

HARCNEWS

Newsletter of

Horsham Amateur Radio Club

Est. 1938



G4HRS

April 2006

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Notes From The Editor

This month sees the introduction of page numbers, which I hope will make it easier in finding a particular section. I understand that in due course there may be some changes regarding the writers of the club meeting reviews.

Since January I have been attending evening classes on Thursday evenings but the end of the course will have passed by the time you read this and I shall be able to return to club meetings and look forward to a personal chat with my fans!

In due course I will be producing an up to date list of club members. This will consist of the same details as written on the address labels on the envelopes that the newsletter comes to you with plus your telephone number.

Please can all current members check and let me know if any details are

incorrect or if there is any information such as telephone number that you don't wish to be published. No other data will be included on the list. I will be liaising with the treasurer but if your telephone number has changed since July 2003 and has not been notified please let Paul G4TMC or me know.

Don't forget to send in your articles for the new regular features of the newsletter; Broadcast Listener, Guest Writer, Net Meeting, TV Addict, Web Trawl, any dates for the Radio Diary and any articles of your own.

You are welcome also to suggest any new ideas, perhaps a section giving a review of any new equipment? The review of the March Junk Sale is a combined effort from Paul G4TMC and Alister G3ZBU.

73 David G4JHI

March Meeting Review:

Junk Sale

The March Junk Sale was well attended by a total of 37 people. Including a celebrity appearance by Eugene GOVIQ no doubt looking for interesting items to include in one of his future talks. The usual wide variety of surplus equipment was on offer but quantity was less than normal.

Even the least appealing item eventually found a new home thanks to our auctioneers Tony G3NPF and Robin G3OGP and the very entertaining BONUS System. The Hon Sec. really entered into the spirit of the event and left with more junk than he brought.

Tony obviously spotted a couple of choice items, which he secured for a few pence although he did admit not having an immediate use for them. Some items of interest sold, in no particular order: (References to service dept. of G3ZBU works)

A Kyocera laser printer -

This had an intermittent page feed fault. It seemed that the paper feed cassette was not being detected. A small micro switch is activated by a thin plastic plunger when the cassette is pushed into position.

A resistance check of the switch showed that the diameter of the plunger was not quite large enough to close the switch contacts. A small wire was used to bridge the switch so it was always on! The service dept. was not impressed by this modification.

However the paper feed fault remained! Our service dept. dismantled it and found that a clutch solenoid was not activated reliably. When it engages, it locks into the rotating teeth of a revolving pinion on a clutch. When the pinion stops, the paper feed roller starts, as if by magic. Wiring for the solenoid goes from board to board via

several small connectors and ends up on a surface-mount power FET transistor. Buzzing through produced intermittent connection by fiddling with the wires in their connectors, apparently. After a few seconds of moving the wires, all intermittency stopped.

When opened up, it was cleaned up as toner manages to get everywhere. The printer has been working reliably so far, and print quality is excellent. HP Printer - This model 695 should be a step up from our old 690, which is getting very clanky.

However it also has a paper feed problem. This has yet to be rectified. A quick Web search reveals a considerable amount of information about repairing HP printers, and 99 percent go something like rejuvenate the paper feed rollers, if there are any problems at all!

As the rubber dries out over time, it stops gripping the paper and even though there may be enough pressure; it will not force the paper through correctly. Some sites advocate cleaning the rollers with various special

cleaners. I have an HP 1600C, which works fine if you knead the rollers for a minute. Replacing them could be a hard job. When new printers cost less than a set of new ink cartridges, it is not exactly cost-effective, but often new printers are allegedly sold with half-full ink!

Resistor Kit - A large box of a hundred plastic containers each with about 10 resistors in. Very handy for servicing jobs. Car CD player. Talking of servicing, a nice looking car cd player was sold. It had been dismantled as the small screws are all missing.

The service dept had a look at one of the pcbs with a magnifying glass and commented that it must have got hot and some surface-mount components desoldered themselves! We shall see. I think the laser optics just needs a good clean, with something like Vim... Later on you may read the answer.

A total of 128 items were sold making in excess of £70 for the Club. The Refreshments were in constant demand all

evening, with the Bacon Rolls being as popular as ever. Marilyn and Jan persuaded us all to buy raffle tickets. The prizes included a Selection of Fresh Fruit, 4 Piece Measuring Set, Box of chocolates and the always-useful can of WD40. Many of the visitors commented and thanked us for an enjoyable evening and were very generous when settling their accounts. The good reputation of the HARC Junk Sale lives on.

Next Month:-
G3TSO is giving a talk on Homebrewing, so if you see the word 'homebrewing' in HARCNews, this month is not the time to raid your loft and bring along your most interesting projects. That time will come soon and is of course October!!!

Mike has had many articles published in Radcom over the years, and is likely to show us many exciting circuits.

Net Meeting

A Brief History of the BADNET

By Tony Wadsworth G3NPF

The Billingshurst and District Net (the BADNET) was started over 50 years ago, by a group of radio amateurs who liked to have a weekly chat on the air about anything of mutual interest.

The original members all lived in, or close to, the small town of Billingshurst, which is about 6 miles west of Horsham, but,

they are all now silent keys. Of the present members, Mike G3LHZ has the longest association with the net and Dave G0MLG is the only participant now living in Billingshurst.

In reality, the BADNET is now the Horsham Amateur Radio Club's weekly net but the original name is retained for

nostalgic reasons. The net meets every Sunday morning, and on Christmas morning, at 10.00hrs local time, on the 80m band. The normal frequency is 3722kHz, but occasionally a slightly different frequency is necessary, depending on QRM.

Although now essentially a club net, all are welcome to give the Station Master, Tony G3NPF, a call and join in. Indeed, three of the current regular attendees are not HARC members.

Over the years, members of the BADNET have included businessmen, farmers, a university professor, a chartered engineer, a doctor, a water engineer, the Vicar of Wisborough Green, and many others.

Original members included Les G2DVD, John G3JEP, Alan G3HCU and Vic G3AFK. These were soon joined by Mike G3LHZ, Doc G3LKB, Paul G3MAC and Trevor G3KWU. Clive G5PR, Ross G3ABJ, Ernie G8OS and George G8TH occasionally joined the net. Later on, regular participants included Tony G3NPF, Eric

G3YWD, Ted G3POR, Ian G3PUX, Andy G3UDR, Paul G4ADF, George G3OUX, Steve G3SXR and many others. Currently, the regular net members include Tony G3NPF, Mike G3LHZ, Ron G3PYC, Dave G0MLG, David G4FQR, Andrew M0GJH, Brian G3GDU, Maurice G0CDQ and Adrian G4LRP.

When Tony G3NPF is unavailable, the net is usually controlled by Ron G3PYC. In the early years, the members, together with their partners, also met regularly at social gatherings and an annual dinner.

One of the traditions was to present a chain of office to the "President" of the group. Tony, G3NPF, was presented with this chain at the last of these social events to be held, although he has only ever been the net controller.

He still has the chain, although there is now no suitable occasion when it can be worn. Another tradition was to present a toy trumpet to the net member adjudged to be best at "blowing his own trumpet". This was presented to Mike, G3LHZ, who still

has the trophy in his shack. These presentations were last made over 30 years ago, when many of the original net members were still alive.

Although HARC holds regular social events, such as the annual Christmas dinner, it is not really appropriate to display the items at these gatherings as they relate to a bygone era and many of the current HARC members would be unlikely to appreciate their significance in the history of amateur radio in the Horsham area.

It is not known who made the chain of office but it consists of a costume jewellery "gold" chain from which is suspended a copper shield. The shield is not engraved, with the markings appearing to be stamped or scratched onto the metal.

A B9A valve pin straightener is suspended from the shield using brass wire. This reflects the "fun" side of the hobby, with the "home-made" appearance exemplifying the nature of amateur radio in the forties, fifties and sixties, when most equipment was home constructed and the

hobby lacked the sophistication and complexity we take for granted today. There is a photograph of the chain of office in the "Odds and Ends" section of Tony and Anne's Website. (URL: <http://homepages.tesco.net/~a.wadsworth>).

Note the tilde (~) and that there is no "www" in the URL. Unfortunately, a photo of the trumpet cannot be located at the moment. If one can be found, it will be included in the brief history of the ongoing and still thriving BADNET.

It is amazing how many diverse subjects are discussed, ranging from the trivial to the highly technical.

Subjects have included baroque trumpets (not to be confused with Mike's trophy), sailing ships, small magnetic loop antennas, satellites, radio navigation systems, mathematical puzzles, weather systems, refurbishing elderly cars and model steam locomotive boilers.

Home brew radio equipment, garden ponds, welding

techniques, computing and many other subjects far too numerous to mention. Mike G3LHZ is a retired Professor at Surrey University and now runs his own business.

He is still carrying out research on magnetic loop antennas in his spare time. Mike has written several papers on the subject, which have been published in both the professional and amateur domains.

Tony G3NPF is a retired Chartered Electrical Engineer and David G4FQR is a retired chemical engineer. Tony spent most of his working life in the defence electronics industry and is currently building a model of the steam locomotive Britannia.

Until recently, he was a member of Washington Parish Council but also finds time to build the odd item of electronic equipment and to help in the garden. David spends much of the summer sailing in his small dingy and builds his own radio equipment during the winter.

Dave G0MLG was involved with aircraft electronic

equipment and Ron G3PYC worked in the electronics, oil and chemical equipment industries prior to their retirement some years ago. Dave is an avid reader of books and magazines.

Ron has recently rebuilt an aged Mini, and won several trophies playing bowls when not indulging in his other interests, such as his wife's allotment and astronomy.

Prior to their retirement, Brian G3GDU was employed by the Civil Aviation Authority and Andrew M0GJH had a career in banking. Brian is a very accomplished photographer and is a leading light in the Institute of Navigation, giving lectures and writing technical articles for several publications.

Just for good measure, he is also a very able musician. Andrew is very involved with running HARC's courses for the three grades of Amateur Radio Licence. Maurice G0CDQ installs and maintains swimming pools.

Maurice and Adrian G4LRP are the only regular net members currently in full

time employment, being somewhat younger than the others! Adrian is currently employed in the digital communications industry but still finds time to pursue an interest in full size steam trains and be the Chairman of HARC.

This wide range of interests and professional

knowledge ensures the BADNET sessions always include lively discussions on a huge range of subjects. This is in contrast to many other regular nets, where the subjects appear to be limited to the giving of signal reports or revelations about the participants ailments but very little else!

Broadcast Listener

Steve Wright is a well-known TV and radio presenter but is probably most famous for his show 'Steve Wright in the Afternoon' which started when he took over from Tony Blackburn in 1982 on BBC Radio 1. Today he can still be heard as the voice introducing the video tracks on Top of the Pops 2.

In the 70's Steve worked on local radio and then went overseas and presented on 208 metres where the powerful Radio Luxembourg resided which was well known for it's constant fading and phase distortion!

During the summer of the 80's for one week Steve could

be heard broadcasting each day from a coastal location somewhere around Britain for one and a half hours from 11am during the Radio One Roadshow.

The audience would be warmed up one hour before and asked to make a lot of cheering at the start of the live transmission and again after the news at 1130am. The show included the regular Bits and Pieces where the contestants had to write down the names of 10 artists that were played in the form of a very quick clip!

The afternoon show became very popular with listeners and along with the 'afternoon

boys had many regular comical guests such as Mr Angry from Purley who would phone in and discuss a topical issue and get so angry that he would throw the phone down!

One of the crew regularly impersonated Mick Jagger and there were catchphrases such as 'Get Some Therapy'. Mr Mad would tell you who was raving mad, there was 'Dr Fish Filleter' and the true stories.

In 1995 Steve left the BBC but returned in 1996 this time on Radio 2 and in 1999 once again hosted yes you've guessed it 'Steve Wright in the Afternoon'. This programme is still aired today popular as ever and there are news features, guests and great tunes from the past and present and the Big Quiz.

The show is co hosted by the Janie Lee Grace, Tim Smith and has a weekly

appearance from the mystery lady known as 'Old Woman'.

Many of the old jingles are still used and Ask Elvis is where you can put your questions to the King himself! Tune in from 2 – 5pm each weekday to hear the team. Radio 2 started in 1967 broadcasting on 200 KHz/1500 metres long wave using the powerful transmitter at Droitwich.

In 1978 frequency changes came into effect and moved the channel to 693/909 kHz or 463/330 metres medium wave but was lost when Radio 5 launched in 1990.

Since the start of Radio 2 it has always been broadcast and still is today on the VHF/FM service and can be found between 88 and 91 MHz.

Thanks go to Alan of Radio Rewind for allowing some of the material of his site to be used in this article.

www.radiorewind.co.uk

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Train Mobile



Since the announcement of proposed new rail links that will improve the services for passengers travelling from the South East some new types of trains have emerged. The one of most interest here is the Radstock WMU.

These units will not only have the usual features such as automatic doors, disabled toilets, quiet carriages, tables, catering facilities and seat reservations but a facility for operation of amateur radio equipment.

Trials are expected to begin in early 2007 starting with a commuter service at 0700 Monday to Friday from Brighton to Cambridge.

There will be two carriages on this service carrying suitable connections for hand held equipment with a regulated supply of 12v and 2m + 70cm omni directional antennas fitted on each roof. Users may need to keep power to a minimum to avoid interference to other users of the system.

To indicate that operation is from a train it will be necessary to add /RM after the callsign. If the trials are successful the service will be extended to cover other routes and will include a service weekdays at 0745 from Guildford to Norwich and 0630 from Portsmouth to Great Yarmouth, which will route via Horsham calling at 0755.

TV Addict

The Sky at Night is one of the longest running programmes on BBC television. The show that started in 1957 has always been presented by Sir Patrick Moore but in recent years has been joined by co-presenter Chris Lintott.

Each month features a particular topic and the March edition used telescopes in Hawaii to explore the stars and distant galaxies. Although the show is produced in Birmingham many episodes have come from Patrick's home in Selsey.

It is interesting to see his array of books and scientific equipment and on a few

occasions guests were looking at the stars and meteor showers threw the observatory in his back garden!

Several eclipses have been followed many with excellent results but unfortunately when Patrick visited Cornwall in August 1999 the weather was dull and cloudy and not much was seen at all!

The programme is screened at the beginning of each month usually early Monday mornings on BBC1 with a repeat the following Saturday lunchtime on BBC2. An extended version is available on BBC4.

Please send contributions for the May edition of HARCNEWS to the editor by 15th April. Items received after the deadline will be held over until a later edition.

All input is subject to suitability and available space.

Any comments, letters or new ideas very welcome especially for the new features of this newsletter.

For items sent by email please send to this address:

harc.news@g4jhi.co.uk

Web Trawl

This is a personal site presented by Chris G3XFE and well worth visiting where you will find details of the station equipment used and QSL card on the home page.

As you go further in the site there is a nice collection of circuit diagrams. These are related to HRO and Codar equipment and include valve and semi conductor circuits.

One page has details of a microphone preamplifier circuit using BC109 and 2N2222A transistors and other components, which are highly likely to be in most junk boxes in the radio shack!

Also there are pages with circuits of a commercial made AM transmitter, info on command sets and photos of various equipment and for sale and wanted ads.

www.christopher.morgan1.btinternet.co.uk

Radio Diary

Apr 3rd 80m CW Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30

Apr 6th Club Night: Home Brew - G3TSO

Apr 12th 80m SSB Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30

Apr 13th Social Evening - Sussex Oak - Warnham

Apr 20th 80m Data Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30

All above times are BST

Club Meetings and socials start at 8pm