

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. Contact g0eyo@blueyonder.co.uk

What a summer!

Our good weather of the summer generally continued during the autumnal months with some great events run by the club and with some members incorporating "having fun with rf" into their late summer holidays. The club ran a QRO station for HF SSB which was organised by Callum M0MCX involving his nested fan dipole and a couple of vertical antennas. No results as of writing this but it was a dedicated contest station with single transmitter in the "inside out tent" and a gazebo for mess arrangements. A number of regular members were either on holiday or indisposed for that weekend so it was great to see some newer members participating and enjoying their first experience of contest operating. Callum also took his radio gear (lots of it) down to Bude in Cornwall, where he had hired a beach-side cottage for him and the family. He erected a 40m vertical and a 15m vertical in the front garden and managed to work 511 QSO's over the two weeks he was there. Barry M0DGQ went even further, to Cape Verde Islands in fact. Located just of the west coast of Africa he went QRO with a homebrew CW transceiver and fishing rod dipole and worked 133 QSO's over ten days (see article in this newsletter). Chris G7DDN and Lynne M6FAB didn't venture quite so far but managed to work a few stations (and club members) from a cottage they hired in the South of France using his new Icom IC7100 and a 40m dipole. Ian M0IDR also took his IC7100 on holidays but didn't fare quite so well with his locations in Norfolk and Cornwall (see article in this newsletter).

A few of us went to the weekend RSGB National Convention in October, where we enjoyed a full programme of talks and lectures covering many aspects of the hobby from DX expeditions, IOTA stations, training, history of radio plus many, many other subjects. We enjoyed the Technical dinner where we had a interesting talk from the father of QRP, the Rev George Dobbs G3RJV on the subject of want and need



The club's AGM was held on the 15th October attended by 30 members and the following were elected officers and committee;

Chairman: Mike G4VPD
Treasurer: Ian M0IDR
Secretary: Anita M6DUO
Committee; Peter M5DUO, Jim 2E0BLP, Callum M0MCX, Lee G0MTN, John G4OJL, Phil 2E0WTH

In an unexpected twist at the end of the AGM, a proposal by Chairman Mike G4VPD, that in light of Chris G0EYO's decision to stand down from the committee, that he be made President of the club, was carried unanimously.

We are starting to plan our next rally which will be on March 9th at Woodrush Sports Centre and we have our Xmas party to look forward to on Saturday December 14th and the Xmas Contest over the holiday period.

We are preparing for our two day special event station on 31st Oct & 1st Nov when we get to operate G100RSGB. A number of tests have been done to ensure that co-sited stations do not interfere with each other and we are endeavouring to make the shack tidy for the event. We will provide a full write up in the next issue of the newsletter but we aim to make this one of the best G100 stations in the region.

As always with Wythall Radio Club there is a great deal going on, with something for everyone. It is what makes us a great radio club.
Enjoy

Chris G0EYO



Operating Practise for those "pile ups"

Preface: *There are a number of aspects that appeal to me in this hobby, fancy radios, interesting antennas and GREAT operating. I enjoy making my hobby more fulfilling by operating well, and I don't just mean following my license conditions. I like to mimic great operators, those guys that sound clear, even under QRM and QSB, they mean well, they act professionally, like they're in Mission Control during an Apollo Mission. They inspire their contacts to act professionally - even the Italians don't scare them! Someday, I hope I might be half as good as them :)*

This note will be particularly beneficial to those who may be required to run a special event station either on the lower bands or maybe on VHF. These tips & tricks will also help you anywhere on the band, regardless of your circumstances.

Mirroring

When you call CQ on the band, it is generally accepted that you "own" that frequency until you decide to go QRT and terminate your usage. Let's call the CQer the "Owner" and the person who calls in, the "Caller". Most Callers generally adopt the style of the Owner. If Owners are crisp and polite, giving name, QTH and basic operating conditions, ie power and antenna, they will generally get a similar style Over in return. Owners who ramble on, giving callers exquisite detail on version numbers, height above sea level & software etc will generally get a similarly long (and mostly boring) rambling return.

Of course, having a DX contact that might be terminated rapidly due to propagation changes, requires a whole different posture however do listen out for the mirroring, it's interesting when you hear it happen well. A skilled Caller can manage large numbers of contacts quickly whilst maintaining friendliness and professionalism.

Rule of Three

I'm interested in how some operators can run high rates on the one hand but maintain a very polite and meaningful existence on the other. I'm not discussing contesting or DXpedition operating, just a busy guy running for a couple of hours, generating great interest with his superb setup. He doesn't "Er and Urm" and he's enjoyable to listen to. He knows what he wants to say and he encourages you to follow suit; sometimes guiding you, "Back to you for a short final" is an ideal example of Operators who manage Over dura-

tions.

Whilst in Cornwall in a fantastic beach location, I was privileged to run a few pile-ups during the night to North and South America. I had a dilemma on how fast I should push the pile, on the one hand, I wanted to give the Callers some time to enjoy their radio but on the other, I was conscious of the little guy, 3,000 miles away with a G5RV at 20 feet, looking for his first trans-Atlantic QSO on 40m to the UK (amazingly, there are many). I didn't want him to wait an eternity to get a look in.

To satisfy all Callers, I would give them three turns on their microphone, the first turn was when they transmitted their callsign, and of course, I'd call them back giving them a signal report, my name & QTH and passing back to them for their second turn, sometimes saying, "...back to you for a short over please..". In the main, they mirrored my approach and gave me the same style Over as I gave them; crisp and to the point, but friendly and polite at the same time. I'd thank them for calling me and say bye-bye, passing back to them for a short cheerio.

Getting this just right achieves around 60 QSOs per hour, not huge by contest or DXpedition standards, but one that gives callers enjoyment on the one hand but doesn't frustrate the pile-up with long rambling Overs.

I tried leaving out their third turn on the microphone and not give them a chance to say cheerio by calling QRZ straight away, but for the 10 second saving, it didn't give me any satisfaction. I therefore adopted the Rule of Three, 1) They get to TX their call, 2) They get a fulfilling over and 3) They get to say goodbye and then I returned to the pile-up.

During the same holiday, I had occasion to listen to many of stations activating Lighthouses. Some of them followed my *Rule of Three* but many others had not thought about what they were going to say and had no training or discussion prior to the event and they just "winged" it, waffling endlessly about the event that they were putting on. Of course, they'd end this rambling over with "it's all on QRZ".

So how can a Special Event station manage their contacts? For me, assuming you have more than one caller, I encourage the Rule of Three. It goes like this, and let's assume you are mid-pile-up:

Owner: "... thanks for calling. Bye bye... GB1ABC listening?"

Tip: Always give your callsign, do not say only "QRZ", it will frustrate Callers who have just tuned in and they will have no idea who you are or what style you are operating. A snappy callsign takes no longer to say than "QRZ" anyway and it's darned professional.

Callers transmit and you pick out a partial callsign..

Owner: "Who is the Papa Alpha please? P.A. only please?"

Caller: " PA1ABC, PA1ABC.."

Tip: If you are a caller, Just give your callsign and stop. I have heard on a number of occasions, two-stations, both thinking that they have been instructed and both doubling with each other, giving what should be their 2nd Over. Messy.

Owner: "PA1ABC, thanks for the call, you are 5 and 8 (give accurate reports please). My name is Callum, QTH Birmingham at the XYZ Museum (*no need to elaborate*). Full details on QRZ.com. PA1ABC, GB1ABC, over

Tip, yes - say Over. There can be no mistake you are giving the microphone back to him and the other callers will take note of your professionalism and will (hopefully) adopt and mirror your great operating.

Caller "... thank you Callum. Name is Peter from Amsterdam with FT1000mp and G5RV. Sounds like you are having a good time. Enjoy the pile-up. GB1ABC, PA1ABC, over."

Owner "OK, thanks Peter, indeed many callers so I won't hold it. Thanks for calling today. Bye bye Peter, Over."

Tip, I just say "Over" at this point, we don't need both our callsigns this time. We're keeping it short and we don't need to show off that we have a ZL on the line on 40m.. :) We're just giving him the courtesy to allow him to close off and it tells the pile-up to wait.

Caller "Yes, thank you Callum, good luck and bye bye. GB1ABC, PA1ABC. Bye."

Continued on page 3 >>>>

Tip: A good caller will normally do a professional close-down with full callsigns to indicate they are done and dusted and this also preps the pile-up for their chance.

Tip 2: Some callers might try and sneak in between his goodbye (above) and you calling again (below). I encourage you to ignore them. Staying absolutely professional will maintain a discipline and give the other callers confidence that you know what you are doing. Imagine the consequences of accepting a sneaky call this time? You guessed it, the pile up will cave in on you the next time someone says goodbye and you'll lose control.

Owner: "Thank Peter. GB1ABC listening..?"

.. and off we go again.

But practice makes it all worthwhile. You would be surprised how many callers you can get when you pace yourself like this, even on 40m during the day at 100w. People love professionalism - and when they hear your little 100w station operating professionally, they will call you.

A final tip, no matter what operating you are doing, if you can keep your Over shorter rather than longer, you will get a faster, more dynamic contact with greater input from your opposite number. You can still have long, enjoyable QSOs (if that's what you'd like) but by keeping your Overs snappy, you will achieve a more fulfilling experience. Try it :)

Enjoy your operating.

Callum, M0MCX.



Seagulls and Inverted V options

I'm often thinking up ways of getting more gain from my wires. Recent success with my 10m and 15 nested horizontal dipole gave me the inspiration to attempt a self-supporting nested dipole that would tune on 40m, 20m, 15m and 10m using heavy-duty fibreglass 10m flag-poles.

Concentrating on 40m only for a moment, there doesn't seem to be that much difference in outright gain when comparing Inverted V against a horizontal 40m dipole at 9m in height (at feed-point) but there is just enough difference to make this a worthwhile antenna, particularly at both lower angles and where it matters for local and EU contacts; 40 to 60 degrees. Beyond that, the Inverted V catches up, sending all it's RF straight up. But being multi-band makes this a doubly-worthy winner.

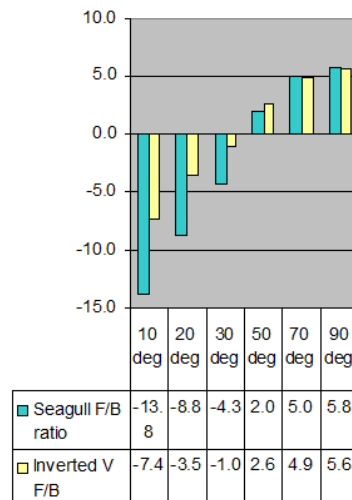
The centre mounting plate was drilled out to accommodate a 10 degree incline to the horizontal, not so much for aesthetics, but so that it would be easy to manoeuvre when low to the ground without the ends scraping. I adopted the name "Seagull" because of the image it created in my mind, a gull in flight.

The three wire dipole elements were cut in D10 comms wire for 40m, 20m and 10m. They were crimped and soldered to a pair of 6mm stainless terminals. A 1:1 current balun was constructed from a previously burned out Radio Works balun, using the ferrite beads just as the manufacturer does; slipping them over a old RG58 patch lead. I cut off one of the PL259s and connected the coax braid and centre conductor to the stainless bolts. A liberal quantity of hot-glue followed to water-proof it all.

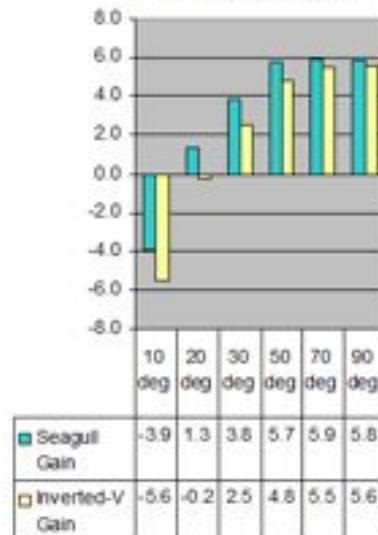
Mark M0MSE, helped me in a full dress-rehearsal one Saturday morning and apart from many minute adjustments to get a match of less than 2:1 on all bands, we had no surprises.

Callum M0MCX

F/B at 10m



Broadside Gain at 10m



| | Seagull Gain | Inverted-V Gain | Seagull F/B | Inverted V F/B |
|--------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 10 deg | -3.9 | -5.6 | -13.8 | -7.4 |
| 20 deg | 1.3 | -0.2 | -8.8 | -3.5 |
| 30 deg | 3.8 | 2.5 | -4.3 | -1.0 |
| 50 deg | 5.7 | 4.8 | 2.0 | 2.6 |
| 70 deg | 5.9 | 5.5 | 5.0 | 4.9 |
| 90 deg | 5.8 | 5.6 | 5.8 | 5.6 |



Transmitting out of band!

Or how a shack re-vamp got into difficulties!

Too much equipment - too little space.... A common issue I am sure.

You know the sort of layout:

HF Transceiver

Desk Mic

VHF/UHF Transceiver

Wide band Receiver

SWR/Power Meter for HF

Antenna Matching unit for HF

Computer for HRD etc etc

Keyboard & Mouse

Stereo Speakers

Extra desk mic for Pc use eg Echolink &

Skype

A4 printer/copier

My xyl would say (of course) to liberate most of it and despite her excellent advice, what I really need to do is to make the layout more compact without losing any functionality.

So a shack revamp is in order.

With everything working a treat, I had a bit of a move round and in the process replaced my rather puny Avair SWR/Power meter with a rather nice Daiwa combined meter that would display peak power instead of just average power. Rather nice white leds would add a touch of class to the shack. I also had bought a Switch-mode power supply to use when out portable with a generator or when on holiday within reach of a 13A socket.

I have the main station transceiver (Kenwood TS2000) linked to the PC via a serial port connection and I mainly use an Adonis (Nissei) 308 desk mic.

I use a linear Power Supply of the twin meter variety for the Rig and a separate linear supply for the SWR meter and for the Automatic Z11 Pro 2 matcher.

I had up until now no direct link between rig and the Z11 Pro 2 (apart from the Antenna input of course) but now was the time to link the two directly so tuning would follow me automatically. This also had the advantage of freeing up a DC power lead which by luck fitted the new Daiwa meter, the one supplied being too short and having Anderson Pole plugs was relegated back to the box from whence it came.

I use two separate 13A supplies, properly RF filtered twin 13A MK sockets for

anything RF and a high quality Belkin filtered extension lead for anything computer.

On connecting back up I noticed the noise level on HF had shot up to S9 across all of the 40m and 20m band and investigation showed the noise extended from around 5Mhz to 15Mhz.

Several unprintable words later, I made myself a strong coffee and thought. Well that did no good of course so I

reached for my multiband SW, MW and LW transistor radio of good German stock.

Taking it downstairs and outside, I pointed it accusingly at next doors satellite transponder thinking perhaps the hot weather had sent it into silly mode, no such luck.

Taking the radio into the garage, the interference got louder as I neared the back of the garage. For those- *Phil*- who have seen my garage, that was no mean feat. But louder it was and what is above the back half and more specifically the back RH side...

You've got... My Shack.

Up in the shack and switching the radio to AM revealed a host of jumbled AM broadcasts which were being radiated from my shack! But Where!

So what had changed?

I had added the Daiwa meter, connected the DC lead but not yet fed it any DC. The new switch mode supply was connected to the Daiwa but not switched on and the Z11 Pro2 was now linked directly to the Rig.

I also looked at my 99p RS232 Serial lead, but despite it's weedy appearance, it had been working without issues.

Turned on the switch mode supply and the noise went, dropping back to a more usual S5-6. The new Daiwa meter looked great lit up and I did the rounds with my transistor radio to satisfy myself the noise had gone..... It had. Back in the shack I turned off the supply to the Daiwa meter and up came the noise.

Taking the DC lead out from the back of the Daiwa meter, the noise fell back again. Feeding it from a linear supply made no difference.

So it had to be the meter or the meter & supply lead combination.



The meter is continually supplied with RF in the form of received radio waves from the antenna even when everything is switched off, so it must be picking up the signals, demodulating them and sending them along the DC power lead.

In order to do that, there must be detection and oscillation going on. Feeding in DC, kills it, as did feeding DC from a battery.

The DC lead I was using was rather long, but it had been fine with the Z11Pro2 tuner and as it had already a ferrite core in place, I thought nothing more of it. However I added a second one at the power supply end and that made matters worse! The ferrite cores seemed to be the radiators...

So they were doing the opposite of what was expected.

Took both away and the interference being radiated stopped!

Phew

Clearly there is something strange going on inside the meter- insufficient screening perhaps?

Dragged out the original DC lead with Anderson Pole connectors and did a quick bodge with an extension lead to connect to power supply.

Yes, you've guessed, no problem with the original DC lead even when extending it to the same length and running it along the same path as the one that caused the problems.

Explain that, I can't and my head hurts...

but while I have been off air from home I have been having good times with FT857 and ATAS 120A mobile.

Anyway, the men in white coats have come to take me away HaHa!

Having fun with RF?

Ian M0IDR

DX44TXP—M0DGQ from Cape Verde Is.

D44TXP, August 27 until September 11 from the Isle of Sal, Cape Verde Islands. off West coast of Africa

Primarily this was a holiday and a special birthday surprise for my wife Ann. My wife knows me well enough now to realise no holiday is complete without a radio, so a homebrew three band CW transceiver, 10m fishing pole, dipole and a sealed lead acid battery plus a SMP were brought along.

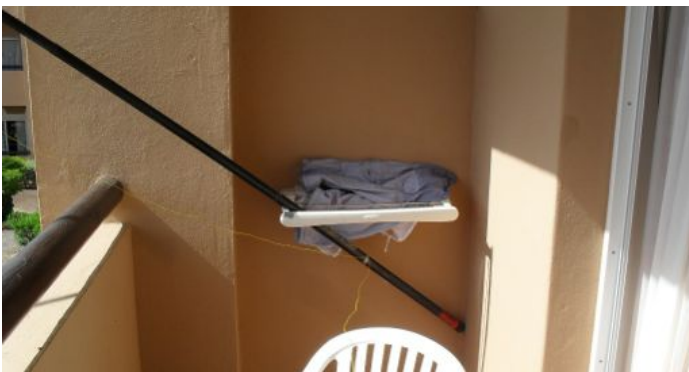
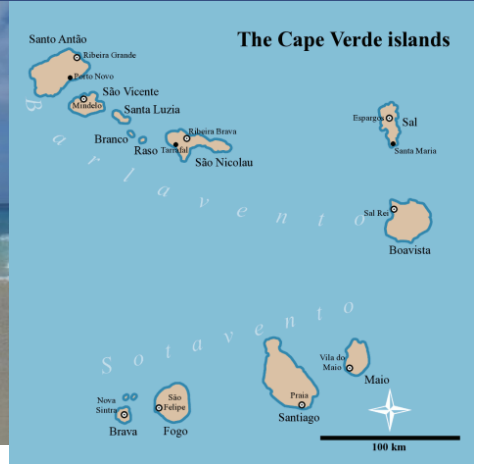
Operation was from the beach 1km west of Santa Maria (near the turtle hatchery) and also from the hotel apartment. Beach operation was difficult due to the paddle being very unstable, balanced on a mound of sand! Operation from the apartment was very comfortable in comparison. A three band dipole (10, 20, and 40m) was used for beach operating and a half wave end fed for 20m was used at the apartment. Of all the bands used, 20m was by far the most successful, 40m proved disappointing - only a few weak Brazilian stations were heard. After a few days of operating I confined all operation to the hotel apartment using an end-fed half wave with a homebrew L-match for 20m, this combination has always given good results. Europe, Japan, Africa, Ukraine and Brazil were all worked with ease.

The radio used had a TX power of twenty Watts, a total of 133 QSO's were had through out the holiday and I was delighted to have some UK contacts. Twenty meters was open every evening I used the radio, best time was 8pm - 10pm UK time (Cape Verde is two hours behind this) so operation was usually for half an hour or so before the evening meal. I was surprised with the amount of activity when calling CQ, after

the first few QSO's a pile up would begin.

The S-meter on my set decided to malfunction after the first day, so if you are a station I worked please do not be disappointed by the RST given, it was a guess!

As for the holiday itself, it was very much a relaxed affair - great if you just want to chill and enjoy the WX and sea. Snorkelling was very good, just to the left of the turtle hatchery there is a small reef supporting a wide variety of marine life. Beware of the strong rip currents, if the red flag is flying do not attempt to swim in the sea. One more thing to be aware of; being only 16 degrees north of the equator the sun is extremely strong so take precautions. In my opinion this holiday destination is not suitable if you have young children (our children are adults now, this is our second holiday without the kids - takes some getting used to!), outside of the complex there is not much to do, a few restaurants and bars but that is all. We stayed at the hotel Riu Garuopa (all inclusive - the first time we have ever done this) and could not fault the accommodation and staff. There was entertainment day and night. The food and drink was unlimited and good.



Barry M0DGQ



Let's go Mobile or Portable

My experiences and disappointments this Summer

My mobile station consists of a Yaesu FT7900 Dual Band transceiver and a Watson W7900 Dual band antenna with SO239 Mount and a "hands free" set up of sun visor microphone and discreet PTT.

The Watson antenna has a gain of 5dB on 2m where it is 7/8 wavelength and a gain of 7.6dB on 70cms where it is 3 x 5/8 wavelength. The entire antenna is 1.54m tall and is solidly mounted to the roof bar. Quite a big beast as mobiles go, a bit of a "tree trimmer" but very useful gain.



For 2m portable I use the Alton Antenna Array mini collapsible beam, the 2 MBA, on a piece of plastic electrical wiring conduit at



around 2 meters from the ground. The beam measures a modest 55cms by 55cms and has a 2dB forward gain with a 25db Front to Back ratio. WAB rare square SW65 Activation this Summer

Contacts made from the St Agnes Coastguard station on the 2MBA included Cardiff, Gloucester, Jersey, and St Agnes (Isle of Scilly) where I spoke to a Cornishman /A on 50 watts FM. I also apologised to the snoozing ham in Redruth that I nearly knocked off his chair with my signal strength! So even though I did not make the distance back to Don, I did get pretty close and no doubt had I have made the distance had I have been able to use SSB.

The exact position of the Coast Guard Station is shown on the map as the tiny square between the unfenced yellow road and the coastal path. The blue lines represent the Eastern and Southern edges of WAB square SW65



For my HF portable station I use the Yaesu FT857 and matching ATAS 120A automatic antenna combination with that antenna simply replacing the Watson and both the battery supply and antenna leads forming an umbilical cord to my operating picnic table and chair.

I fitted an earth lead from the antenna mount direct to the car bodywork as recommended by Yaesu for the ATAS

This station set up has delivered great results static mobile away from the home QTH, where noise levels fell to a respectable S3 and lower.

Finding a quiet location QRM wise is the key to success and although my favourite spot near Broadway Tower (1048 ft ASL) is a bit shielded by trees to the South it provides good takeoff in all directions. From Broadway Hill I have on 2m with the beam made contacts into the tip of Cornwall simplex, across to Norfolk and down to the South Coast.

Another perhaps better spot nearby (Dovers Hill) was subject to the continual tick tick tick of an electric fence. Although lower at 1000ft ASL with no appreciable foliage in the immediate vicinity, the site seemed ideal apart from that pesky fence!



Contesting

The recent WAB 2m contest found me at my usual spot- Broadway Hill, square SP13 where I had some good contacts on the SSB portion of the band. Using the 2MBA beam tied to a fence post, beaming North North East and a small table and chair for the rig and with my back to the wind, I enjoyed making the contacts but was pleased when the bands fell quiet to pack up and get back in the warmth. The station also attracted the attention of a Chinese family who came and had a look see and who spoke perfect English!

Moving down to the main car park resulted in much more QRM from pre-

sumably the tea rooms, something I have not noticed before at that location.

Turning now briefly to the disappointments:

English Holiday in Norfolk.

Booked the barn conversion in a tiny village a few steps away from the pub. A long garden leading to a field, I had permission to set up a long wire or dipole extending into the field if needed. Seemed ideal on paper but in reality the QRM was a virtually continual S9 across all of the 80, 40 and 20 meter bands. Even though the barn conversion and surrounding farm buildings were fed by underground supplies, the rest of the village was fed by ancient overhead wires and when the pub opened...

English Holiday in Cornwall 2013

A lovely new build one bedroom cottage close to the owners' very substantial stone built cottage. Open views to the North and East and plenty of garden. Proved to be a radio dead zone for 2m & 70cms and my delta loop did not do much better on HF. The trip to St Agnes was great fun though and the volunteers in the Coast Guard building came and watched intently (just as well I had a few good contacts)

The latest experiment is with a remote tuned Magnetic Loop antenna, more of this later though.

Ian
MOIDR



The Wythall "PQP" Microphone revisited.

When I first joined Wythall Radio Club in March 2010, apart from completing the training for the Foundation licence, I joined a group of members under the direction of Tom G3PQP to build a desk microphone suitable for SSB with adjustable compression built in.

An excellent dynamic microphone insert as supplied by Maplin was coupled to a processing circuit with variable control to contour speech for the SSB mode of transmission.

Several units were completed and it is sad to think of those carefully constructed units lying unused in the "man stores"

Well I can reveal that one is in daily use in the MOIDR shack for SSB and I have just finished tailoring a second one for Phil 2E0WTH.

During construction, our tutor cast an element of doubt over my soldering (not enough solder being applied and was very keen to demonstrate my unit straight from the production line. The demonstration went well and it got a clean bill of health, but it was clear that the circuit was capable of giving a wide range of processing suitable for SSB transmissions.

When the desk microphone was completed and housed in its aluminium box, the tutor was aghast that I had fitted mine with a RCA phono plug! To cap it all, I had painted the housing in Silver hammered paint, a very posh it looked!

After having explained my use of a RCA jack- to ease interfacing to my two rigs- 8 pin round ICOM and 8 pin round KENWOOD, he made a point to the rest of the class to use a "proper" plug!

The lack of a PTT button on the microphone was sorted by running a thin screened lead to a separate non-latching button switch.

For Phil, he needed a RJ45 connector wired for a Yaesu FT857 and a PTT button on the microphone unit itself.

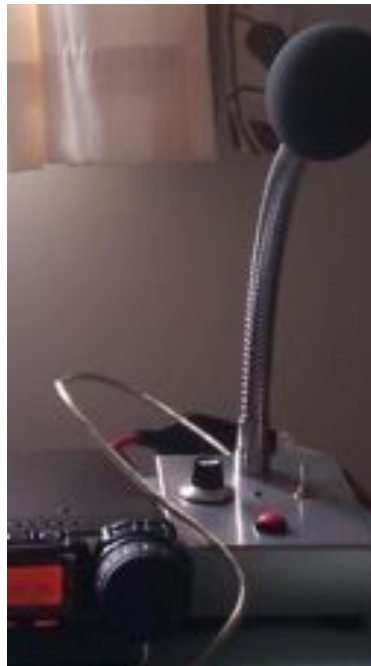
Finding the pinout for the Yaesu rig was confusing as the manual gives no info and the Internet provided at least two different answers.

So in best homebrew fashion I made up a RJ45 with 8 different coloured wires and armed with the conflicting data, found the one where the +5v was on the correct pin, the rest were easy.

Once I had the pinout, I needed to make a suitable cable to connect rig to microphone. A USB lead with connectors removed revealed good double screening and a drain wire together with 4 cores of flexible wire- perfect!

Making up a RJ45 is made easier by using the Cat 6 two part type connector - this was completed without too much trouble.

Just make sure that the connector grips the cable sufficiently, they are designed for very specific cable types and the cable I used was quite a bit smaller in diameter than the Cat 5 or 6 cable for which it is designed.



Fitting a non-latching PTT button was a matter of drilling, centrally towards the front edge a hole of suitable diameter and fitting the switch.

Wiring was completed- two wires for PTT, one for microphone (hot side), the drain wire and a few strands of screening for the mic return and a spare wire that carries the +5v if needed.

Changing the settings from default for compression and mic gain (ssb) from the default setting of 50 to 10 and 13 respectively gave a good punchy audio that was well received.

Desk mics are expensive and if you are in the market for a desk mic, give your home brew item a try. You will not be disappointed!

Ian
MOIDR

Club History: Cellar work 1984

The club had obtained the use of a room for their meetings at The Wythall Heath Social Club in Chapel Lane and the committee meeting on 5th March 1981 recorded that 76 members joined at the first meeting, and there were also 29 visitors, who presumably only attended, but did not join

On one specified meeting day, members arrived to find themselves locked out of the room at Chapel Lane. The committee enquired about using the top floor of Wythall House (did you even know it was there?) but this was rejected although they did have the offer of using the pigeon hut. Instead they started hiring Park Hall. There was a strict proviso that no trouble be caused. CB did not necessarily have a very good name in some people's minds at that time!

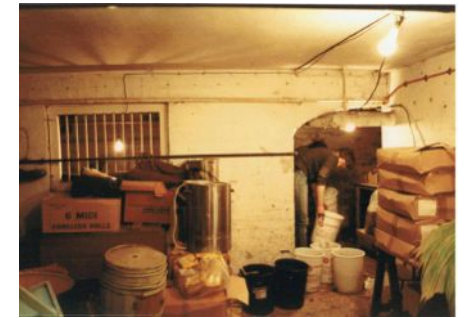
In December 1983, the club was offered the tentative sole use of the cellar at Wythall House, but on the understanding that they would have to clear it out and put it in a suitable condition for safe use at their own expense. We also had to put in shelving in the "boiler room" for the exclusive use of Wythall House. Toby Jackson G4TOB who taught building work at a local college acted as the radio club's consultant on the cellar project. As you can see from the photographs there was quite

a lot of work to be done, including brick laying and getting rid of some asbestos and it took quite a lot of club members spare time to make it suitable for use. Another interesting point is that before the bowling green was laid out, a trench was dug around the outer area and a loop of copper wire was run around it and buried, so forming an earth for the shack.

An agreement between WCA and WRC was drawn up and signed by both parties in February 1984. The agreement was very detailed as to what we could do and what we couldn't do in the cellar, WCA were still suspicious of us even though we had gone respectable by being "radio amateurs". We were limited to using the cellar, no more than three evenings and two half days per week at that time and only between the hours of 9am and 11pm. In November 1984 we had a letter of complaint from the WCA about unfinished work in the cellar, namely a safety rail to the steps and safety barrier to the fire exit at ground level.

Thirty years later and the WCA still have a moan at us from time to time about things we have done or not done.

Chris G0EYO



Ofcom Review of Licence Conditions

Paul Jarvis, from Ofcom, addressed the RSGB Convention in October with their thinking for the Licence Review. He covered the reasons why the review was being undertaken and emphasised that it was not intended to be a radical change, but that the Licence Review was geared to be more explicit with regard to the wording of some of the existing clauses, on operational practice and to help extend the services available to Amateur Radio to encourage development of modern technologies.

He went on to explain that whilst he was keen to hear views from those present at the Convention his workload and staffing meant that he would not be able to enter into general discussions on the likely topics prior to the consultation. He did though stress that Ofcom were working

with the RSGB as part of the pre-consultation preparation, and invited the RSGB to feedback general comments on the topics that he raised.

Amongst some of the areas to be looked at include:

1. One callsign per amateur
2. Regional Secondary Locators
3. Club and Heritage Calls
4. Encouraging people to upgrade their licence grade
5. Spectrum availability and management

The RSGB have already started a forum to encourage comments and views and this is known as the Litmus Test. You can access this forum via the RSGB website

<http://rsgb.org/main/rsgb-consultations/ofcom-consultations/>

Opinions and views will no doubt vary, but the Litmus Test process may be able to identify a consensus on each of the subjects under discussion, and this will be captured by updating the discussion document. At the end of this process this final draft will be passed to Ofcom as a pre-consultation input from the RSGB to help Ofcom frame their consultation approach.

This is worth keeping an eye on and giving your thoughts when you have the opportunity.

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