



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 G7WBC
Colin M0GJM QSL manager

Chairman's Message

Being the start of a new year I thought I would share some past new years with you. The last two including this one at the stroke of midnight I was head down getting timing right for parties I was running as a DJ. Imagine, you have to have 4 music/sound producing devices queued or actually playing. 1 playing a track, 2 queued with Big Ben chimes 3 queued with "auld lang syne" 4 with a track running for at least four minutes over the stroke of midnight. At about 2 minutes to go you fade in number 4 then at 20 seconds to go you let number 2 play over the top of the other track. The actual midnight chime is 20 seconds in to Big Ben's sequence. Once midnight has past about a minute past you get the audience involved in a rendition of old lang syne. Whilst all this is going on you need to queue up something else for after auld lang syne.

So you see new year has been very busy for me.

Happy new year everyone

Martin
G8VXX



g1wac@wythallradioclub.co.uk

<http://www.wythallradioclub.co.uk>

Newsletter

January–February 2009

Our 100% success rate continues...

We are pleased to announce that our three Foundation students, Steve, Stuart and Walter passed their Foundation examination on Tuesday 18th November and have applied for their new call signs. Congratulations to them all and lets see you on the air soon with those M6 calls. At the same time club member, Roger M3RXV took his Intermediate examination and passed with only one question wrong. Tricky one too, what does 2 gold bands on a resistor mean (Answer tolerance and divider – used for high toler-



ance very low resistance resistors). Roger took his Advanced examination in December at Wythall and hopes to get his M0 full ticket by the time this newsletter is published. Joining him for the examination were mem-

ber Peter 2EPWM and two out of county candidates, Dave 2E0BYA from Cleobury Mortimer and Bob 2E0FFQ from Cheltenham. As advanced examination dates are set by the RSGB and only happen 6 times per annum, the club can be expected to act as an examination only centre in the future. Anyway, best of luck to all our advanced candidates, we will announce their new call signs as soon as we get to know them

picture of Steve (now M6STE), Stuart (now M6STU), Walter (now

Xmas came early to Wythall Radio Club

Some 18 club members and their families enjoyed a relaxing Xmas social at Wythall House on Friday 21st November. This years' event was designed to be less organised than in previous years with plenty of time for eating and playing pool, darts or skittles or just chatting amongst ourselves. As in previous years food was provided under the lines of an American Supper and was both plentiful and enjoyable. Visitors were generous with their raffle prizes and even more generous with the cash we collected for the sale of raffle tickets, stand up bingo and conventional bingo. In the event, three people shared the stand up bingo prize money and Chris G8KMQ won the



full house and Wendy, G0EYO's xyl won the line prize money on the bingo. We also ran a quiz consisting of two general knowledge papers, (supposedly easy, but actually quite hard) a Connections sheet and a radio quiz. It is embarrassing to have to report that no team got 100% on the radio quiz which was taken from a Foundation exam paper and one team only got 5 out of 10 right on it. Anyway the

Strictly John Sergeant team, comprising Peter G4LWF, David GW0RQO and family and friends, won the quiz prize with 28 points out of 40. Well done them and well done everyone who came along. We all had a great time and enjoyed ourselves immensely. Thanks to our chairman Martin for providing the PA system which was essential for the bingo calling to overcome a spot of local junior QRM!.



25W Broadband HF Linear

Another exciting project
from Barry's Bench

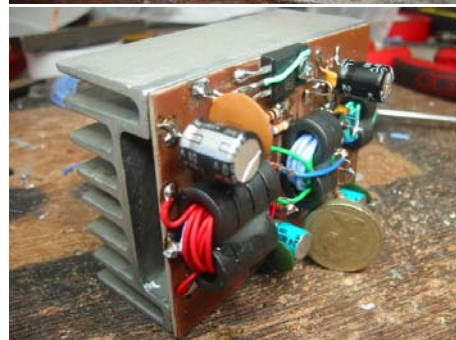
Here is a nice little broadband HF linear that will give a good 25 - 30 Watts of linear output from 160m to 10m with a 13 volt supply (ok for portable / battery use) for 300 - 500mW of input drive. Over 45 Watts have been had out of this, but keep it below 30 Watts so it is within the safe operating parameters of the transistors.

There is nothing special about the circuit, I based it on the PA I designed for my camping set (this covered 80m and 20m). Temperature compensated bias is used for both driver and output pairs, this is provided by

set by the series resistor feeding the diode from the 5 volt regulator. I used fixed resistors but a trimmer pot can be used, A 220 ohm could be used for each of the resistors and fixed resistors used once the correct value has been found (start with the pot at maximum resistance to give minimum standing current and GRADUALLY increase to suit). The indicated standing current for both pairs of transistors is the total current for a pair of transistors (each transistor will be half this). As said, start with minimum current as it is easy to pop transistors and they are not cheap. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!.

Both driver and output transistors are matched pairs (this ensures that each push pull pair transistor does the same amount of work as the other, ensuring good linearity). These transistors are still available from RF supplies in U.S. I bought three sets some years ago, you will now pay approx £18.00 for a complete set (ouch!). All of the transformers are constructed from easily available FT43 - 50 and FT43 - 37 toroid cores and pvc covered wire. (see pic left)

At 10m the gain of the PA falls by approximately 3dB so a gain compensation network is included at the input to the PA if desired, or you can omit it if you use ALC or juggle your drive control accordingly.



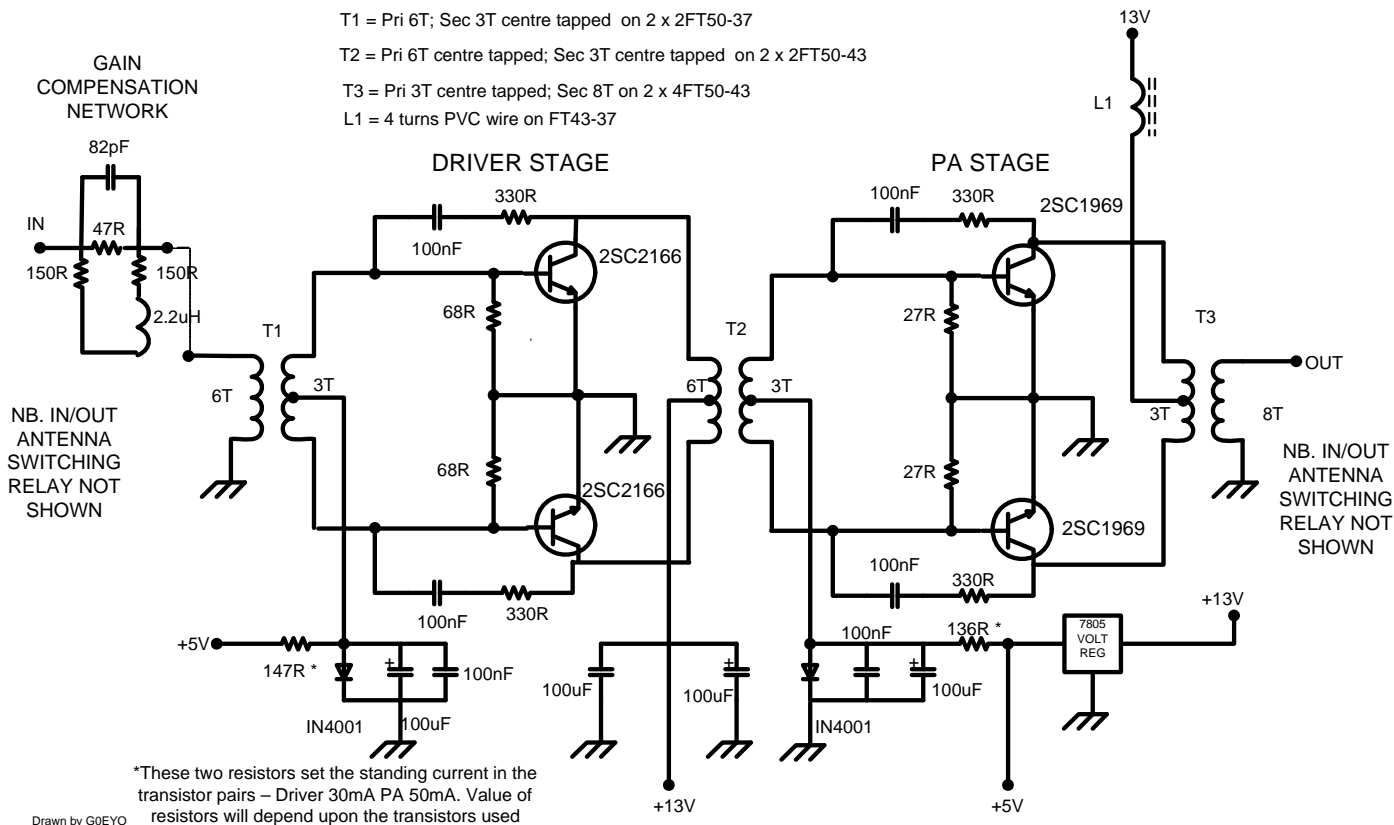
the two 1N4001's mounted on the heat sink next to the pairs of transistors. The driver pair is set for 30mA of standing current and the output pair is set for 50mA, this is in turn

input and the output for tx/rx switching

Barry M0DGQ

Tx/Rx Switching

Note that you will need suitable relays on the



25W BROADBAND HF LINEAR AMPLIFIER by Barry M0DGQ

RST Code explained



Whilst doing some teaching on a recent foundation course I realised that I had forgotten the RST Codes. How could this be, I thought. I have been using them for the past 25 years and was familiar with them since I started S.W. Listening in the 1950's.

The fact is we take them for granted. Most HF contacts, especially in contests, always give a 59 irrespective of the readability or the signal strength. Not being a CW fan I have not had any occasion to use the Tone code. At VHF I believe more attention is paid to trying to give an accurate RST report. Anyway I thought it might be useful just to re-state what the codes are

The system known as RST reporting is normally used to give and receive useful and consistent signal reports between contacts. As the name indicates, the RST reporting system is based around three numbers

- Readability
- Signal Strength
- Tone (for cw or data transmission)

Readability Code	Meaning
1	Unreadable
2	Barely readable
3	Readable with difficulty
4	Readable with a little diffi-
5	Perfectly Readable

Signal Strength Code	Meaning
1	Barely detectable
2	Very Weak Signals
3	Weak Signals
4	Fair Signals
5	Fairly Good Signals
6	Good Signals
7	Moderately Strong Signals
8	Strong Signals
9	Very Strong Signals

Tone Code	Meaning
1	Extremely rough note
2	Very Rough note
3	Rough note
4	Fairly rough note
5	Note Modulated with strong ripple
6	Modulated note
7	Near perfect tone but with smooth ripple
8	Near perfect tone but with trace of ripple
9	Pure tone

competing amateur radio stations are all using Morse code, the nines in the RST are typically abbreviated to N to read 5NN.

SINPO is a more advanced descriptive form of reporting signal quality which is sometimes used to describe professional transmissions from broadcast stations.

SINPO, acronym for **signal, interference, noise, propagation, and overall**. Each letter of the code stands for a specific factor of the signal, and each item is graded on a 1 to 5 scale (where 1 stands for very bad and 5 for very good).

The use of the SINPO code is subjective and varies from person to person. Not all shortwave listeners are conversant with the SINPO code and prefer using plain language instead.

S (Signal strength) Simply the strength of the transmission.

I (Interference) Interference from other stations.

N (Noise) The amount of noise.

P (Propagation) Whether the signal is steady or fades from time to time.

O (Overall merit) An overall score for the listening experience under these conditions.

Chris G0EYO

Would you have got the right answer?

A recent debate on the Tutor's reflector demonstrated how ambiguous some questions can be for our students. How would you have answered this one from an Intermediate paper?

Q: Which one of the following may use an Intermediate Licence Station

- A) The licensee only
- B) The licensee and any Foundation Licence holder
- C) The licensee and any other Intermediate licence holder
- D) Any licenced amateur

The answer is in fact A but many would have selected D.

The problem lies in the use of the word "Station". It has no official interpretation in the licence conditions although the questioner obviously meant it to mean "Radio Equipment".

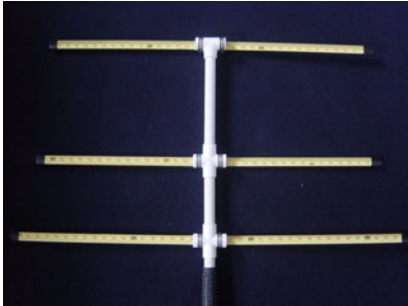
The Licence Conditions state that only the licensee or another UK licensed amateur operation under his or her supervision may use the Radio Equipment and put simply means that only you may use your equipment but you may supervise another UK licensed amateur using your equipment. Since you are supervising, your callsign must be used and the rules of licence must be obeyed. That means that if you happen to be supervising a Full licensee, they will be limited to 50W (for intermediate licence—or even 10W if a foundation licensee).

However if you are a Full Licensee you can use your radio to pass messages for the User services or let one of them use the radio themselves if they need to. There is also the option of a licensed visitor using the equipment as if it was their own property under their own licence and call sign. If they had a higher class of licence they could even then supervise a lower class of licensee using the higher powers and privileges of their licence and giving their callsign in identification.

Am I alone in thinking this is all a bit confusing?

Club Project: 2m Fox Hunt Antenna

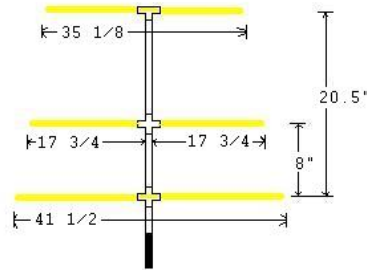
The recent fox hunt suggested that the club have an evening project to build a low cost 2m DF antenna. Well I came across this on the KCOTKS website and thought how much easier can it get. It comprises an old 1" wide tape measure, some PVC pipe and cross fittings and hose clamps.



I wont show the full details here but will have them available as a handout but these are the parts you will need. We will need to get metric equivalents and I will try and source suitable parts before we start the project;

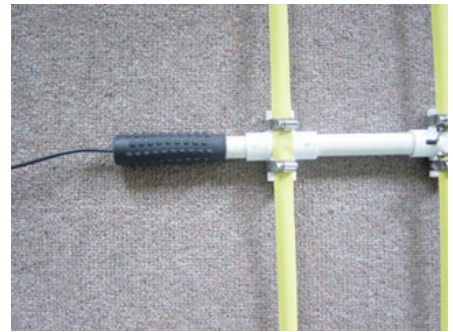
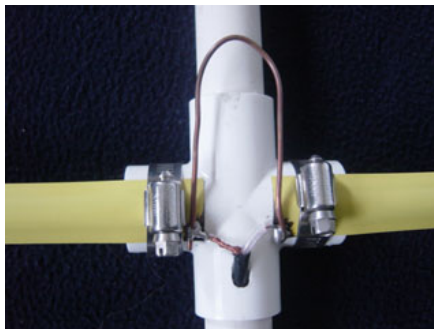
- About 10 ft of 1 " wide measuring tape
- 2 ft of 3/4inch (20mm) pvc pipe
- 2—3/4 inch pvc crosses (these might be difficult to get in UK)
- 1—3/4 inch pvc T
- 6" length of 12 swg wire
- Bicycle handlebar grip
- Length of RG58 coax with suitable connec-

tor for your handheld. There are 3 elements, director, radiator or driven and reflector. These are the dimensions



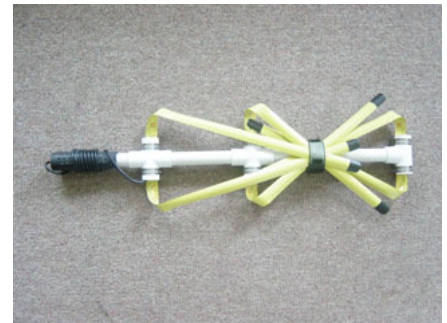
The matching arrangement on the radiator element is quite simple as can be seen below.

The cable can come up through the end of the pipe and through a hole in the cross



fitting.

The whole thing is flexible enough to fold for storage and I reckon it wont cost more than £10 in parts and take about a couple of hours to put together. Being a hairpin match it can also transmit if necessary and is reported to have a 7-8dBi directive gain and 30- 50dB front to back ratio. The VSWR will be 1.5:1 because of the use of 50ohm coax.



Wythall Radio Rally Sunday 8th March 2009 at Woodrush Sports Centre



WRC members your Club



To help at the Wythall Rally



We need your help to set up on the Saturday and of course on the Sunday. Remember a successful rally means that the club can keep going for another year!. Please give us your support. Contact Martin G8VXX or Chris GOEYO if you can help

Ham Radio has a Patron Saint!

Did anyone else notice the item on the Southgate ARC newstream that runs on our club website about amateur radio having a Patron Saint?

Apparently during the WW2 German occupation of Poland, a Ham radio Priest, **Fr. Maximilian Kolbe, SP3RN** was arrested by the Germans. The Germans believed his amateur radio activities were somehow involved in espionage and he was transferred to Auschwitz on May 28, 1941. After some prisoners escaped in 1941, the Germans ordered that 10 prisoners be killed in retribution. Fr. Kolbe was martyred when he volunteered to take the place of one of the condemned men. On October 10, 1982 he was canonized by Pope John Paul II as Saint Maximilian Kolbe, Apostle of Consecration to Mary and declared a Martyr of charity. He is now considered the Patron saint of Amateur radio operators.

You can read more about St Maximilian on Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maximilian_Kolbe



Xmas Fox Hunt— Saturday 27th December

The day after Boxing Day is usually when the club has its Xmas Fox hunt and this year was no different. The club Xmas Contest was suspended for a couple of hours whilst 5 teams comprising:

Team 1, Vaughan, Sherryn and Chris KMQ

Team 2, Martin and Steve

Team 3, Peter and Anita

Team 4, Chris EYO and David

Team 5, Steve M6 STE and Stuart M6STU, drove like crazy people through the narrow lanes of South Worcestershire.

The moral of the day was to check your equipment out before the fox hunt begins. Several teams had problems. David's handheld wouldn't take a charge and the one we borrowed from the club only had an SMA connection. But fortunately Vaughan had an SMA to SO239 patch lead which enable Team 4 to have a directional antenna. Martin went off as the first fox but a suspect lead to his antenna on the car made him difficult to track and he was losing a lot of power. Peter also had antenna lead problems causing his FT817 to back off through high VSWR. Anyway problems aside we all had a great morning with the following results:

Fox 1 Team 2 was found by Team 3

Fox 2 Team 3 was found by Team 4 (after they gave up their location)

Fox 3 Team 4 was found by Team 1 who gave up his chance of being the fox to new team 5

Fox 4 Team 5 was found by Team 4

After that we all made our way back to the Barley Mow in Studley for some lunch. Great time was had by all. We must remember to do one in the summer in 2009.

QSL cards and their electronic versions

I've mentioned the likes of EQSL and the ARRL Logbook of the World before. These systems allow you to upload records of your contacts to their servers, where they are cross referenced with other similarly uploaded logs. EQSL have their own award system for working DXCC entities, States, Prefixes and Zones, and the ARRL system supports the existing DXCC and Worked All States award programmes.

As well as providing an 'easy' method of qualifying for awards without needing to worry about sending and receiving QSL cards, these systems

can also act as a remote backup for your log. Your QSOs are also available for query online at any time. I took advantage of this at a work meeting just before Christmas, where a Nokia colleague I was speaking with let slip he was a radio amateur, although not very active in recent years. Using the web browser on my phone, within a minute or so I'd found we'd actually had two contacts – one in 1997 and one in 1999.

Lee G0MTN

Learn CW online (LCWO)

A different 'interface' for learning morse has been developed by CW contester Fabian DJ1YFK. With LCWO you can learn morse online using your web browser. Quoting from the website, "you don't need to install a program on your computer, and you always have your personal settings available, from any computer on the globe with an internet connection." It features a Koch method course over 40 lessons, speed practice using code groups, plain text, or call-signs. High scores are tracked to give a competitive element – try to beat your own previous scores, and climb places in the overall tables. You can even generate your own CW .mp3 files to play on your Ipod whilst walking the dog in the park. And for any office workers reading this, lunchtime morse practice has now never been easier. 6000 different users have tried the system so far – have a look yourself at <http://www.lcwo.net>

[New Query](#)

23 Records Shown (1-23)
Sorted by Call sign (0.750875 seconds elapsed)

	Call sign	Worked	Date/Time	Band	Mode	Freq	QSL
Details	G0MTN	G1WAC	2008-06-03 19:58:44	2M	SSB		
Details	G0MTN	G1WAC	2008-05-06 19:38:50	2M	SSB		
Details	G0MTN	G1WAC	2008-03-04 21:17:40	2M	SSB		
Details	G0MTN	G1WAC	2008-02-05 20:44:36	2M	SSB		
Details	G0MTN	G1WAC	2008-02-03 09:56:33	70CM	SSB		
Details	G0MTN	G1WAC	2007-11-06 20:52:25	2M	SSB		
Details	G0MTN	G1WAC	2007-09-04 19:31:00	2M	SSB		

How I became a radio amateur: Colin M0GJM

My interest in radio came at an early age when my father made me a crystal set. I was fascinated by the ability of a long wire down the garden & a length of copper tube, in the ground, to use very few components to detect various tunable stations & power up a set of ex army magnetic type headphones. Later, as a teenager, I had great fun, along with millions of others, tuning into the Pirate radio stations transmitting from ships in the Thames estuary. This was also the stage of the first modifications to the transistor radio I had. First installing a bigger capacity external battery (PP3 had very limited life) and second trying to improve reception with a bigger antenna.

That was it for radio really until I changed jobs in 1981. The job itself is hardly worth a mention, but the chap I worked for is. His name was John Langstone, he hailed from the south east & was about 10 years older than me and a great bloke to work for, real good fun. Never took things too seriously and was a bit of a cross between Arthur Daley & Del Boy. Anyway one day he arrives at work to say that one of his friends had a "consignment" of Black & Decker workbenches & 40 channel AM CB radios, both going for a good price !! So I ended up with one of each. The radio was quickly fitted to the car, with suitable CB aerial. There were lots of places selling CB aerials etc. at the time, as I guess we were running into the AM (not legal !!) CB boom time. Every other car seemed to have a DV27 / K40 fitted. We lived in Redditch, at the time, and each evening the channels were buzzing with CB traffic. I even learnt how to "SWR in" the aerial !! What a strange idea that was ! At least until I discovered the reasons for matching the rig output to antenna.

In amongst the radio traffic, most of which was unadulterated dross or worse, there was some serious interest by people who were obviously keen to explore radio further. One of my friends, who I showed the CB radio to, was one Mike Goode, who I'm sure some of you will recognise as a founder member of Wythall Radio Club. Mike loved the CB radio idea and quickly went from a basic 40 channel AM rig onto one of the sets with hundreds of channels & sidebands. These were now freely available from US, and although still well illegal there were a lot in use. There was always talk, on the air, of breakers using side-banders having contacts into the States. I thought this was moonshine and never believed a word of it !! However, I must admit now that it probably was true, in certain cases. The rest, as they say is history, Mike along with other CB / radio enthusiasts founded Wythall Amateur Radio Club, with a view to moving to "proper amateur radio". Mike became G4SMA, Secretary of Wythall Radio club. In August 1986 was granted call

GIWAC on behalf of WARC. Mike was always keen that I join with him and pursue real amateur radio status. As a keen golfer & with a young family, time & money were always an issue. I could not afford to do both, so stuck with golf.

There are a few things that I remember about CB radio days:-

4 Watts was a stupidly low RF power output !

The Government legalising CB onto FM killed it off more or less completely.

I regret never having an "eyeball" with "Wicked Witch" she just sounded Soooo sexy on the airwaves !!!

Some of the locations (20's) used on CB. Eg. "The Dancing Donut" which I'm sure you'll all recall was the Maypole Island !!

So that was it for CB !! Went the way of the Hula Hoop & Dodos !!

My interest in radio waned somewhat, after this, although G4SMA kept me up to date with projects he was working on like Packet, AmTOR , RTTY etc.

The next surge of interest came with the Enigma story. My dear old Dad gave me a book to read, that he had taken out of the library, called "The Hut Six Story" by Gordon Welchman. Welchman had worked at Bletchley Park, as a codebreaker, in Hut Six, and the book his recollections of the decrypting work carried out there during the war. I think we all now know the story of Bletchley Park, Alan Turing & the Enigma decoding, but it certainly captured my imagination, not in the least for the vital part played by radio as the transmission medium for Enigma coded messages. This and the British / Allied listening stations that had armies of staff (mainly women) listening and recording reams of unintelligible Morse code.

My Father had taken part in WW II & worked his way to Major, in the Dorset Regiment, but never knew anything about Enigma or Bletchley Park until he read the book. I don't think he could believe what he was reading !! As Winston Churchill said "The geese that laid the golden eggs but never cackled". One of the best kept secrets of the war and later.

The Call.

A couple of years back I realised that my interest in Amateur Radio was still there and that I now had more time and money, than in years gone by, that I would investigate the requirements to obtain a license. For a New Year Resolution I decided, rather than to give something up, I would take something up, so following in the footsteps of Mike

G4SMA, I joined the ranks of Wythall Radio Club, to undertake Foundation License training course. This was successfully navigated in June 2006, along with Mel (M0MAJ), Sherryn (M3SVR) and a few others.

2008 saw the push for the Intermediate Exam, followed by Advanced Training & Exam, at the end of May. I think all 3 of us that took the Advanced Exam (Mel, James & I) would agree that the 4-5 week wait for the results (which go to RSGB for marking) is the worst part. At least with Foundation & Intermediate you get instant result after sitting the exam.

Having said that Chris G0EYO was much more nervous than we were, don't know what he was worried about !! All was well, in the end, and we all got notification that we had passed, with all thanks to those club members who assisted in the process. So I am now the proud owner of a Full UK Amateur Radio call (M0GJM). During the journey to gain the license I have learnt that there is more to Amateur Radio than the "London calling" of Hancock's Radio Ham. My present interest & learning is for digital radio modes (PSK & RTTY etc) which is a nice integration of radio & computer technology. Mind you, you should see all the wires interconnecting the components !! But it does work & is surprising how little power is required for a good QSO. It would be nice to make contact with club members using these techniques – maybe a digital mode Xmas contest !!

For the future I look forward to the increase in sunspot activity that should give some good DX conditions. May need a better antenna then. I would still like to build a valve driven radio (that works !!) & have a QSO using real CW !

Colin M0GJM



Club Diary

Tuesday	6th January	Talk by Vaughan M0VRR on Echolink and 2m Club Contest
Tuesday	13th January	Committee Meeting
Tuesday	20th January	Home Brew Night
Tuesday	27th January	Intermediate Class 1
Saturday	31st January	Intermediate Class 2
Tuesday	3rd February	2m Club Contest
Friday	6th February	Intermediate Class 3
Saturday	7th February	Intermediate Class 4
Tuesday	10th February	Committee Meeting
Friday	13th February	Intermediate Class 5
Tuesday	17th February	Intermediate Class 6 and Home Brew Night
Tuesday	24th February	Intermediate Examination
Tuesday	3rd March	Rally Preparation and 2m Club Contest
Sunday	8th March	Rally Day
Tuesday	10th March	Committee Meeting
Tuesday	17th March	Home Brew Night
Tuesday	24th March	Natter Night

Xmas Contest—latest

Well it has been an interesting Xmas Contest with top QSO's in the 80+ and quite a few in the 60+. Not aware of anyone in the 70+ but quite a few in the 50+ and below. There quite a few members participating probably in the region of 20+ plus the club calls that were transmitted on Tuesday. No official scores yet but Jim 2E0BLP seems to be ahead of the pack with 80+ QSOs. Calculate the number of different callsigns worked and multiply that by the total QSOs you had over your best 5 days and put your score on the list. Lee will want your logs or spreadsheets for the official scoring and adjudication and we can expect an official result in a couple of weeks.

Training Report

The lottery grant got signed off as a completed project by Awards For All in November and we completed a Foundation Class which resulted in 100% pass results for Steve M6STE, Stuart M6 STU and Walter M6WJC. We also put on an Advanced examination in early December for four students who had chosen self-tuition. We don't yet know the results but are hopeful that all have passed.

We are planning to run an Intermediate course for 5 weeks comprising a combination of two Saturday mornings and five evening sessions. It will start on Tuesday 27th Jan and the examination will be on Tuesday 24th Feb. The course schedule is shown below. The cost for the course to club members will be £50 (or £65 if not a club member) and this includes the exam fees, books and tuition materials as well as the project kit. We aim to do the practical work on the two Saturdays. We still have spaces available on that course so if you know of anyone who is looking for an Intermediate course then put them in touch with me G0EYO via e mail on g0eyo@wythallradioclub.co.uk

WYTHALL RADIO CLUB INTERMEDIATE COURSE 5 WEEKS

Date	Tutorial session		COURSE 5
Tues 27th JAN 8pm-10pm	1 Nature of Amateur Radio 3 Technical Basics Part 1 -components G6KMQ	4 Tx/Rx -1: Transmitters G8VXX	Project G0EYO
Sat 31st JAN 9am-2pm	Practical 9 Safety 10 Soldering Solder practise G0EYO & G4LWF	Building a DC Circuit Using a Multimeter Fitting a 13A plug G0EYO & G4LWF	Component Recognition Fitting PL259 & BNC plugs G0EYO & G4LWF
Fri 6th FEB 8pm-10pm	3 Technical Basics Part 2 - Circuits G4LWF	4 Tx/Rx -2: Receivers 7 EMC G3PQP	
Sat 7th FEB 9am-2pm	Practical Measurements on circuit board Volts & Current G0EYO & G3PQP	Measurements on circuit board Resistance, Input Power & Ohms Law G0EYO & G3PQP	Measurements on circuit board Diodes and Transistors G0EYO & G3PQP
Fri 13th FEB 8pm-10pm	5 Feeders and Antennas 6 Propagation G0EYO	8 New Modes - demo PSK31 etc M0VRR	Calibrating a VFO G0EYO
Tues 17th FEB 8pm-10pm	2 Licence Conditions 8 Operating Practises G6KMQ	Mock Exams G4VPD	Finish Project G0EYO
Tues 24th FEB 8pm-10pm	Intermediate Exam DAY G4VPD		

After the rally in March we intend to run another foundation class and then an advanced class, before the summer recess, so keep checking on the website or the newsletter for the latest information.

Chris G0EYO

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

Morse Examiner Scheme planned

A note on the Tutors web site said that the RSGB had sanctioned a morse testing programme for those who want certification of their morse skills at 5 wpm and above. It is all entirely voluntary and there are no additional privileges to any license holder by having the certificate. There was some concern that the old morse test certifiers, some of whom were professional senders (ex merchant marine or coast station) were going to die out and the proposers' of the scheme wanted to ensure that there were people capable of running examinations and certifying

those who meet the required standard in the future. There are lots of awards in the hobby which some of our fellow amateurs enjoy while others do not see the need for. This "split" in support for awards extends not only to potential awardees but also to those who help to organise the administration of the relevant schemes. The proposed Morse Certificate is no different- some will wish to obtain the award, some won't. Some clubs will embrace the idea, some won't. The proposed Morse scheme is NOT really about reciprocal operating privileges. It is about a

service to the hobby. The potential for reciprocal operating privileges is a bonus.

The scheme will require a band of Morse Examiners and the organisers hope that some of these will come from the pool of registered instructors who have expressed an interest in seeing Morse live on.

We will bring you further news as this proposal develops.

Contest Group Report

Happy New Year!

The results of the 2008 144 MHz Club Championship have recently been announced. They place the club in 15th position, out of 40 clubs entering over the course of the year. Well done to everyone who took part during the year. Will there be the same enthusiasm to have another go this year? There were regular entries from the club station at the start of the year, and 4 or 5 club members taking part from home or their local hilltop.

Recently at the start of the December the 144 MHz Affiliated Societies Contest took place. After a very sparse entry last year, I'm pleased to report increased numbers.

M0COP/P, G4VPD, G0MTN, G0EYO, M0AEJ, M0COK, and M5DUO all took part and submitted logs. With 5 members per AFS team, we'll have a full AFS 'A' team and also a 'B' team in the results tables.

VHF:

Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name	Dates - Mode - Frequency - Exchange
Every 1st Tuesday	2000-2230 (Local)	144MHz UK Activity Contest and Club Championship	QTH Locators (M2), Activity contest (S8), Club Championship (S9)
Every 2nd Tuesday	2000-2230 (Local)	432MHz UKAC	QTH Locators (M2), Activity contest (S8), Club Championship (S9)
Every 3rd Tuesday	2000-2230 (Local)	UHF UKAC	QTH Locators (M2), Activity contest (S8), Club Championship (S9)
Every 4th Tuesday	2000-2230 (Local)	50MHz UKAC	QTH Locators (M2), Activity contest (S8), Club Championship (S9)
Every 5th Tuesday	2000-2230 (Local)	70MHz UKAC	QTH Locators (M2), Activity contest (S8), Club Championship (S9)
11 Jan.	1000-1200	70MHz Cumulatives #1	Cumulative contest (S5)
25 Jan.	1000-1200	70MHz Cumulatives #2	Cumulative contest (S5)
8 Feb.	0900-1300	432MHz Affiliated Societies Contest	Affiliated Societies contest (S3)
15 Feb.	1000-1200	70MHz Cumulatives #3	Cumulative contest (S5)
22 Feb.	1000-1200	70MHz Cumulatives #4	Cumulative contest (S5)
7-8 Mar.	1400-1400	March 144/432MHz	
15 Mar.	1000-1200	70MHz Cumulatives #5	Cumulative contest (S5)

HF:

Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name	Dates - Mode - Frequency - Exchange
January	2000-2130.	80m Club Championships	5th - CW; 14th - SSB; 22nd - Data
Jan 11	1400-1800.	Affiliated Societies Team Contest	3510-3590kHz, RST+Serial (CW)
Jan 17	1400-1800.	Affiliated Societies Team Contest	3600-3750kHz, RS+Serial. (SSB)
February	2000-2130.	80m Club Championships	2nd - SSB; 11th - Data; 19th - CW.
Feb 14/15	2100-0100.	1st 1.8Mhz Contest	1810-1870kHz, RST+Serial+District.
March	2000-2130.	80m Club Championships	2nd - Data; 11th - CW; 19th - SSB.
Mar 14/15	1000-1000.	Commonwealth Contest	3.5-28MHz, RST+Serial.

Got a story to tell? Seen something you can share with others? Want to tell us how you got started in ham radio? Written a poem?. We are always on the lookout for material for the newsletters. Send to Chris G0EYO

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

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New Year's Resolutions

It's at this time of the year that we normally take stock of the last 12 months, and make some plans for the new year. On the amateur radio front, it might be to start (or complete!) a particular construction project, or antenna. It might be to learn CW, or to try some new modes like SSTV or PSK.

A hot topic of the last 12 months is D-Star – providing digital voice modes, plus slow and high speed data, with the option of linked repeaters worldwide. This is slowly gaining a foothold across the UK. Will any club members become active on D-Star in 2009?

Another technological frontrunner is Software Defined Radio, where the processing power of your PC can be harnessed to replace (and maybe improve upon) the performance of discrete components and modules in a traditional transceiver. Single band SDR kits can be put together for a few tens of pounds. A feature of SDR is the ability to "listen" to large chunks of bandwidth at once, so detecting band openings on HF, or detect weak signals at the other end of the spectrum. On HF, an SDR radio combined with some CW-reading software called CW Skimmer has caused a furore as it can detect and decode hundreds of CW signals simultaneously – which could be used by contesters to give them an advantage. Try <http://skimmer.dxwatch.com> to see some online skimmers in action. Call CQ on CW a few times, and then see where your callsign has been decoded around the world. A recent feature addition is the Signal to Noise ratio, so you could even compare the performance of different antennas in Europe and the USA.

Another SDR can be found here. This is a web controlled receiver that can be used by multiple



users simultaneously, thanks to the Software Defined Radio. <http://websdr.ewi.utwente.nl:8901/> Here you can hear your own SSB or CW signals through your PC, with less than a half second delay. The radio club ETGD at the University of Twente in the Netherlands is responsible for this fascinating and fun tool.

Lee G0MTN