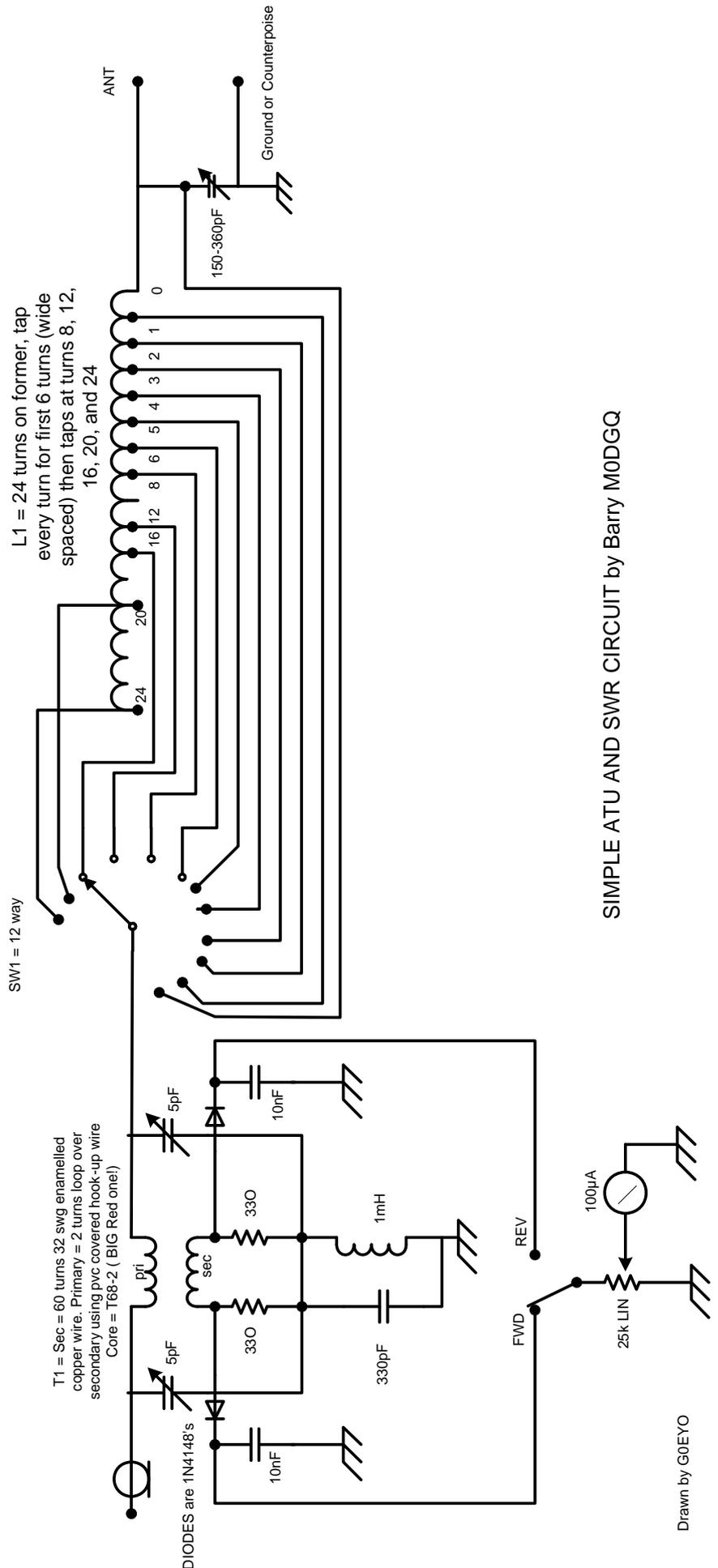
## Home Brew Evenings?

Barry M0DGQ, Tom G3PQP and Peter G4LWF are keen to organise some home-brew evenings at the club and we look forward to being able to give out more details on this as they become available.

The club purchased a number of items of test equipment as part of the Training programme and these are available for home brew evenings. They include:

- PC Oscilloscope
- Multimeters, soldering stations and tool kits
- LCR meter
- Marconi 2022E 100kHz-1GHz signal generator
- Antenna Analyser
- EMC filter and ferrite kit

We will be procuring other equipment including:  
 Frequency Counter  
 Audio Signal Generator  
 Digital RF Voltmeter etc



# RSGB HF Convention + Contest University

Sylwia and I attended the RSGB HF Convention in October. The venue this year was the Wyboston Lakes Conference centre in Bedfordshire. The HF Convention is unlike any other amateur radio event in the UK. The focus is on a series of presentations given over the weekend, plus the chance to catch up with other "HF types" in convivial surroundings. There are many visitors from around the world, plus several hundred UK visitors. Some people visit just for the day, but many stay for the whole weekend.

The HFC actually starts on the Friday evening with the "IOTA buffet", but most people arrive on the Saturday morning. There is an introductory welcome from the RSGB President, and then three or four parallel lecture streams begin. The lecture themes include presentations on the biggest Dxpeditons, contest stations and IOTA activities over the last year. As an aside, normally there are UK licence training and exams offered, a CW pile-up competition, RSGB bookstall, stands from Martin Lynch and the CDXC as well.

As a new feature this year, on the Saturday one of the lecture streams was to be dedicated to "Contest University UK." Based on an idea devised by Tim K3LR and run at the Dayton Hamvention over the last couple of years, CTU aims to give some training and instruction to new and improving contesters

on topics such as contest strategy and tactics, operating procedures, and station and antenna design. I was invited to be a "CTU Professor" with the opening presentation of "The Joy of Contesting"

As nothing similar had been run previously, none of the organisers had any idea how many participants there might be. As it turned out, Contest University was a great success. For each presentation, it was standing room only usually with some people unable to get into the meeting room. A CTU-UK participation certificate would be awarded for any CTU delegate who attended at least 4 of the 7 lectures. Over 50 people qualified for this. Many lectures had over 60 and 70 attendees, and according to the register taken there were 148 unique participants who attended at least one presentation.

There had always been some doubt whether the HF Convention could support a 'contesting stream' and the roaring success of CTU has now disproved this. It's too early to say what might happen for next year, but given the interest in the 2008 event there is enthusiasm amongst the CTU "professors" for some sort of graduate programme next year, perhaps with more in depth case studies, analysis of contest audio, or hands-on sessions with contest hardware and software tools. A good foundation was laid this year that can surely be built upon.

On the Saturday evening there was the gala dinner, with over 200 people sat down. Some trophies were awarded, including the prestigious G5RP award for "greatest progress shown in DX'ing" which went to Tim M0URX (ex-M3SDE.) After some wine and good conversation, the residential accommodation was fortunately not too far away and the delegates got some sleep.

On the Sunday morning, Sylwia and I left to do some sightseeing around Cambridge, but the Convention continued with more presentations until the late afternoon. Please consider visiting the HF Convention next year – it's good fun.

Lee G0MTN



**Xmas has come early this year, our party is on Friday 21st November in the Britannia Room at Wythall House kicking off at 7.30pm**

**PLEASE BRING FAMILY AND FRIENDS SO WE CAN HAVE A GOOD NIGHT OUT.**

\*

**AMERICAN SUPPER (everyone brings something to share)**

\*

**BINGO \* DARTS \* IRISH BINGO\***

**POOL \* QUIZ \* SKITTLES \* RAFFLE PRIZES**

**THE RADIO CLUB NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT SO PLEASE COME ALONG. WE PROMISE YOU WILL ENJOY IT!**

## Contest Group AGM

**Election of Chairman.** Lee agreed to serve. There were no other nominations.

### Election of committee.

The following members who were on the committee last year were nominated and elected *en bloc*:-

Peter M0COP  
Vaughan M0VRR  
Mike G4VPD  
David G0ICJ  
Chris G0KMQ  
Vic M0AEJ

### Contest Statistics:

Contests entered: 142 (130 in 2007, 120 in 2006, 116 in 2005, 90 in 2004)

HF Contests entered: 111 (104 in 2007, 95 in 2006, 90 in 2005)

VHF Contests entered: 31 (26 in 2007, 25 in 2006, 26 in 2005)

Club members entering contests by themselves (excluding multi-op Field Days and Christmas Contest):

14 (16 in 2007, 18 in 2006)

Total QSOs: 27,967+ (29,608+ in 2007, 26,000+ in 2006)

## Xmas Fox Hunt— Saturday 27th December

Every year the club hold their Xmas Fox Hunt to help members blow away the over consumption of the Festive Holiday and to exercise both themselves and their vehicle in chasing around the Worcestershire countryside like a mad thing looking for a fox who happens to drive a car with a 2m radio in it. We usually meet up in the Barley Mow car-park in Studley at 10am and usually end up at a pub for



lunch. We normally operate in pairs and all are welcome to join in. Ideally bring a 2m handheld and portable 2 el beam, but even if you don't have the kit we can pair you up with someone who does. It is always great fun and is a well established event in the club calendar. Contact Chris G0EYO at the club if you are interested in having a go.

## Lord Pettitt's Shooting Trophy 2008

A fine, sunny and mild October day, awaited those brave and trepid contestants for the 2008 Lord Pettitt Shooting Trophy at the Hereford and Worcester Shooting Ground. Fifteen club and family members were to shoot it out to win the coveted cup. As is usual we split into two teams and due to the family nature of those present it was decided that the Truran clan should be up against the Richards clan. The teams were as follows:

### Truran Clan

Colin M0GJM  
Rob (Colin's brother)  
Peter (Rob's son)  
Phil (Colin's other brother)  
Martin G8VXX  
Steve (Martin's business partner)  
Neil 2E0TUX

### Richard Clan

Peter M5DUO  
Matt (Peter's son)  
Jonathon (Peter's son)  
Richard (Peter's daughter's boyfriend)  
David G0ICJ  
Neil (David's son in law)  
Chris G0EYO  
Mike G4VPD

We were under the guidance of two instructors, Ally (very nice blond lady) and Mike, (very nice tall dark chap), who gave excellent advice and encouragement. Each contestant was able to let off 40 shots, and some managed to let rather more of the clays survive for another day than they wished but in the end the winner was Colin's brother Rob who I have to say was very much dressed for the part. Congratulations Rob, the Truran clan get to keep the trophy for another year. Here are the scores. Apologies to those who might be embarrassed by them.



1<sup>st</sup> Rob 35/40  
2<sup>nd</sup> Neil 34/40  
3<sup>rd</sup> Martin 33/40  
3<sup>rd</sup> Phil 33/40  
4<sup>th</sup> Colin M0GJM 32/40  
5<sup>th</sup> Jonathon 30/40

5<sup>th</sup> Steve 30/40  
6<sup>th</sup> Peter M5DUO 29/40  
7<sup>th</sup> Mike G4VPD 28/40  
8<sup>th</sup> Chris G0EYO 26/40  
9<sup>th</sup> Richard 25/40  
10<sup>th</sup> David G0ICJ 24/40  
11<sup>th</sup> Peter 18/40  
12<sup>th</sup> Neil 2E0TUX 17/40  
13<sup>th</sup> Matt 16/40

Everyone had a great day and the weather certainly helped. Only another 12 months before we do it again. Thanks to all who participated and as usual the Tardebigge managed to provide a good lunch for those who could take advantage of it.

Chris G0EYO



## How I became a radio amateur: David G0ICJ

Once upon a time a long time ago when I was 9 years old and living in Wolverhampton, I met the older brother of a school friend. He had a large shed in the orchard behind their back garden, which was full of Ex WD (Government surplus after the War) radio and electronic equipment. Most had been obtained from the local surplus shop, about a mile away from where we lived, which was like "Pandora's Box" full to the ceiling with STUFF. The orchard was strewn with wires (aerials as I later discovered) and we sat in the shed whilst he spoke to sundry people around the world. I was bitten. I came home with a pocket full of bits and pieces and instructions on how to build a crystal set. I built it and it worked and with a long wire aerial I could hear lots of stations but it really became interesting in the evening when stations like Voice of America, Vatican Radio and Radio Moscow came through loud and clear. I was so fascinated that most evenings my dad would peel my headphones off when he went to bed and I would sleep through it.

Another school friend and neighbour had been given an old domestic mains receiver, an Ekco I think, which had short wave bands and we used to spend hour tuning around to see what we could hear. One Sunday morning we heard one side of a conversation and the guy speaking said that he was waiting for his wife to come out of St Phillips church, which was only ½ mile away. So we got on our bikes and cycled down the road to find that there was a car with a huge aerial attached to the back bumper, they were steel in those days not plastic. The driver noticed us looking curious so he opened the window and called us over and showed us his radio transmitter and receiver and introduced us to the friend he was talking to.

Shortly after that my parents moved to Solihull because my dad had been moved with his job to Hall Green. I started Sharmans Cross School and met a class mate who lived close by and by coincidence shared the same birthday. We were both very practically minded and when I met his dad I discovered that he had been a radio Ham after the War before there were the same level of examinations required you apparently had to be an experimenter which he was. He also repaired radios and televisions in his spare time, something of a hobby. He soon realised that I was interested in what he was doing and the test meters, signal generator and oscilloscope fascinated me.

With his encouragement I embarked on a course of self study to tackle the City & Guilds, Radio Amateurs Exam. I then met Bert a neighbour of John's who was a school teacher but interested in becoming a Ham. It turned out that he was building the G2DAF

SSB Transceiver from the RSGB Radio Communication Handbook at the same time he had been studying for the RAE. He passed shortly after I had met him to become G3RHI, now silent key, so he lent me his study notes which helped me considerably. In 1962 I passed my RAE but still needed a Morse Test pass at 12 words per minute send & receive, to be able to get a licence, which regrettably took another 25 years to obtain.

In 1962 I met Len, G3FGT, who lived on the boundary of Solihull & Shirley, who was a very adept CW operator and for a while he sent Morse to me a couple of evenings a week when work permitted. I would go into his shack, which was full of home designed and home build radio receivers, transmitters, power supplies and test equipment, to find him communicating in Morse at high speed 40 words per minute plus and he would start a verbal conversation with me at the same time.

I took my first Morse test in 1963 at the old Birmingham Post Office Headquarters which used to be at the top of Hill Street where the Iron Man now stands. There were a couple of hundred candidates from all over the Midlands but I failed. I took the test several more times at various coastal stations but still failed. When my two daughters were aged about 6 & 9 I read in RadCom about Wythall Radio Club running slow Morse training evenings. That was about 24 years ago and as I had just left Round Table I had an evening free so popped in to see what the arrangements were. I asked at the bar where I could find the Radio Club members and was directed in the direction of Colin G6ZDQ and a few others. They advised me that Lew would soon be there and he would send Morse for as long as we wanted. At this stage I have to say a big thank you to Lew for his perseverance with me but eventually between us I passed my Morse test on 28 July 1987 and obtained my "A" licence on 6 August 1987. I should explain that when I first became involved there was only one licence for which the RAE and Morse test were requirements. Later after I had passed my RAE a "B" licence was introduced which made available 2 meters which later was extended to include more VHF & UHF bands. As I was not interested in VHF I continued to eventually pass the Morse test.

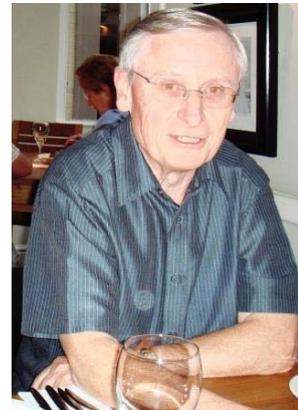
My interest has always been in Short Wave having spent many years as a Short Wave listener which I still believe is good training before becoming an operator of a transmitter. During the early years of my interest I had constructed a wide variety of projects from crystal sets, one valve receivers, multi valve receivers, direct conversion (TRF) transistorised receivers, transistorised superhet receivers,

test gear and a top band and 80m AM transmitter. The transmitter started life as a project from the RSGB handbook but I then modified the VFO several times and also the modulator which increased my knowledge and experience.

My latest project was some years ago when the club organised a project for members to construct the PW Marchmont 20/30 amp 13.8 volt power supply and I still use it to power my 2m station.

I suppose the fascination of radio is still that it is possible to hear voices or data etc signals from around the world and I am still amazed when I call CQ or a station and we can have a conversation without any wires between us and that in all probability we shall never meet each other. Ham radio is a hobby with so many different facets and the range is increasing almost daily now with the involvement of computers and the various data modes. After an involvement of some 54 years in the hobby I would still recommend it to anybody with a practical or electronic or computer interests or for anybody who just fancies operating and being able to talk to like minded people around the world or just down the road. I look forward to many more years of pleasure from the hobby.

David G0ICJ



### Subs are now due for 2008-09

As agreed at the 2007 AGM they have gone up!

*Members Standard Rate £15.00*

*Students and over 65's £7.50*

*Family membership £22.50*

Still amongst the cheapest in the country and look at what you get for your money.

David G0ICJ would love to take a cheque off you if you send it to him at

David Dawkes G0ICJ, 95 Hounds-

## Club Diary

Tuesday	4th November	Talk on D Star repeaters by Ian G8PWE (to be confirmed) and Club Contest 2m
Friday	7th November	Foundation Class Week 4
Tuesday	11th November	Committee Meeting
Friday	14th November	Foundation Class Week 5
Tuesday	18th November	Foundation Exam
Friday	21st November	Club's Xmas Party Britannia Room 7.30 onwards
Tuesday	25th November	New M6 play radio night
Tuesday	2nd December	2m Club Contest
Monday	8th December	Advanced Examination 6.30pm
Tuesday	9th December	Committee Meeting
Tuesday	16th December	Natter night
Tuesday	23rd December	New M6 play radio night
Wed- Thurs	24th Dec - 1st Jan	WRC Xmas Contest
Saturday	27th Dec	Xmas Fox Hunt
Tuesday	30th December	Natter night
Tuesday	6th January	2m Club Contest
Tuesday	13th January	Committee Meeting

## Training Report

We have now completed our first year of the Awards for All Lottery Grant and have submitted our Final End of Grant Report to them. Our grant was for some £5100 and we spent £3600 of that on equipment and £1500 on subsidising the courses that we ran.

In all we did one intermediate course with 6 students who all passed, one advanced course with three students who all passed and one foundation course with three students who all passed. We advertised an intermediate course to commence in October but there were no takers, although one member wishes to take the exam using self-tuition and our assistance on the practical assessments. As a replacement we started a new foundation course and currently have 4 students who hopefully will have all passed their exam which is due to take place on 18<sup>th</sup> November. We have booked the Dart Room for 12 weeks between January and Easter, and I think our strategy will be to set up and advertise Foundation classes on a regular basis and do the Intermediate and Advanced on an "on demand" basis. After Easter we can decide whether we need to make an advanced booking of the Dart Room or go back to using the Club class room. It costs us about £10 per week to hire the Dart Room, so an Intermediate Course of 10 weeks could cost £100 and if there were only 2 or 3 students doing the course we would be unable to recover the costs. We will have to play this one by ear. We are also setting up an Advanced examination for a couple of members (plus and outside visitor) who have undertaken self tuition and just want to take the exam somewhere.

Advertising our courses and facilities is something we need to keep under constant review. At the moment we advertise it on the club website, the Southgate ARC news-stream and the RSGB Tutors site. The club is listed as providing Foundation, Intermediate and Ad-

vanced courses on their web site and I believe it is also listed on the RSGB regional website. We have a poster up in the local library and hope to be able to promote the courses in the local schools next year. We tried an advert in Bargain pages but had no response. We should probably target the local scout groups as well.

We also constantly need to develop the course materials for each of the examinations. For foundation classes we need to allow plenty of time for hands on demonstrations of the equipment and making QSO's. Also for intermediate we have developed worksheets for each of the practical assessments required. We probably need to do a bit more on the maths side of the intermediate and advanced for those who have not been anywhere near a school room for many years.

We already have some practical equipment loaned by members to demonstrate SWR and dipole resonance and we also use the clubs Antenna Analyser to further demonstrate matching antennas. We could do with some data decoding facilities on the club's shack computers so that we can demonstrate and try the various data modes such as MMTTY, PSK31, Slow Scan TV and others. If anyone wishes to volunteer to assist with any of these projects then please get in touch with Chris GOEYO.

## Whatever Next?

Purely for fun I've now had an (admittedly quite awkward) RTTY QSO remote controlling my station from my new mobile phone's WiFi connection. Whilst I can't recommend this for any lengthy contest operating, it does illustrate future possibilities that newer technology can bring. I'm struggling to think of a practical application, perhaps apart from being able to continue to make a few QSOs whilst on a rest break or enforced dinner break. *Lee GOMTN*

## Evesham Special Event QSL card

This was the QSL card we sent out to all the people we contacted at the Evesham Vintage Gathering (GB0EVG) at Easter and the Evesham Steam Fair (GB0ESF) in August. We did not need too many so we knocked up a montage picture using MSOffice Publisher and converted it to a jpg file which we sent to one of these firms who print 6 x 4 photos really cheaply. We got a 100 for £8 including postage. The QSO information is applied via a label on the reverse side.

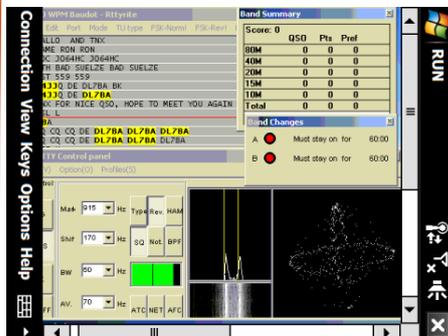


## New Members

The club is pleased to welcome the following as new members to the club in the past two months:

Peter Mitchell 2E0PWM  
Bill Bailey  
David Mitchell  
Walter Chance  
Stuart Vizer  
Steve David

These last four are currently doing the Foundation Course with us and will take the examination on Tuesday the 18th November. We wish them well and look forward to working them as M6's



## Contest Group Report

The coming months see the bulk of the major HF contests as propagation should improve over the summertime conditions. Cold, wet weekends aren't the best incentive for portable VHF contesting. There are a number of 'Club' events over the next couple of months – for example the Club Calls contest on 160m, and the 144 MHz Affiliated Societies contest in early December.

Over the last couple of months, as well as the regular participation in the RSGB 144 MHz and 3.5 MHz contests, it was great to see Vaughan M0VRR and Martin G7WBX having a go at the HF SSB Field Day in September. Aably assisted by Chris G6KMQ, and apparently "an awful lot of Red Bull" the guys had an enjoyable first time entry, despite the weekend weather being atrocious.

It was also good to see some club participation in the CQ WW Phone contest at the end of October. The club Christmas Contest should see the biggest turnout of club members in the year on air. A reminder though to send in some logs which helps with the checking and the fun of the final results table.

### HF Calendar:

8 Nov – Club Calls Contest on 160m  
22 / 23 Nov – LZ DX Contest  
29 / 30 Nov – CQ WW DX CW  
13 / 14 Dec – ARRL 10m Contest  
20 Dec – OK RTTY Contest  
27 Dec – Canada Winter Contest

### VHF Calendar:

7 Dec – 144 MHz AFS  
26-29 Dec – VHF Christmas Cumulatives

### Rules & Info:

HF: <http://www.rsgbhfcc.org>  
<http://www.sk3be.se/contest>

VHF: <http://www.vhfcc.org>

## Wythall Christmas Contest Rules

### 1. Objective:

The objective of the contest is to promote amateur radio activity amongst members of Wythall Radio Club, and to gain some 'on-air' publicity for the club. The contest is open to all members of Wythall Radio Club. It is a social affair — no need to take it too seriously! Most of the activity takes place on 2m FM — usually from a "CQ Wythall Radio Club" call on 144.500 MHz, and most contacts end up on 145.225 MHz. Out of town members may be contacted using Internet linked repeaters. It is asked that repeaters are only used when simplex contacts are not possible. Please try to maintain activity on 145.225 where possible.

### 2. Dates and times:

Starts: 2000Z 24th December 2008  
Ends: 2000Z 1st January 2009

### 3. Bands:

Any amateur band may be used. Cross mode and cross band contacts are allowed. Packet radio and repeater QSOs are allowed. Echolink QSOs are allowed — the only rule is that a real radio must be used by each party — but they are allowed to both access Internet linked repeaters.

### 4. Exchange:

Signal report + QSO number.

### 5. Scoring / multipliers:

Contact other members of Wythall Radio Club. You can use any mode and any band. You score 1 point per QSO for each club member worked each day. The best 5 daily QSO totals will count for the final score. Each Wythall Club Member worked over the contest counts as a multiplier. The total score for the contest is the total of the best 5 days' QSOs, multiplied by the number of different club members worked over the whole contest. For example, if Les M0COK works 35 stations in his best 5 days + 10 different club members during the contest, his score is 350. If Vaughan M0VRR claims only 30 stations, but 15 different club members, his score is 450. The multiplier total is the number of different club members worked over the entire contest — not just those worked in the best 5 days.

### 6. Logs

Logs in any format to me, Lee G0MTN, as soon as possible (31 Jan 2009 at latest), if you cannot calculate your score please send me your log and I will score for you.

### 7. Awards

The winner will receive the Reg Brown G7OJO Trophy (retained for one year). The winner, the second and third placed entrant will receive certificates of merit. Special awards e.g. Leading Foundation entrant, leading SWL, may also be awarded. The results will be published in the Wythall Radio Club Newsletter following adjudication. Disputes will be settled by the contest committee, whose decision is final. So there!

Lee, G0MTN

## Why are we called Hams?

*Ham*: a poor operator. (American in origin)

"That's the definition of the word given in G. M. Dodge's *The Telegraph Instructor* even before radio. The definition has never changed in wire telegraphy. The first wireless operators were landline telegraphers who left their offices to go to sea or to man the coastal stations. They brought with them their language and much of the tradition of their older profession. In those early days, spark was king and every station occupied the same wavelength—or, more accurately perhaps, every station occupied the whole spectrum with its broad spark signal. Government stations, ships, coastal stations and the increasingly numerous amateur operators all competed for time and signal supremacy in each other's receivers. Many of the amateur stations were very powerful. Two amateurs, working across town, could effectively jam all the other operators in the area. When this happened, frustrated commercial operators would call the ship whose weaker signals had been blotted out by the amateurs and say "SRI OM THOSE BL\*\*DY HAMS ARE JAMMING YOU." Amateurs, possibly unfamiliar with the real meaning of the term, picked it up and applied it to themselves in true "Yankee Doodle" fashion and wore it with pride. As the years advanced, the original meaning has completely disappeared.

The next issue of the Wythall Radio Club Newsletter will be published at the beginning of January 2009

Editor: Chris Pettitt G0EYO, 23 Dark Lane, Hollywood, Birmingham, B47 5BS. Phone: 07710 412 819, E-mail: g0eyo@blueyonder.co.uk