



Wythall Radio Club meets from 8pm every Tuesday evening at Wythall House, Wythall Park, Silver Street, Wythall, B47 6LZ, near Birmingham.

Visitors are very welcome. **Wythall Radio Club** is affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

Officers

Chairman: Martin G8VXX

Secretary: Chris G0EYO

Treasurer: David G0ICJ

Committee -

Chris G6KMQ

Vaughan M0VRR, Deputy Chairman

Lee G0MTN Contest Liaison

Peter M5DUO Antenna maintenance.

Mike G4VPD

Mel M0MAJ

Martin G7WBX

Colin M0GJM QSL manager

Neil 2E0TUX IT manager

Chairman's Message

I thought I would share my Saturday 2nd May with you. I had promised Ben Simmons, who used to be a club member years ago as a young lad and who is now nearly 23 years old, that I would supply a PA system for a friends party he was doing. As well as being a Police Constable, he is also a very good club DJ. I loaded the van with about 6KW of sound system for the gig and then went round to Ben's to load his decks and lighting. From there, off to Tipton where the gig was to be held. We had a window of 2.5 Hrs to set up and then we had to leave the premises at 3 pm and return at 7.15 pm when the place would re-open for the night. We almost managed to do it in time but had to leave the last bit of lighting gear to be set up to when we returned. We then had several hours to kill so we decided to find a local pub and have a drink. We walked to the first one and spent 1.5hrs in there with one drink. It was a bit rough and a karaoke guy started to set up his gear. As I think that karaoke is awful because, in most cases, it ruins good songs, we left that pub and walked back to the van with the intention of driving around to find somewhere else, only to find that the van's battery warning light would not go out when the engine was running. So we left the van and walked about a mile to the Barge and Barrel, a canal side pub in darkest Tipton. There we sat outside and had a long chat. It was really very nice to spend some time with Ben talking about various things including his Police work etc. It turns out that both he and his father have taken flying lessons and, given my previous interest in flying, this pleased me greatly. Later we did the gig and managed to get home at 2am ok with battery warning light showing all the way. Testing battery volts the following morning revealed that the battery was charging. Therefore it must be a wiring fault so I will be investigating in the problem over the bank holiday. Just shows some things are not what they seem.

Martin G8VXX

Wythall Radio Club

Wythall Contest Group

G1WAC G4WAC G7WAC G0WRC M5W



g1wac@wythallradioclub.co.uk

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

Newsletter

May-June 2009

Rally 2009. Another Wythall Success !

The club's 24th Annual Radio rally held on the 8th March at Woodrush Sports Centre, turned out to be another success for the club. Some 30 traders turned out and we had over 500 paying visitors, the first time we have been over 500 since 2004. This success was undoubtedly due to the massive support we got from the membership. Over 28 of our members turned out on the Saturday or Sunday to help set up, man and knock down the rally. Only Wythall Radio Club can count on more than half the membership turning out for such an occasion. What was particularly encouraging was the way members who have only joined us in the past few years, mostly as a result of getting their licences with us, got stuck in and worked hard over the weekend. And these were not just the younger members, even those in the 70's and 80's did their bit and very welcome it was too.

This year we had the benefit of the local Explorer scouts providing some help for the car marshalling. Eight turned up and they did a sterling job. The club was very happy to make a £100 donation to scout funds for their help. I would add that some of their time was spent working during some pretty heavy showers.

Next year will the 25th Rally and over that quarter of a century we have seen a few changes. I can remember, even now, the conversation I had with Mike Goode G4SMA, who was club secretary when I joined, about how several of the local clubs had talked about having a joint rally at the park but that it had never come to anything. I thought about this and decided that we had the facilities at the park to have a rally and with my contacts in the business, I thought I could muster the trad-

those days. We decided that if we couldn't be the biggest, we would be the friendliest. We started off with just using Park Hall, but within a year or so we had also taken the Britannia Room and the Scout Hut. Parking was always an issue as the site was well used on a Sunday by dog walkers, footballers and Sunday drinkers. So we hired a field just up Wilmore Lane from the local garden centre and used that and the site car park. After another year or two, demand from traders was such that we had to start hiring



ers. At that time (mid 80's) there were Midlands rallies each month from April to October so we thought we should be the first so plumped for the 2nd Sunday in March. We guessed that punters would be starved of rallies over the winter and would have saved up their pennies to spend at our rally. I remember we put out a flyer which claimed it would be the best rally in the Midlands which upset the MARS boys who ran Drayton which was an enormous rally in

a marquee and this turned out to be the major expense in addition to the traders. We have had all sorts of weather thrown at us over the years, snow, heavy rain, even sunburn. There was one year when the weather was so good that the park authorities let us park the cars on what is now the rugby pitch. One year the winds were so bad that I thought we were going to lose the marquee and we needed our members to hold on to the

Automatic Keyer

Another exciting project
from Barry's Bench

Now being the proud owner of a Kent paddle key (bought from the club rally for a fiver), I needed an automatic keyer in order to use this paddle (none of my homebrew sets have a keyer built in). After looking around on the web I chose this excellent simple circuit from a multitude of others (all of which used PIC's), for a detailed description go to <http://freenet-homepage.de/dl4yhf/index.html>

The heart of the circuit is a PIC16F84 microcontroller which is also very cheap (I bought ten for £1.70 each off Ebay a year ago). It is useable for speeds of 4 to 60 words per minute and also has two message memories of fifty characters each. Both of these memories can be subdivided into multiple smaller messages by a button push.

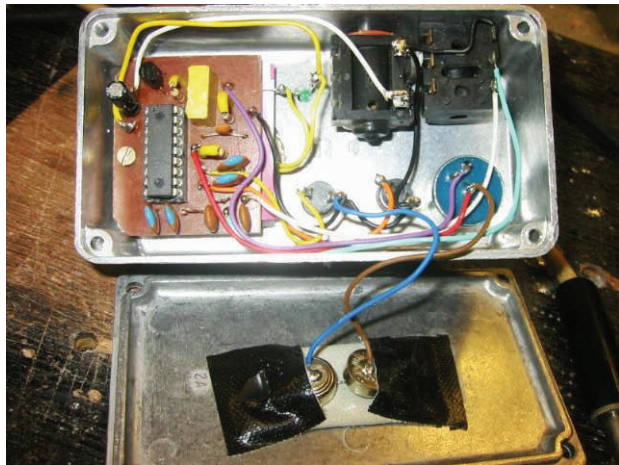
It also generates a side tone so it can be used as a stand alone practice oscillator. The piezo sounder used should be a low voltage type i.e. one salvaged from a birthday/Christmas card, the usual ones will not sound very good in this circuit due to the very low supply voltage (3 volts).

The circuit requires very little power; two 1.5 volt button cells are all that is needed. A neat feature is that the PIC is in sleep mode (very little current consumption) until the key is pressed, so battery life will be long.

As you can see from the pho-

tos, construction is very simple. A small PCB for the PIC and its associated components was made, and the case consists of a small die cast box. Vero board or dead bug construction would also be fine. The keyer could also be built into a rig due to its small size.

From a personal perspective, I find the keyer much less tiring when sending quickly for a prolonged period of time (I like to ragchew in



CW) and I very much like the message facility, it is great to sit by the rig, press a button and out goes "QRL? QRL?" or "CQ CQ CQ de M0DGQ M0DGQ K". I do not think I will ever give up the straight key, there is just something about it that I like (simplicity, history etc.), but I am very much looking forward to using the paddle once mastered (wont be long now).

If anyone should contemplate building this keyer, I am happy to program the blank PIC for them.

Barry M0DGQ

Rally 2009 (continued from page 1)

thing when the gusts blew really bad. That was a frightener. By and large the rallies have been easy going affairs but one year at Wythall Park we came to site on the Saturday only to find the field car park that we hired, waterlogged and a rally without car parking is a very sorry affair indeed. An idea from Martin G8VXX to ask Becketts if they had any land locally we could use and bus the visitors in. Young Mr Beckett came up with a hard standing in Middle Lane and so the years of bussing people into the rally began. Eventually we moved from the Becketts site for parking and used the Britannia site further down the same lane. All of this extra expense started to reduce our earnings until we decided that the Park was no longer viable and we eventually based the rally at its current site in Woodrush Sports Centre.

Rally preparation starts with David G0ICJ liaising with Woodrush and booking the hall about 6 months before the rally date. In November, I send out notices to the trade press and advance notices to the traders who came to us last time. This is followed up with

further reminders from December to January and about this time we book the tables. We advertise the rally on several of the reflectors and put up notices locally on the boards and in the library. The month leading up to the rally is spent making sure the traders are booked in and eventually just before the rally we send out the booking confirmations and exhibitor badges. At the Tuesday before the rally we allocate the jobs and ask for volunteers to help out on the Saturday (layout the halls) and on the Sunday.

The rally is no longer the responsibility of just one person, but is basically a committee led event where each person takes on a job and gets on with it.

The rally scene has changed over the years. At one time you could go to a rally every weekend not so far away but somehow the costs to the organizers have risen so much that they have stopped doing them and the number of visitors has dropped because they are buying their kit from other sources (probably the internet) and traders are finding it hard to make

money. In the Midlands we had our rally, Drayton Manor, RSGB at the NEC, Worcester, Bromsgrove (strawberry rally), Elvaston Castle, MARS November rally, Telford, and Leicester, to name but a few. Only Wythall, Telford, and Leicester are still doing rallies.

So thanks once again to all the members who came and helped out. Your efforts have given us enough funds to get through another year at Wythall Radio Club.

Chris G0EYO



Voltage Multipliers as a battery converter

Another bit of junk
from Chris's Garage

Those that know me well, know I have a love of old valve communications receivers. Well in the past few years this has also incorporated old valve broadcast sets as well. I restored one old Kolster Brandes for use in the workshop as a background set permanently tuned to R5 Live. I have also in the past few months discovered a website called vintage radio which is a forum for all kinds of stuff; tv's, radios, gramophones, tape recorders, ham stuff and military radios. Ask a question and it is guaranteed that someone will come back with the answer within a few hours. Great site (see URL below).

Anyway I was up the club when Tom was finishing his talk on ATU's the other week when I noticed a very nice AM/FM valve portable that Martin G7WBX had brought in. I said I wouldn't mind having a look at that and he said take it away and see if it works. Well this was an offer I could not refuse. However the problem with portable valve radios is that they need batteries to supply the 90V 15mA HT and the 1.5V 125mA LT. Batteries such as this are no longer available. Then I remembered an article I had recently read in an old PW that David G0ICJ had left with a pile of magazines in the club shack. This showed how using a voltage multiplier you could derive 90V from a 15V AC output from a transformer. The HT voltage is not critical as they allow for a battery losing its energy over a period of time so sets can operate from around 100V down to about 60V. With any rectifying and smoothing circuit the off load voltage will be 1.414 times the AC rms input voltage so if we multiply it by four we get $4 \times 15 \times 1.414 = 85V$. In practise the output from the transformer is a little bit higher so we get our 90V.

The most commonly used multiplier circuit is the Half-Wave Series Multiplier. All multiplier circuits can be derived from its operating principles. The following description assumes no losses and represents sequential reversals of polarity of the transformer T_s in Figure 1. (in reality several cycles are required to reach full voltage):

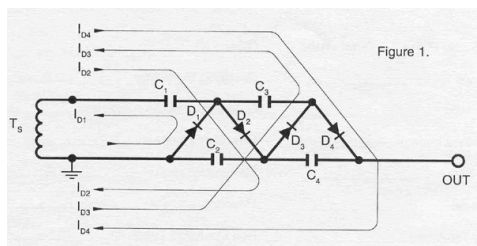


Figure 1.

- T_s = Negative Peak so C1 charges through D1 to Epk
- T_s = Positive Peak so Epk of T_s adds arithmetically to existing potential C1, thus C2 charges to 2Epk through D2
- T_s = Negative Peak so C3 is charged to 2Epk through D3
- T_s = Positive Peak so C4 is charged to 2Epk through D4 then 4Epk

I then googled the internet to find a 90V/1.5V circuit and found the circuit below which used a transformer with two 15V outputs on the secondary; one for the multiplier to give 90V HT and the other for a standard regulated DC power supply capable of give a fixed 1.5V DC output using an LM317T voltage regulator. I had most of the bits needed in the junkbox and the rest I bought from Bowood Electronics (a regular trader at our rally) online and got delivery the next day. (I would thoroughly recommend them for anyone needing components at fair prices quickly).

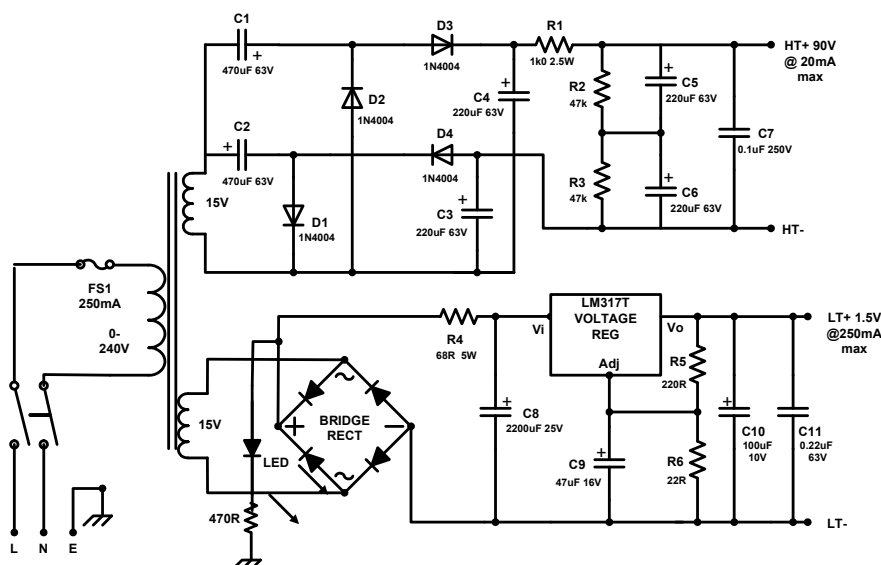
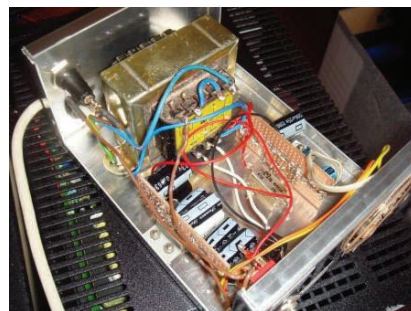
In my junk box I found an Eddystone box which had amongst other things a 15V -0V-15V transformer, mains switch, LED and bridge rectifier. A few minutes with the snips and a screwdriver and the unwanted bits were soon out of the box. I built the multiplier circuit on a 25 x 9 hole veroboard and got that delivering 90V. I then built the 1.5V supply on another similar piece of veroboard and mounted the voltage regulator to the side of the box to give some heat sinking. I also used a 10W 68R resistor to drop the DC from 12V to 6V so that the regulator didn't have to work quite so hard getting it down to 1.5V. The 68R resistor was also mounted to the box. This part of the circuit was connected to the existing bridge rectifier and was found to have a 1.5V output

I mounted the multiplier in the box and set about making a connection that would interface with the 4 pin battery connector in Martin's radio. (This was a BEREK Commander – the South African equivalent of an Ever Ready Sky Emperor and now much sought after by vintage radio collectors). The original battery was an Ever Ready

B103 which had a British 4 pin valve socket on the top. A call through the club's list and I found that David G0ICJ had one. I drilled a hole in the diecast box and wired it up. Then came the test. Connect to the radio and there was sound coming out of the speaker. I measured the volts drawn and decided that it would work better if I changed the transformer to a 0—17V one which I happened to have in the junk box. Unfortunately this meant having to repackage the whole unit into a Maplin Aluminium enclosure, but it now looks a lot better and should do the business next time I need to use it.

Chris G0EYO

<http://www.vintage-radio.net/forum/>



Antennas for a special event station G6SL.

I had been asked to put on a special event station for the National Vintage Communications Fair to be held at Warwick Exhibition Centre on 10th May. This is a big event run by the British Vintage Wireless Society and attracts about 200 traders, clubs and societies plus thousands of visitors from UK and overseas. The BVWS had asked the owner of one of the largest collections of



Eddystone receivers to put on a display of Eddystone sets from the 1920s onwards. Some of you may know that I am the webmaster and Patron of the Eddystone User Group (www.eddystoneusergroup.org.uk). I am also the holder of G6SL which was the original experimental licence taken out by the owners of Eddystone, (Stratton and Laughton) in the 1920s. I was asked if I could put on a radio station using Eddystone equipment and using the Eddystone callsign. This seemed like an excellent opportunity to air a callsign that I regret to say, doesn't get used very much.

The collector had an Eddystone Orion 7000 available although this had never been used in anger. It was also a channelised transceiver covering 1.6-30MHz, but the channels were factory pre-programmed for use on commercial hf frequencies and unless you knew the code you could not re-programme it for ham band frequencies. Luckily I was still in touch with the engineer who designed it and I was able to contact him and he told me the code to use for re-programming. Thus I programmed in chan-

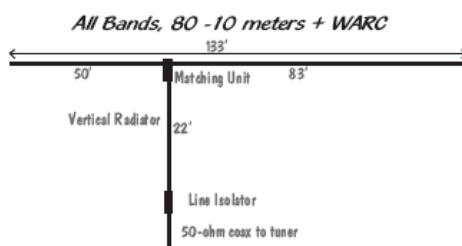


nels for 80m, 40m and 20m figuring that for inter-G contact 80m would be the most useful band. I also had the problem of not having a microphone for it. The Orion used a standard 7 pin plug and all my Yaesu mics were 8 pin. So I made an interface box with an 8pin plug and flying lead to 7 pin socket. I decided to use the club's Yaesu MD1 desk mic. I tested the set into a

dummy load and all seemed fine.

For an 80m antenna I decided to use an SGC230 tuner I had just bought, so set that up on a pole in the back garden with my 8m GRP fishing rod supporting a long wire (about 100ft long). This tuned up nicely on 80m and I did make some contacts with stations in the South West, however it was rubbish on 20m and I then found I was suffering from an intermittent audio problem which I traced to a wiring problem with the ground lead from the mic socket on my new interface unit.

I also intended to use the club's windom supported by the 25ft telescopic mast we use on the club's caravan. I went over to Chris KMQ's factory unit and picked up the mast and antenna from the caravan and some UR67/RG213 feeder from the shack. I tested the feeders on a 50 ohm load with my analyser and they were fine (so good for NFD). I then erected the windom on the telescopic mast and measured the SWR across the ham



bands. (see below) Bit disappointing as it only seemed to me in match on 40m and 20m.

Band	SWR	Frequency
160m	10.3	1.84MHz
80m	4.4	3.60MHz
80m	3.2	3.8MHz
40m	2.8	7.05MHz
40m	1.9	7.24MHz
20m	2.4	14.16MHz
20m	1.7	14.35MHz
15m	3.7	21.3MHz

I am not a Windom expert and as an 80m – 15m antenna, I expect it would match quite well with an ATU but this is a big antenna and I wanted to use the Eddystone transceiver without an manual ATU. So I figured that the end fed long wire with the SGC Auto ATU would be fine for 80m/40m and I would try a dipole cut for 20m which I had made for the Steam Fair special event stations we used to do. I put this on the mast and its SWR was between 1.3 and 1.5 across the 20m band.

My next thought was to

make a similar cut dipole for 40m and also support this from the mast but this meant having to switch between 3 feeders (long wire/20m dipole/40m dipole) but remembered that Nigel G4NRR has long espoused the use of separate dipoles fed from the same balun as below. Reading Nigel's notes he recommended using 10% over length dipoles and cutting back to get into match at the required frequencies.

Using the formula: $\lambda = 300 / \text{freq MHz}$, I calculated λ for 7.05MHz being 42.55m plus 10% = 46.80m. Thus a half-wave dipole needs to be 23.40m or each leg 11.70m. I cut two lengths of pvc coated multi-strand earth wire to 11.7m and connected them to the same balun as the 20m dipole was connected to and raised the mast. I secure the free ends of both the 20m and 40m dipoles such that the elements finished about 3m/5m respectively off the ground.

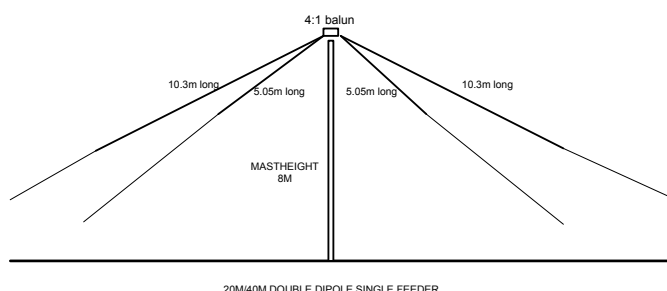
Measuring the SWR on the analyser I found that the 20m dipole had hardly changed, but that the 40m dipole was resonating on 6.1MHz with an SWR of 1.3. I needed to remove some wire but how much?. The ratio of 6.1MHz to 7.05MHz is;

$$\frac{6.1\text{MHz}}{7.05\text{MHz}} = 86\%$$

Thus my dipole needed to be shortened by 14% of 11.7m = 1.64m. This seemed a bit drastic so I shortened each element by 1m and measured again. The resonant frequency was now 6.8MHz so I took another 0.33m off each leg and measured again. This time the SWR was 1.5-1.7 across the 40m band. Good enough for me. So Nigel was right all the time you can make a couple of cut dipoles work through a single balun

Normally when you are cutting dipoles you need to take into account the Velocity Factor of the wire. This is usually taken as 95% so you actually make your dipoles 5% shorter than the basic formula. I didn't do this as I knew I would have to take into account the fact that two dipoles were connected to the same balun and in fact I increased the dipole length by 10% so doing the maths the velocity factor of a low band dipole when used in conjunction with a high band dipole is about 97.5% so the dipole only needs to be 2.5% shorter than the basic formula.

Chris G0EYO



Training News

Our 100% success rate continues with all five of our candidates on the recent Foundation course passing their examinations. Well done to Matt, Mark, Jon, John and John. We hope to hear you on the air with those new M6 call signs soon and also you need to start thinking about going on to the Intermediate stage. If at least three of you want to have a go then we will put on a course for you over the summer months when we usually have a rest from courses. The new course materials worked out well and having the practical assessments documented on worksheets focussed our work on what was strictly necessary.

We shall be planning an advanced course for the autumn to tie up with the December examination. The advanced is a fairly intensive course which we have previously run over 14 weeks. We might extend this a couple of weeks by introducing a maths primer and some more practical demonstrations of the technical basics using the club's test equipment. We also need to spend the summer re-writing the course materials similar to that done for the Foundation.

Vaughan's (M0VRR) son Nick took his Foundation examination at Wythall in April and got a very good pass (23 out of 25). At ten years old this makes Nick the youngest person to take the examination since Barry's (M0DGQ) son, Craig M3ZCR took his in 2005, when he was also 10. Well done Nick



with your new M6NJR call.

Our report on the guys who passed their intermediate examination in the last news-



letter also made the RSGB RadCom news, the following month, due probably to Allan's pass at the young old age of 86 and we have yet to hear of anyone older passing the exam.

New Exam Fees from Sept

The new fees which will come in to effect from 1st September 2009 and with an increase of £2.50 will be as follows:

Foundation - £22.50
Intermediate - £27.50
Advanced - £32.50

New Course Fees from Sept

As a consequence of the above we have revised our course fees as follows;

Foundation £40 including club membership, or £25 if already a club member or under 18 or out of work – no change

Intermediate £50 for club members or those under 18 or out of work and £60 for non-members—no change

Advanced £60 for club members or £50 those under 18 or unemployed. £70 for non-members—increased by £10 to cover some of the room hire costs we incur.

The above fees are still subsidized to some extent by the club and they do include exam fees, course book and materials and in the case of the intermediate, project kit and materials used in the practical work.

Above Top: Matt, Mark, Jon, John and John with their Foundation Pass Certificates.
Left: Nick M6NJR

Station up-grade ideas

The biggest improvements you can make to your amateur radio station will almost certainly be the antenna system. Spending a lot of money on the latest radio or accessory will give some benefits, but normally it'll be improvements outside the shack that will bring the most rewards. A lot of the time the antenna works won't cost very much money either which is doubly good news. However, here are a couple of 'nice to have' in-the-shack items that I've recently added. The good news is that these didn't cost much money either.

2nd PC Monitor

Many amateurs have incorporated a PC into

their radio activities. From keeping a log, to sending and receiving RTTY, PSK, SSTV, and maybe CW, or checking the DX Cluster and propagation alerts, there are certainly many applications.

One thing can quickly become apparent is running out of screen real estate. This can be solved by adding a second monitor. For those running a laptop as your 'shack PC', many offer the option of using the laptop screen in conjunction with an external monitor. You may have an old monitor at home already, perhaps an old 14 inch CRT that has been relegated to the garage since you upgraded to a larger LCD screen a few years ago. If you are using a desktop, a video card supporting two outputs can be purchased for

a few ten's of pounds.

For my contesting activities, it's great to be able to see the multiplier lists, rate meters, and band maps all of the time, which hopefully keeps me on the right track on the air and motivated to carry on. (forward to Noise



How I became a Radio Amateur—Darren GW7HOC

I seem to have been into radio forever. As far back as I can remember I have always had an interest in communication, whether it be bean tins and string or radio. My earliest recollection of using a two way radio when I was about 6 or 7 years old. A friend of my father had a pair of "Walkie-talkies". I remember him secretly showing my father them as they were illegal. I was given the chance to have a go. I took one of the walkie-talkies to the end of my street and spoke to my father who was stood outside my house. This was a distance of about 200 yards. After this I was hooked, and radio started to become a very strong interest.

Back in those days (mid 70s) the police could be picked up on the radio in the kitchen. I knew that if I tuned the radio so that the needle was in the middle of the tuning scale I would find the local police. This became an everyday occurrence, and some nights the whole family used to sit and listen. I remember one night hearing a policeman reading out the registration number of my brother's car. Later when my brother returned home he was amazed to hear that we all knew that he was stopped by the police. I will add that during this period of my life, my father had many good friends in the local police, so no matter what he or my older brothers got up to in their cars, they usually got away with it. Even today, the Warburton surname can be a bit of a blessing when dealing with the local bobbies.

A bit later on in life, my brother had a music centre. The radio on this had shortwave. My brother had his own room, and I being the youngest was not allowed anywhere near this room and if ever I entered this room I would be sure to die... That is if he found out. I spent many an hour, whilst my brother was out or in work, tuning up and down the shortwave radio band. I used to hear all these stations from far away places, but my main regular listen was Voice of America. I used to sit there amazed that I was listening to a signal all the way from America - a place I have only ever seen on television. As a 10 year old this was almost as good as going to the country. These voices travelling the Atlantic and into a small bedroom in Splott in Cardiff. I didn't know at the time that VOA used more local transmitters to relay the signal across Europe, but it was good enough for me.

Whilst listening to my brother's radio, I used to hear all sorts of weird and interesting stuff. Morse code I recognised, but had no idea what it said. I also heard a lot of what I now know to be RTTY. I also heard the jamming stations and number stations, but none of this meant anything to me at the time. These strange noises and secret codes started what was to become a great love of the wonders of



shortwave. So much "stuff" being transmitted that made no sense to the average listener. I assumed it was all top secret. This made shortwave listening very exciting. I also used to love the pre-broadcast station IDs. The high pitched tones and bells etc that broadcasters send to aid tuning etc. I recorded hours of these things. Sadly these recordings have all since been lost.

Also remember, that all this listening was done in top secret, and in fear of my life, for if my brother were to find out he would surely have killed me. Forward on a year or so. Early 80's, perhaps late 70's. A song called "Convoy" was popular. A story of American truck drivers using a two way radio system called CB or citizens band to communicate with their colleagues and learn of police speed traps etc. This had me, and many others hooked. A spate of films of a similar story only went to fan the flames... I assumed up to that point, that only government, military, police or other important organisations could transmit radio signals. The idea of anyone being able to do so made me very excited. I wanted to do it... NO! I NEEDED to do it.

A short while later, I discovered that CB was around in the UK. Not only was it around, but one of my friends from school had a CB radio. A 40 Channel AM/FM Commtron IV connected to a DV27 on his out-house roof. It took a long time before I was allowed to see this rig, and a long time after that before I was allowed to hear it in action. It was all very secret. My friend used the handle "Thumper" and he used to speak to all sorts of people with odd names. The lingo meant next to nothing to me. All I knew was what I learned listening to "Convoy". I eventually got to have a go on the wondrous radio, and spoke to someone in Weston-Super-Mare, a

whole 12 Miles away in "another country". Hooked. Completely and utterly hooked. I had to have one of these radios. My life could no longer carry on without one.

My father was a second hand car dealer, and had many friends... (he had a lot of enemies too). I remember one day, just before my 13th birthday, a man knocked on the door to buy a car. As my father was speaking to him, I noticed that this man's car had a DV27 on its rear wing. I walked across and looked inside, only to see a CB radio sat under the dash. I wanted this radio... I wanted it bad. Dad knew of my desire to have such a radio but had no idea where to get one. Being the man he was my father struck a deal on a car, as long as this man threw in the CB and aerial... This was the moment that changed my life forever. I had my Stalker IV CB radio and my very own DV27 aerial to go with it.

In no time at all, the DV27 was mounted on a spare wheel base and the Stalker was connected to a battery. Then came the fattest, steepest learning curve I have ever been on. I quickly mastered how to "swar" the DV27. How to put on PL plugs, and the language came second nature. I no longer lived in Splott, or indeed Cardiff. I now lived in "Roughside" in "The Smokey Dragon". I was no longer Darren, I was "Union Jack". None of my friends had names they were known as "Merry Mermaid", "Loose Goose", "Thumper", and "King Pin". I was amazed at how many of these illegal radios there were in such a small area. I was the fourth CB operator in my street, and there were 15 at one stage within a stone's throw.

Many years of CBing passed along. I progressed to a multi-block Superstar 360, and also went across to the new legal CB 27/81 FM system as well. This was great fun at first. I spent many an hour winding up all the newcomers. One of these newcomers was a young girl with the handle of Kookaburra. She sounded fun and we eventually arranged an "eyeball". This "Kookaburra" was later to become my wife Carol AKA MW3YKL.

During my time as a CBer, I heard about ham radio. A friend of my uncle was one, and my uncle told me stories of the far away places this man had talked to. I wanted to become a ham, but I was an apprentice electrician at the time the ham radio course was a 9 month course with 2 large exams at the end of it. My technical college work was hard enough without the added stress of my ham radio studies. I decided to put off my ham radio dreams until I was qualified. In

1989 I started my RAE at the Highfields Amateur Radio Club here in Cardiff. My tutor was a great man. Clive Trotman, GW4YKL. Clive really was on of the greatest people I have ever met, even if he was a dedicated RSGB man and president of the organisation for a time. Thanks to Clive's teaching, I passed my RAE in the June/July of 1990.

As soon as the paperwork was delivered it was sent off, and on the 24th July 1990 GW7HOC was legal to operate. It just happens that this day was also my birthday.

In the September of 1990, I moved north to Birmingham. I moved next door to Al, G1BUJ, who a year or so later introduced me to Wythall Radio Club. The rest as they say is history.

Darren GW7HOC

Club Diary

Tuesday	5th May	Demonstration of Kite Antennas Roger G4ROJ
Saturday	9th May	Coach Trip to Bletchley Park
Tuesday	12th May	Committee Meeting and 2m Club Contest
Tuesday	19th May	Homebrew Night
Tuesday	26th May	Natter Night
Tuesday	2nd June	Natter Night
Tuesday	9th June	Committee Meeting and 2m Club Contest
Sunday	14th June	PW QRP 2m Contest
Tuesday	16th June	Homebrew Night
Sunday	21st June	Summer Fox Hunt Severn Valley
Tuesday	23rd June	Using a Spectrum Analyser - practical demonstration by
Tuesday	30th June	Preparation for VHF NFD
Sat/Sun	4/5th July	VHF NFD and club social
Tuesday	7th July	Natter Night
Tuesday	14th July	Committee Meeting and 2m Club Contest
Tuesday	21st July	Homebrew Night
Tuesday	28th July	Natter Night



Darren is one of the club's real characters, always involved and willing to have a go even though he and Carol moved back to Cardiff some year ago. A regular at every Rally and Field Day, my abiding memory of him is mounting the mast on his motor home at the special

event stations we used to do as a club. Here he is at Hanbury trying to get it up yet again. Brilliant sense of humour—Well done mate!
Chris G0EYO

Congratulations Lee and Sylwia

We are pleased to announce the engagement of our Contest Chairman Lee G0MTN to Sylwia M3SSP this month. We wish them all the best for the future.

Lee G0MTN



Sylwia M3SSP

Welcome New Club Members

The club is pleased to welcome the following new members:

Kev Tatlow, G4XLO who has rejoined after a few years absence.

John Burnham, soon to be an M6

Jon Marshall, soon to be an M6

Matt King, soon to be an M6

John Reynolds, soon to be an M6

Mark Street, soon to be an M6

ENJOY READING ABOUT HOW CLUB MEMBERS BECAME RADIO HAMS?.

Why not put pen to paper yourself and tell us how you got into this hobby. Don't worry about the spelling and the grammar. We have technology that can sort that out for you. Go on have go, reminisce a little.

Contest Group Report

. As we approach the summertime, and the Met Office have advised that it may be a long hot summer, now is the time to think about some portable VHF or HF contests! A small fishing pole, wire or small yagi, flask of tea and an FT817 are all you need. Also, we will have VHF National Field Day at the start of July. There is still some preparation work to be done, but hopefully we will have another very successful Field Day this year. Maybe there will be some kites this year?

Well done to Chris G0MLY for persevering with CW in the 80m CC contests. Also

Mike G4VPD is notching up some good scores in the 144 UKAC contests. Pete M0COP (often /P) has taken over from me as the contest stalwart for 2009. Les M0COK will be active in this year's Backpacker contests. Thanks for the activity guys – and I hope to see more of the membership (perhaps some of our newly licensed members) having a go soon.

73's Lee G0MTN

Club Net 145.225 MHz Wednesdays and Sundays

The club has started a regular net on Wednesdays and Sundays for club members. Both nets can be found on 145.225 FM and start at 7pm. All are welcome to come in and say hello and talk about anything that takes your fancy.

Rules & Info:

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

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

16-17 May.	1400-1400	144MHz May Contest	SF SO Q 6S 6O	Post Codes and Countries (M1)
17 May.	1100-1500	1st 144MHz Backpackers	3B 10H	Post Codes, Countries and Locators (M3) , Special Backpackers Rules (Backpacker)
14 Jun.	0900-1300	2nd 144MHz Backpackers	3B 10H	Countries and Locators (M4) , Special Backpackers Rules (Backpacker)
20-21 Jun.	1400-1400	50MHz Trophy Contest	SF SO Q 6S 6O	Countries and Locators (M4) , Runs concurrently with all or part of an IARU co-ordinated contest (S7)
21 Jun.	1000-1400	50MHz Backpackers	3B	Countries and Locators (M4) , Special Backpackers Rules (Backpacker)
4-5 Jul.	1400-1400	VHF NFD	Open R L M	Special Rules for VHF NFD (VHFNFD)
5 Jul.	1100-1500	3rd 144MHz Backpackers	3B 10H	Countries and Locators (M4) , Special Backpackers Rules (Backpacker)
19 Jul.	1100-1500	4th 144MHz Backpackers	3B 10H	Post Codes, Countries and Locators (M3) , Special Backpackers Rules (Backpacker)

RSGB HF Calendar

May	1900-2030.	80m Club Championships	4th – SSB; 13th – Data; 21st – CW.
June	1900-2030.	80m Club Championships	1st – Data; 10th – CW; 18th – SSB.
June 6/7	1500-1500.	National Field Day	1.8-28MHz, RST+Serial.
July	1900-2030.	80m Club Championships	6th – CW; 15th – SSB; 23rd – Data.
July 19	0900-1600	Low Power Field Day	3510-3580, 7000-7040kHz, RST+Serial+Power.
July 25/26	1200-1200.	IOTA Contest	3.5-28MHz, RS(T)+Serial+Reference.

Wythall CQ WPX Challenge Results

In the last newsletter I suggested that if a full weekend operating session might not be suitable, we could have a 'sprint' and see how many stations club members could work in the contest in a 60 minute period. I only received a couple of entries, so well done to Chris and Chris. I hope we can drum up some more support next time.

G0MLY – 37 QSOs
G0EYO – 28 QSOs

Noise Cancelling Headphones (from page 5)

Noise-cancelling headphones reduce unwanted sounds by using a microphone and some clever circuitry which generates an anti-noise soundwave with the opposite polarity of the sound wave arriving at the microphone. This results in destructive interference which cancels out the noise. Although invented over 50 years ago, it's only relatively recently that they've entered mass market appeal with models priced for

the high street. For regular users they are mostly used on aeroplanes, trains or other noisy environments when listening to CD or MP3 players.

In the radio shack, there may be a variety of fans and blowers from radios, power supplies, linear amplifiers, and computers. This can soon add up to be a considerable bass rumble which can be distracting when trying to listen to some far flung weak DX station. Something else to add to your Christmas list !
Lee G0MTN

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

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