Wythall Radio Club Newsletter Autumn 2002

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Wythall Radio Club meets from 8pm every Tuesday evening at Wythall House, Wythall Park, Silver Street, Wythall near Birmingham. Visitors are very welcome.
Club callsigns: G1WAC, G4WAC, G7WAC, G0WRC and M5W
Wythall Radio Club is affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

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Editorial

This issue is quite a bumper issue because the club has been quite busy since the last newsletter. We have run a couple of special event stations at Wythall House. One for the Jubilee with the prefix GQ and the other for the annual Wythall Carnival.

The club has also taken part in the regular RSGB VHF National Field Day which was cancelled last year due to foot and mouth.

The AGM is just round the corner which is your chance to decide who you want running the club. Last year's AGM minutes and details of voting will be posted to all members separately. Nominations for all posts should be sent or given to the secretary as soon as possible.

Alban M5UGC

Contest News

Club members entered a variety of contests over the last few months and the club callsigns were aired a few times. National Field Day was the main event from the club, the 2m Backpackers and Activity nights were also entered with club calls, there was even an entry for the Marconi Centenary contest from G0WRC, (who was the op?).

Lee, G0MTN, was the most prolific contester; his entry in the IOTA contest being his best yet, must be the new antenna.

Again, the same callsigns appear in the contests entered list with Vic, M0AEJ, Les M0COK, and Pete, M0COP contributing; where are all the new M3's and 5's?

Let's hope the new rigs at the club will encourage more members to get involved, perhaps more multi-op efforts; if you don't know how to start, try the Activity Contests on Tuesday nights from the club, these are a good introduction to contesting and also an opportunity to get used to the new radios.

The RSGB 80m Slow Speed Cumulative contests take place in September, they are a good opportunity to try out your CW; they only last for 90 minutes and the speed is as slow as you like, the maximum is only 12 wpm and the power is 10W max.

The Foxhunt that was postponed from July has been rescheduled for Sunday the 8th of September, 09:30 to about 1300.

Contest Diary

September

HF

RSGB Slow Speed Cumulative	CW	Sep 2
All Asian DX Contest	SSB	0000Z, Sep 7 - 2400Z, Sep 8
IARU Region 1 Field Day	SSB	1300Z, Sep 7 - 1300Z, Sep 8
QRP ARCI End of Summer PSK31 Sprint		2000Z - 2400Z, Sep 8
RSGB Slow Speed Cumulative	CW	Sep 10
WAE DX Contest	SSB	0000Z, Sep 14 - 2359Z, Sep 15
RSGB Slow Speed Cumulative	CW	Sep 18
Panama Anniversary Contest		1200Z - 2359Z, Sep 22
RSGB Slow Speed Cumulative	CW	Sep 26
CQ/RJ Worldwide DX Contest	RTTY	0000Z, Sep 28 - 2400Z, Sep 29
Anatolian DX Contest		1600Z, Sep 28 - 2400Z, Sep 29

VHF

RSGB 144 MHz Trophy	7th/8th Sep 1400-1400
RSGB 144 MHz Backpackers # 5	8th Sep 1100-1500
WAB 144 MHz Phone	15 Sep 09:00 - 17:00
RSGB 2nd 70 MHz	22nd Sep 0900-1300
WAB 432 MHz Phone	29 Sep 09:00 - 15:00

October

HF

RSGB Slow Speed Cumulative	CW	Oct 4
RSGB 21/28MHz	SSB	Oct 6
Oceania DX Contest, Phone		0800Z, Oct 5 - 0800Z, Oct 6
EU Autumn Sprint	SSB	1500Z - 1859Z, Oct 5
RSGB 21/28 MHz Contest	SSB	0700Z - 1900Z, Oct 6
WAB HF Phone		Sat / Sun 12 - 13 Oct 12:00 - 12:00
Oceania DX Contest	CW	0800Z, Oct 12 - 0800Z, Oct 13
EU Autumn Sprint	CW	1500Z - 1859Z, Oct 12
FISTS Fall Sprint		1700Z - 2100Z, Oct 12
Iberoamericano Contest		2000Z, Oct 12 - 2000Z, Oct 13
RSGB 21/28MHz	CW	Oct 20
JARTS WW RTTY Contest		0000Z, Oct 19 - 2400Z, Oct 20
Worked All Germany Contest		1500Z, Oct 19 - 1459Z, Oct 20
RSGB 21/28 MHz Contest	CW	0700Z - 1900Z, Oct 20
CQ Worldwide DX Contest	SSB	0000Z, Oct 26 - 2400Z, Oct 27

VHF

RSGB 432 MHz - 248 GHz IARU		5 Oct 1400 – 6 Oct 1400
RSGB 1.3/2.3 GHz		5 Oct, 1400 – 2200
RSGB 50 MHz		20 Oct, 0900 - 1300

November

HF

IPA Contest	CW	0600Z - 1000Z, Nov 2 and 1400Z - 1800Z, Nov 2
Ukrainian DX Contest 1200Z		Nov 2 - 1200Z, Nov 3
IPA Contest	SSB	0600Z - 1000Z, Nov 3 and 1400Z - 1800Z, Nov 3
Japan Int. DX Contest, Phone		2300Z, Nov 8 - 2300Z, Nov 10
RSGB Club Calls	SSB	Nov 9
WAE DX Contest	RTTY	0000Z, Nov 9 - 2359Z, Nov 10
OK/OM DX Contest	CW	1200Z, Nov 9 - 1200Z, Nov 10
LZ DX Contest	CW	1200Z, Nov 16 - 1200Z, Nov 17
RSGB 1.8 MHz Contest	CW	2100Z, Nov 16 - 0100Z, Nov 17
CQ Worldwide DX Contest	CW	0000Z, Nov 23 - 2400Z, Nov 24

VHF

RSGB & EU 144 MHz Marconi Memorial Contest		
	CW	2 Nov 1400 – 3 Nov1400
RSGB 6 hour 144 MHz	CW	3 Nov 0800 - 1400

Contest Results

RSGB 432 MHz AFS	Wythall ARC 11/17	
	G1WAC (multi op) 5/5	
IARU HF Champs.	G0MTN 3rd G mixed LP	
	M0COP 7th G phone LP	
RSGB 144 MHz AFS	**Wythall A 6/19**	
	M0COP 21/59, G4VPD 27/59	M0COK 34/59,
	M5UGC 37/59, G0ICJ 45/59	
	Wythall B 19/19	
	M0AEJ 49/59, G7OJO 57/59	
EA RTTY	M0COP 183/205 all bands,	M0AEJ 27/29 20m
Mexico RTTY	G0MTN 140/144	
TARA PSK	M0COP 54/66	
EU Sprint CW	G0MTN 29/51	
SSB	G0MTN 27/64	
CQ WPX RTTY	G0MTN 4th G LP	
	M0AEJ 8th G LP	

Marconi Centenary Contest	G0MTN 4th	SOAB LP	Prize
	M0COP 13th	"	"
	G0WRC 3rd	Multi-op	"

RSGB 144/432MHz	M5W	5/8	144MHz	6S
		3/4	432MHz	6S
		6/9	Overall	6S

Contests Entered

May

Volta RTTY	M0AEJ	50 qso's	
50MHz Trophy	M0COP	109 qso's	
Baltic	G0MTN	148 qso's	
CQ WPX	G0MTN	11 qso's	
Russian DX	G0MTN	575 qso's	
NFD (at G3NKC/P)	G0MTN	1198 qso's	
June			
RSGB 144MHz Backpackers #2	M0COP	35 qso's	
July			
RSGB VHF NFD	G1WAC/P	2m	383 qso's
	G7WAC/P	70cm	25 qso's
	G4WAC/P	4m	37 qso's
	G0WRC/P	6m	60 qso's
RSGB 50MHz Activity	G1WAC	18 qso's	
RSGB 144MHz Backpackers #4	G1WAC/P 32 qso's, ops: M0COK, M0COP		

IOTA G0MTN 670 qso's, 942,066 pts in 12 hr
mixed mode, island, unassisted, low power section

Contest calendars and rules:

HF: www.g4tsh.demon.co.uk/HFCC/index.htm
www.sk3bg.se/contest/c2002apr.htm
www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html

VHF: www.vhfcc.freeserve.co.uk
www.users.zetnet.co.uk/g1ntw/wab-cont.htm

One of the events held during World RadioSport Champions (see article on page 12) was the tradition of the pile-up competition, which was broadcast over local broadcast FM radio! The pile-up comprised some 200 SSB and 200 CW callsigns, with perhaps with 4 or more callsigns being transmitted simultaneously. A group of Wythall club members took the SSB pile-up test one Tuesday recently.

Here are the results:

G4VPD	30
G0EYO	28
M0COP	26
M5UGC	23
G6KMQ	21
G0ICJ	17
G6ZDQ	15
M1EOQ	12

Well done to Mike G4VPD for leading the pack. At WRTC itself James 9V1YC was the leader scoring 48!

Rob Manion Talk — September 19th 2002

Please keep Thursday 19 September free for the visit and talk by Rob Mannion, Editor of Practical Wireless. His talk will be based on "PW — Origins, Past, Present and Future" followed by what is usually an animated "Question and Answer" session. I am sure that he will cover many issues relating to Amateur Radio including many of his experiences around the hobby. The talk will coincide with PW's 70th birthday and celebrations will start at the Leicester show on Friday/Saturday 20th/21st September i.e. the days after Robs visit to us.

This is a great opportunity to get a good number of Radio Amateurs together for what promises to be a interesting and entertaining evening relating to our chosen hobby. The meeting will take place at 8pm in Park Hall, Wythall and we will have to charge £1 per head entrance fee to cover the cost of the room hire, for which we have arranged a special rate. Rob does not require a fee but requests that a donation is made to RAIBC, which is the Amateur Radio Charity which he supports. The normal way of raising the donation is by running a raffle on the night and donating the proceeds.

There will be one strict requirement on the night which will be, ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING IN THE HALL, as Rob is extremely allergic to any kind of tobacco smoke. Any smoke in the hall could bring on one of his attacks which would result in the talk being abandoned.

Please all try to give this meeting your full support to make the visit a worthwhile one.

David G0ICJ

Jubilee Weekend

The club were asked by Wythall House to look after the parking arrangements for their Bank Holiday Jubilee Celebrations on Monday June 3rd. Being the friendly bunch we are, we readily agreed and decided that we would join in the fun by setting up a Jubilee Station GQ4WAC. Another excuse the get the trailer mast into action after its recent maintenance. A few days before the event the long range weather forecast looked decidedly iffy!. A phone call to the Scouts got us the use of the Scout HQ for the day so we were assured of a dry, warm place to set up our station.

The day dawned and a few of us met to get the show on the road. Colin G6ZDQ, Lee G0MTN, Mark G8WJY (now an M0 I believe), Peter M5DUO, Peter G3LWF, Peter M0COP , Vic M0AEJ, Anita and me. (Bound to have left someone out-sorry). Colin had located the mast just behind Park Hall Kitchen the day before and so we were soon into action. After the training on the Tolkien weekend we were quite sharp. In order to join in the spirit of the day we hung Union Jack pennants from the guys and a Union Jack on the top mast. We put up a beam for 2m, a colinear for 2m and the dipole for HF. We did all of this in the rain!. Eventually we got operational but we had a few problems with the hf dipole so those bands were poor. We made most contacts on the 2m beam and used the colinear for talk-back to the hardy band who were on the gate. The weather being so bad the expected hordes did not appear so parking duty was a fairly leisurely affair. I got to say hello to Julie Kirkbride our local MP (bit of a dish really – pity about the politics) who came to open the event for Wythall House. They had gone to a lot of trouble with funfairs, pig roasts, jazz band and exhibitions.

We organised our own barbecue and this seemed to go off OK, in between the showers. Mick G4VPD did most of the cooking. The weather put a bit of a dampener on the day but those that participated enjoyed themselves and we got to work a few stations. We also made a special QSL card for the event.

Chris G0EYO



Cornwall Calling

We had a little holiday
Two weeks in the sun
A wireless tour of Cornwall
It was certain to be fun

The first stop of our journey
Was Longleat Safari Park
A very impressive rally
That was my first remark.

We then moved on to Cornwall
A county steeped in history
A communications mecca
It's the only place to be.

There's Porthcurno for cables
That come in from the sea
A museum about telegrams
And how they got from A to B

Next there is Goonhilly
Communicating with the sky
The massive giant dishes
They're a wonder on the eye.

Then of course there's Poldhu.
A place all hams should go.
Where Marconi's little miracle
Happened all those years ago.

The Lizard was our next stop
It famous for it's light
The impressive Lizard lighthouse
A beacon in the night.

Then walk along the cliff path
to Bass Point, That's where we went
A little Marconi station
From where shipping messages were sent.

In the field back at Poldhu
I put my station on the air
My little FT-817
And a dipole hung with care.

With only 5 watts output
I didn't reach the USA
But to operate from Marconi's field
Made this a very special day.

If your into communication
Cornwall's the place to go
It's not just me who thinks that,
So did our friend, Guglielmo.

Darren GW7HOC

Club Diary

September 1st 2002		Telford Rally — R.A.F. Cosford
September 8th 2002	9.30 a.m.	Foxhunt
September 19th 2002	8 p.m.	Visit & Talk by Rob Manion, Editor of Practical Wireless Magazine. PW — Origins, Past Present & Future
October 15th 2002	8.30 p.m.	Club A.G.M.
March 9th 2003		Wythall Radio Rally

VHF National Field Day 6th-7th July 2002

With no VHF National Field Day contest in 2001 due to the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak, this years contest was eagerly looked forward to.



The strategy this year was to put in an entry in the Mix and Match section with a high power station for 2m, 70cms and 6m in the restricted section and 4m in the low power section. As an extra, Chris was putting on an HF special event station, G6SL, to mark the closing of Eddystone Radio after 90 years of existence.

The set-up started on the Friday evening when the mobile tower was put in place on the field. Saturday morning was fortunately dry and everyone met at the shack at about 08:30 and proceeded to empty it into a fleet of cars and caravans, which then made its way carefully up to the field.

Like a well-drilled army, every one knew what had to be done and teams formed to put up the tower and masts, assemble antennas and set up the rigs, and most importantly, set up the kitchen.

The 2m and HF station were set up in the club's caravan; the 70cms and 6m stations went into the motor caravan that Alban, M5UGC, provided for the weekend.

Getting the 2m amplifier out of the shack and across to the field was a struggle as it is extremely heavy and had to be treated with great care, but it was successfully moved with no hernias reported by club members.

Dale had provided two 17 element Tonna antennas complete with harnesses and feeders for the contest, with these at 100', 400w from the amplifier, and the club's FT 920, the 2m station was very impressive.

The setting up was completed by about 13:00, in a record time according to Lee, even though there were fewer helpers this year. Chris, G0EYO, set about providing lunch for everyone, which came as a welcome break before the contest started at 14:00.

After lunch the contesting began, the 2m station being very busy, the 70cms and 6m stations starting well, but as there was no DX propagation, they became quieter as the day progressed. The only problem encountered was with the logging program, it occasionally stopped incrementing the qso numbers, but that was soon dealt with.

Chris was kept busy on HF with his special event station, mainly on 40 and 80m.

The operators were well cared for, with Reg, M3OJO, providing cups of tea on demand and a fridge full of cold drinks and chocolate bars, and with enough people on site willing to operate, the atmosphere was quite relaxed.

The evening barbeque went down well.

The weather was fine, which ensured a good attendance; with Chris and Mick providing an endless supply of burgers and sausages and Reg bringing a curry, everyone was well catered for. It was about 23:30 before just those on the night shift were left on site.

The 2m station was operated throughout the night, with the occasional QSO passed over to 70cms. A few of those who stayed managed to get their heads down for an hour or two before they were disturbed by the day shift turning up at 07:00.

Sunday morning was damp and misty with a fine drizzle falling, but Chris provided an excellent fried breakfast, which set everyone up for the day.

The first task was to change the 6m set-up for 4m, this was done quite quickly and the 4m station was soon on the air. Typically, when this was finished the rain stopped and the sun came out.

Again, a good turn out of members ensured that there were plenty of operators to keep the stations manned, 2m continued to be busy although with no real dx contacts, but the qso rates on 4m and 70cms weren't brilliant; losing the amp on 4m didn't help nor did the inexplicable drop in output power on 70cms.

Chris again prepared sandwiches for lunch before the contest drew to a close at 14:00.

Dismantling the site was just as slick as the set-up, and by 16:30 the tower and caravan had been towed away and everything had been packed into the cars to be taken back to the shack.

It was generally agreed that the weekend was a great success and very enjoyable. The event was very much a team effort, and thanks must go to all those who took



on extra responsibilities, including Chris EYO for the catering and Chris KMQ for looking after the caravan.

Below is a summary of the contest results with comments and a comparison with the 2000 NFD, prepared by Lee.



Technically, all of the stations worked well, and despite disappointing scores on 4, 6 and 70cm, we should be on track for a reasonable position in the tables. Some locators need checking, and some QSOs with locations, not locators, will add to the km points scores. Entries must be in by 31 July so plenty of time to sort out the logs prior to entry.

144 MHz — G1WAC/P
Open Section
FT 736, 400 watts,
2 x 17 el Tonna @ 100 feet
383 QSOs, 98,488 km
DX into Orkney, EA, F up to 1200 km

Comments:
In 2000 (there was no VHF NFD in 2001 of course), we were in low power section on 30 ft mast. We had E's conditions then — best DX to ER at 2205km, but total points then only 32,661 from 108 QSOs. This weekend we passed the 2000 QSO total after just 3.5 hours of operating. With the station as it was I felt it was certainly competitive in the Open section against all except the east coast stations who have their own advantage. You had confidence to call stations and manage QSB/QRM etc. Some stations noted they were only running indoor half waves or dual band verticals etc. The station required a lot of work to man it (tnx Mick, Pete COP for sterling work!) but in return we were rewarded with almost constant activity and calls over the 24 hours. Overall, great fun, and many thanks to Dale for use of his antennas and amplifier.

432 MHz — G7WAC/P
Restricted Section
IC 910, 75 watts
23 el Tonna @ 30 feet
25 QSOs, 3,898 km
DX to PA

Comments:
In 2000, we had the antenna at 100 foot, and managed 40 QSOs. 8588 kms, DX into PA (not DL though!). Conditions this year were not above average, although we possibly missed some openings and local G's by not manning the station as much as we could. However, even determined calling and tuning was no guarantee of success so I can't argue we lost very many points, if any. BBQ + Beer should take precedence! We seemed to have (once again for this band) an intermittent power loss problem. Alban and Pete COP have the details and it will be useful to check out.

I hope South Birmingham didn't blow up their new 475!



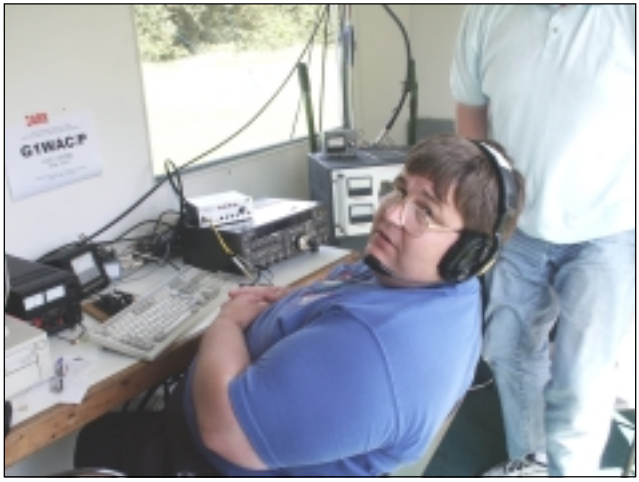
70 MHz — G4WAC/P
Low Power
FT 847, 15 watts (most of time)
7 el yagi @ 30 feet
37 QSOs, 5,323 km
DX to GI / GM

Comments:
In 2000, 35 QSO and 5383 km (very similar!). A steady plod as usual. The MFJ analyser showed a SWR around 1.5 to 1.7, the in-line SWR meter showed SWR of 2 when using the radio itself. With the amplifier in line, this increased to 3. Patch lead problem? Removed amplifier, and ran at 15 watts. The FT847 will produce more but it is required to under-drive as operation on 4m was not designed. I did feel the RX performance didn't match the TX. e.g. several 59 reports received, even when running 15w, but really struggled with reception. Audio was at full output most of the time. Mick mentioned that it is possible to improve front-end performance.

50 MHz — G0WRC/P
Restricted section
FT 847, 100 watts
5 el Tonna @ 30 feet
60 QSOs, 8,979 km
DX to PA

Comments:
In 2000, had 96 QSO, 114,821 km (yes really). Europe wide Sporadic E that year, but nothing this year! G stations were just spotting VE beacons at 11.30 on Saturday night, but I don't think we worked anything.99% QSOs inter-UK.

Pete, M0COP



World RadioSport Team Champions



For a week in July the best contest operators in the world gathered in Helsinki to take part in the 4th World RadioSport Team Champions, or WRTC.

The aim of the event is to provide a level playing field for contesters by offering the chance for 52 two-man teams to compete at identical stations in the same geographical area, all with similar callsigns.

The contest itself was at the end of a packed week of socialising with other visitors from around the world, and taking part in opening ceremonies, experiencing Finnish culture and saunas, meetings and DX presentations.

Each team would be operating from a host station who had in the weeks before WRTC set up an identical tribander and windom antenna at their home. Most host stations were located at Finnish summer cottages in the forests - where the Finn's return to at the weekend and during the summertime.

Accompanying each team was a referee who would liaise between the team and their host, and also make sure there was absolute fairness in adhering to the rules. I was a referee to the South African team of ZS6EZ and ZS4TX, and I was also entrusted with the OJ callsign that was only revealed 10 minutes before the start. A technological first was real time reporting of claimed scores by GSM SMS by each referee, which was then posted directly to a web page. This way the contest was followed by thousands of other amateurs, and the competitors friends and family back home during the course of the 24 hours.

All of the entrants were winners just by being selected to represent their country, but after the end of 24 hours of SSB and CW pile-ups, Jeff N5TJ and Dan K1TO from the USA became three time WRTC winners which is an outstanding achievement, with over 2400 QSOs being made with their 100 watt signal.

Lee G0MTN



Mast adventures



One of the main reasons for moving into my house in April last year was the possibility of putting up a mast with a directional HF antenna. It was in last July I first started to measure what would fit into the garden, and then I started to approach my neighbours to gauge their opinion, and hopefully win the support! Some neighbours were supportive, some were a little more apprehensive, and one was decidedly against my plans and organised a petition of local residents objections!

However, I was not daunted and in October applied for Planning Permission for a special 3 section 9m Tennamast. This was smaller than the normal 3 section mast — with the important feature that when wound down would only be 14 feet tall — hidden behind the apple tree at the top of my garden. With almost complete shrouding when the mast is lowered, following a visit from a local Planning Officer, I was granted planning permission in December, despite the objections of several neighbours.

I decided to wait until the spring before putting the mast up as this would make the job more pleasant, and also give maximum tree cover of the mast from the neighbour's eyes! The first job to do was dig a hole a cubic metre in size. This was a joint effort between me and my Dad and was finished in a couple of evenings. The only problems encountered here were trying to hide all of the soil and clay taken out of the hole, and also baling out the hole following some severe rainstorms.

The final step was to organise some concrete to put in the hole along with the mast. To do this I enlisted the help of the "Wythall Mast Crew" and we held "BaconFest 2002" one Saturday morning. Whilst I manned the kettle, the team mixed the concrete on my drive and then carefully wheelbarrowed it to the top of the garden. Many hands did make light work — we were all done in a couple of hours. Many thanks to M1EOQ, G6KMQ, G6ZDQ, G4VPD, G7OJO, M0COP, G1DUO and G0EYO for their hard work and enthusiasm. I hope the bacon sarnies were worth it!

After the concrete had set, I spent a couple of days putting together the Force 12 triband yagi, and manhandling it onto the mast. The first QSOs I had were on the 18th July — nearly 12 months after starting the project. In the two contests I've used the mast in so far I've had approximately 1300 QSOs in 24 hours of operating time so I'm happy that all of the work and anguish has been worthwhile.

Lee G0MTN



The BRUTON QRP SSB Rig

Way back in December '91 *"Ham Radio Today"* had an article to construct a one transistor, one frequency, 80 m transmitter for CW. This unit had seven components and was rated at 3/4 watt output.

As I remember it, Chris EYO suggested that some club members might be interested in having a go at this project and I believe perhaps 8 or 9 did so with a positive result; I was one.

Now this was all very well, but I don't like CW and Peter EQV told me how to convert the unit to phone use. I found an amplifier in the Maplin catalogue with a TBA810P chip and also with a 1:1 transformer as well. I did convert this unit to a sort of phone rig and did make a couple of local test transmissions.

One step further was to buy a Howes VFO kit for the 80 m band; it worked. The seeds of QRP were now planted.

In June 2000 I bought the "*BRUTON*" transceiver kit with coils for the 40 m band, SSB transmission. As soon as I received it I thought I had made a boo-boo when I had read the instructions and looked at the circuitry. I do like construction work but I am not too technical, especially when it comes to present day transistor and chip technology. Valve circuits and sets were easier by far.

The instruction booklet by Walford is actually very good, describing the construction in stages starting with the receiver section before going on to the transmit. At the end the reeks stage a simple test is made before proceeding to the next.

I had one fright when I once switched on for a test and the fuse blew. I couldn't cure the problem, but Andrew KOR looked at it and found that a positive power lead strand was shorting to earth.

So the construction continued and then at the end of the last stage before the finalising points, I couldn't get the correct stage test results. This is where I worried Frank MZU who tried all he knew to find the problem, but eventually had to give up.

Well here I was with £85 worth of a dead duck.

For some few years now I have a Sunday morning sked on top band with G3VFF and I was mentioning my troubles to him one Sunday, when he volunteered to have a look if I cared to take it over to him. In fact he had previously held me out on a problem that I had with my home brew PSU some months before.

On my visit to Don the problem wasn't solved, so I left the rig with him. The next Sunday on our sked he told me that he had traced the fault and the rig worked fine and he had made contacts with good reports back. "Come and get it!" he said.

So over I went (to Great Bridge) and there it was switched on and going . Don't anyone tell me that they haven't felt sheepish at some time, I certainly did when Don pointed to a resistor and said that I'd put it in the wrong holes on the PCB.

I have made contacts in Italy and France with the magnificent power output of 5 watts and have had excellent audio reports. I use an old Harvard CB Mike,

my aerial is a G2DYM custom made 10 — 160m dipole with five traps and I use a home built tuner.

The 40 m band it hasn't been too good lately but not as bad as the noisy 80 m band.

I have since bought the digital counter circuitry, the soldering up of which was terror of a job but worthwhile.

Don, G3VFF, drew up the circuit for an S meter which I built up, but am still trying to perfect this unit.

QRP must surely mean Queer Radio People (in the nicest sense). The things some of us do as a hobby must make others think that we are mad when you can use the phone or computer with immediate results!

Alan G0HBC

PS
Re my trip last year through France and Germany without seeing a single amateur aerial. This June I toured Southern Brittany for two weeks through towns and villages and again saw not one aerial.



Chairmans Report

We were all saddened to hear of the death of member Ken Bassett G3YIU after a long illness. Ken had been an regular attendee at the club for a long time although we had seen little of him in recent years because of his illness. We offer our sincere condolences to his wife Sheila and his family. Ken is the second Silent Key in the club this year, having lost Charlie Hawkins in March. At the family's suggestion we have sent £25 to the British Heart Foundation in memory of Ken. A number of members attended his funeral.

The club has been quite active during the summer months. We purchase of new radios at Drayton Manor Rally in May so our line now includes the new ICOM 910H VHF/UHF transceiver with 100W on 2m, 75W on 70cms and 10W on 23cms. We also took the DSP option. This has replaced the IC475H which we sold to South Birmingham. For HF we have chosen the Yaesu FT920 100W on H.F. and 6m with auto ATU and it came with a 500Hz CW filter. This replaced the Kenwood TS850 which we sold at Drayton. This was quite a big investment for the club net after sales of old rigs of £1700. However it should keep us going for another 10 years.

Other activities have included the Queens Jubilee Station in June (see separate report), several mast maintenance sessions on the fixed antennas and the trailer. We have purchased a banner for Wythall Radio Club for our (many) Club outings and events. We held an inter-club skittles evening with South Birmingham which everyone enjoyed (again see separate report). By the time you read this we will have done the Wythall Carnival on August 11th for which we are again setting up a special event station. Lee G0MTN was a referee at the World Radio Contest in Finland and gave an illustrated talk to show what a great time he had. He is planning to go toe the middle of Africa, Burkina Faso for CQWW. Brave (and lucky) man!

The really big occasion has to have been VHF NFD in early July. This was a great weekend. Mostly hot and sunny (apart from Sunday morning) and this year we blasted everyone with our big linear and dual beam at 100ft on 2m. Next year it all has to be QRO! Give me big every time! We also have things to look forward to. On Thursday September 19th we have Rob Mannion Editor of Practical Wireless coming to give us a talk and we have hired Park Hall for the occasion. Please give us your support to help fill it. Let us show Rob what a Wythall welcome is and what a great radio club we are. Prior to that we have the Telford Rally on Sunday 1st September where we will again be running the Bring and Buy. Again your support would be most welcome. In October we have the AGM, which is always well attended. The idea of giving committee members specific duties has been tried for the first time this year and it will be interesting to get peoples views as to how successful it has been. We have DF Hunt lined up for Sunday September 8th in the morning and a start to shack refurbishment on Sunday September 22nd.

The contest season has been as busy as ever with the usual stalwarts keeping the Wythall club name and callsigns in the listings. Contest news is reported elsewhere in the newsletter so I wont repeat it again. but now that the RFI problems have been solved at the club we want to encourage regular use of the club equipment.

That's all from me folks, 73

Chris G0EYO

Telford Radio Rally

Once again Wythall Radio Club were invited to run the Bring & Buy for the Telford and District Amateur Radio Society. As for the last few years, this was held at the British Airways Museum of Aviation at R.A.F. Cosford.

The weather was perfect and the sunshine attracted many visitors. Cars had to be parked all over the site — even



under some of the aircraft. The weather was also fortuitous for the flea market traders with pitches outside the main hangars.

The Bring and Buy started empty and finished empty, but was full for much of the day with quite a brisk trade. In contrast to previous rallies the quality of the goods on the stand was generally





quite high and there were a number of good bargains to be had.

Wandering around the rest of the rally it certainly looked well attended although there were several empty tables in the flea market hangar — but the traders might just have all been outside.

The final profit has yet to be fully



calculated, but we think we did reasonably well.

I think everybody who was there enjoyed the day, and we were visited by a couple of club members including Darren and Carol, Alan MYK and Nigel NRR.

Alban M5UGC

Inter Club Skittles



Friday June 21st heralded the return of the inter club skittles competition. This was again hosted by Wythall Radio Club at Wythall House. Joining us were members of the South Birmingham Radio Society.

We were divided into teams of 3 each team being given a country from the World Cup. Each member of the team had three balls to knock down as many skittles as possible, and the total of the 3 team members taken.

Each round consisted of each team bowling twice. By eliminating the lowest scoring teams the contest was gradually whittled down to 1 winner.

After a shaky start my team gradually pulled up the ranks, with me taking the winning bowl with 1 ball and 1 team member left to play.

Somewhat embarrassingly Wythall once again hold onto the Inter Club Skittles Trophy.

As usual a fish and chip supper was provided and a generally good time was had by all. There was also the obligatory raffle and sudden death skittles.

This was also the last time we would see the Radio Club's favourite barmaid Kim, as she was off to live in sunny Spain.

Alban M5UGC



Wythall Carnival

This year the Wythall Carnival was held on Sunday August 11th. Once again Wythall Radio Club provided bodies to man the entrances and car parks.

Following our successful special station at the Jubilee celebrations held at Wythall Park in June we were asked to put on a station for the Carnival.



With the assistance Colin G6ZDQ the tower was manoeuvred onto the main field being used for the carnival. This being the fourth time the tower had been set up in anger this year, things went pretty smoothly and we were up and ready to run in less than 2 hours. The more often we put it up the faster we get at it.

Chris G0EYO provided his gazebo again to shelter the radios (and operator). With the club generator chugging away behind the tower, and the FT920 and IC910 connected up we had an operational station running with the HF dipole, 2m Yagi and 2m Colinear.



Once the station was operational, members scattered to their respective posts to handle the flow of traffic onto the park. Initially our task was to direct stall holders and Classic Cars down towards the main field, and later general public onto the main car park and football field.

For me the highlight was the classic cars, especially the tank which is a rather unusual sight in the Wythall Park car park especially when we had to use Pete M0COP's car to jump start it!

The weather, although a little dull stayed dry and I think the station and event as a whole were successful. I am sure Chris would join me in thanking everyone to helped out on this event, especially Anita who was very strict in directing the traders!

Alban M5UGC



Next Newsletter published Tuesday December 3rd 2002.

All material to the editor by Tuesday November 5th 2002 please.

The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Committee or the Editor.