

Est. 1938



G4HRS

**H
A
R
C
N
E
W
S**



The Journal of

Horsham Amateur Radio Club

April 2008

Sponsored by:

nevada[®]

Contents

In this issue

3. Lets get ticking
3. Great idea
4. Spend away
6. Maps out!
8. Moving digital
10. Diary of events

Cover photo: Sheffield Park Station

Editorial

Welcome to the second quarter of the year. Since we have now put forward the clocks you will note the change reflected in the diary. Did you know that in parts of the USA they changed their clocks two weeks earlier. This is a regular occurrence apparently for some reason. At the first weekend of this month is the next Kempton Park Rally and further details appear in the diary too.

World Thinking Day on the Air took place over the weekend of 16th and 17th February. Pete G4LKW advised that the event was well supported this year with over 100 visitors coming through the doors at the scout hut in Christ Hospital. TDOTA gives the girl guides and scouts an opportunity to have fun trying to talk to members in other countries.

David G4JHI

Spring Product News

Ever wished that cleaning your amateur radio equipment could be simpler then maybe here is the answer with the 'Radwaver'. This is a special ultrasonic unit which can sit in your shack or any convenient space and measures W50 x D45 x H22 cm.

It promises not to cause any harm to any equipment and can even tackle your computer keyboard. Operation is easy requiring the equipment to be put into the unit and a special cover is then placed over the top.

Then select the appropriate cleaning time depending on the size of the item to be ultrasound. The Radwaver will be launched this month at the 'Bceenthere' Show being held in London.



(Left)
The
'Radwaver'
every Radio
Amateurs
dream

March Meeting Review:

Junk Sale

This sale had a good selection of radio junk items. There has been a period where many items of computer equipment and accessories have been in prevalence but those days seem to be dwindling away to some extent. First up was an oscilloscope although strangely enough everything went quiet at that point!

Digital multimeters, signal generators and frequency counters then appeared and the battle began. Tony our long standing auctioneer presented a UPS (uninterruptible power supply) along with several mains cables to plug into the unit but it was said that it no longer UPS'd! Aerial wire is always a favourite and there was no shortage of that with an assortment of colours available.

The bargain of the night must have been a Freeview box that went for £1 apparently working! Fortunately a UHF aerial was also available to plug into it and one of those circular band II FM aerials. I know of one of those in use with good results but of course being omni directional may not prove the best with such a crowded band these days. Porcelain insulators are expensive normally but several came up for sale and proved to be popular.

Several large items in the form of a CR100, 3092, 1155, BC348Q receivers (the latter is the American equivalent of the 1155), IC125 (175 MHz transmitter) and a teleprinter. Other items included some hefty transformers, RSGB Yearbooks, valve voltmeter, a collection of home and garden software, kettle and not forgetting some blank VHS tapes.

One final item of note was a 2 meter multimode transceiver

(Below)
Auctioning of antenna wire



made by FDK which sold for a mere £10. The raffle included prizes of Easter eggs (very nice too and eaten long before Easter!), a tumbler set and carpets for the car. Thanks go to Tony G3NPF, Robin G3OGP, David G4FQR, Ian M0FRH, Paul G4TMC, Alister G3ZBU, Steve G4TPO, Ron G3PYC, Marilyn G7EYL, Janet and Janet. G4JHI

Membership List 2008

Many HARC members will have a copy of last years list of members with details of callsign, address and telephone number. In the summer an updated list for this year will be distributed. If members have any amendments including specific details not to appear in print then now is the time to get in contact with either the Newsletter Editor or Treasurer. Email addresses are not included and the list is only distributed to members of HARC.

HARC Foxhunt

Sunday 2nd March

The morning started off with a phone call about 15 minutes before the off from Paul G4TMC telling me that no one had turned up for the start. My immediate thought was cancel.

Unfortunately the diaries that were consulted when the HARC diary was arranged failed to note that Sunday 2nd of March was Mothering Sunday, but just before the off another call from Paul confirmed that (a) two more hunters were on their way to the start at Mannings Heath, albeit a tad late, and (b) my signals were readable from the start.



(Left)
Engine 'Birch
Grove'

So with just only three hunters it was decided to continue. Using the usual format of 2 minute transmissions every 10 minutes from my lair at the Ashdown Forrest Cricket Club, just off the A275 at Chelwood Gate near to Birch Grove House, Alister G3ZBU was the first to arrive about an hour and half after the first transmission.

By the last transmission at 12 noon, Bryn G3SWC and Eva got to within a mile or so, but were fooled by the map, believing themselves to be on the right road, but in fact were not. Paul G4TMC was lost in the Ardingly area going round in circles having had bearings going all over the place..

Well done to Alister for coming first and winning the enviable duty of being the next fox, and to Bryn and Paul for putting up a good fight. It was disappointing that we were down on numbers taking part, perhaps 2m Foxhunting is losing its appeal. After all had arrived at the Red Lion at Chelwood Gate (at this point Andrew M0GJH and xyl Janet arrived) for a pint and a bite to eat, we were disappointed to find that the pub was fully booked for food being Mothers Day.

So a suggestion was made (can't remember who?) to QSY to Sheffield Park on the Bluebell Railway for a sandwich and ride behind a steam train. The locomotive in question was 'Birch Grove' (named after the grand house that I was hidden by) hauling the vintage Metropolitan coach set from Sheffield Park to Kingscote and back again. All agreed that is was a pleasant way to finish off our day.

Regards

Adrian G4LRP (The Fox)

Copy deadline for May edition 15th April

For items sent by email please send to this address:

harc.news@g4jhi.co.uk

DAB on the move

G4JHI

Last year I had a JVC DAB stereo system installed in my car. In fact there was very little choice in finding different models as only a handful of manufactures produced them and the situation hasn't changed that much even now. Vauxhall had a factory fitted version but discontinued it due to lack of interest!

The unit in question has not only DAB but also, medium wave, long wave, VHF/FM band II and includes a CD player. The performance on all bands is good although when on the move weak medium wave stations are drowned out by the noise of the ignition! Another problem encountered is that my car is fitted with 2 ECU's which radiate 13 carriers across the FM band which cause interference to any radio station on that particular frequency.

In the Horsham area only 100 from Croydon (Kiss) and 104 MHz from Reigate (BBC SCR) are actually affected and Horsham itself is not in the official services areas although both signals are quite readable at home on a portable but not in my car! The factory fitted aerial is used on all bands except DAB which is connected to a small passive type fitted on the front windscreen which could be mistaken for a mobile aerial.

In order to operate the receiver successfully it is necessary to read the manual as there are many functions to say the least especially if you want to get the travel service working! Once on the move I was able to experience the full benefit of DAB which compared with FM is extremely good despite what others may say.

There are the exceptions though with stations that transmit using low bit rates. Whilst driving in and around the Horsham area all the BBC national and Digital One multiplexes (the latter includes Classic FM) come in well.

If you have driven in the Crawley area this is noted for

good FM reception of all main, local and London stations but on DAB I found that there are quite a few dead spots which was quite surprising.

In the West Green area for example near the hospital I only found Digital One. As you head north along the M23 good reception arrives from all programmes except DRG London which is extremely patchy but once on the M25 is excellent.



(Left)
DAB
passive
antenna

It was noted that when heading on the M25 towards Dartford passed the junction with the M26 perfect reception is had where the FM service is quite scratchy. Heading North up the A24 passed Warnham and is quite promising with many channels being available but when you go south it is a different story. Mainly the national and Digital One multiplexes are available (things do start to improve though!) and on the A281 to Guildford it is a similar story for reliable reception.

Heading SE down the A281 to Pulborough the national and Digital One services are again good. On the local front Kiss is the best example since it broadcasts on both London 1 (CE Digital) and Sussex Coast (GCap) and one can listen all the way down (break up does occur from time to time) except just to the north end of Billingshurst it is necessary to change frequency.

The radio does do this automatically but is somewhat unreliable in doing so and in a case like this it is best done manually. One feature that is rather useful gives the ability to switch automatically between FM and DAB depending on coverage.

If you invest in one make sure it is AAC+ compatible.

Diary

April 3rd, Club Night: The History of Recorded Sound
John G0GNA

Apr 7th, 80m CW Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30
RST + SN

Apr 6th, West London Radio & Electronics Show
Kempton Park 10:00

Apr 10th, Committee Meeting - QTH of G7EYL

Apr 16th, 80m SSB Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30
RS + SN

Apr 17th, Social Evening - The Frog and Nightgown
Faygate

Apr 24th, 80m Data Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30
RST + SN

Apr 26th, HARC Grand Day Out (via Calais)

May 1st, Club Night: The Origins of the RSGB

May 5th, 80m SSB Club Championship

All above times are BST

Committee/Club Meetings and Socials start at 8pm