

HARCNEWS

Newsletter of

Horsham Amateur Radio Club

Est. 1938



G4HRS

February 2006

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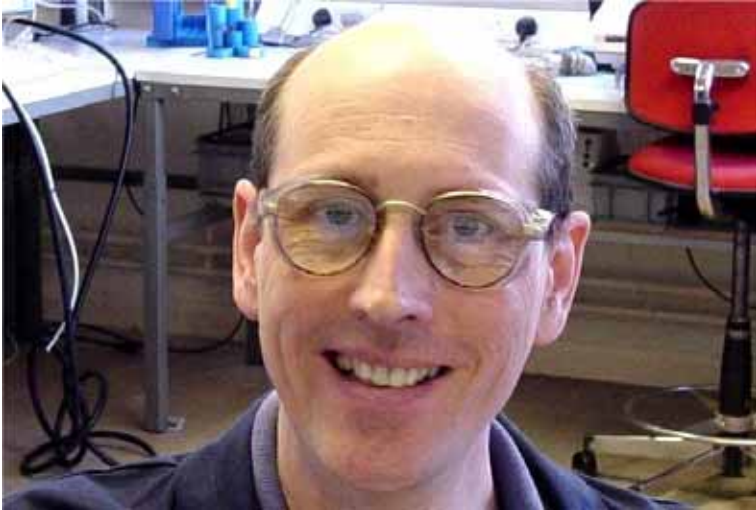
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Notes From The Editor



I would like to start by saying many thanks to Gavin M3DFV for all the newsletters during the last 10 years and to the club members for voting me in at the AGM. I was looking for a new challenge and here it is!

You will have noticed some changes to HARCNEWS and I am sure there will be more as the months go by. An occasional quiz or puzzle may even appear in due course.

Broadcast Listener will feature details of a radio programme of interest including when and where to find it. Guest Writer is exactly as it says and can be anyone who would like to produce an article that a HARC club member is acquainted with.

Net Meeting will give details of amateur radio nets that club members take part in or think they would be of interest to others.

Radio Diary will feature information about a specific radio event such as a rally or contest or any other radio event taking place including club events.

TV Addict will feature details of a TV programme that members have seen and can recommend. Web Trawl will list Internet sites that readers can visit.

If you have any comments to address do send in your letters and also any items for sale.

The inputs to the newsletter do not have to completely radio related but items of a technical nature are very welcome!

If possible please send your items to me via email. You can also submit by post, telephone, or give to any committee member.

See you next month!

David G4JHI

TV Addict

Click is a revamped version of Click Online which closed its doors in December. The programme is now presented by Spencer Kelly and features items relating to technology of all aspects and has kept a similar format.

A recent edition looked at how computers are moving into the living room and some pc problem solving.

Each edition ends with a look at a selection of websites sent in by viewers.

The best viewing times are: BBC News 24 - Sat 20:30, Sun 04:30 (also on BBC1 or 2) and 16:30. BBC World (not available on Sky) - Thursday 20:30, Friday 09:30, Saturday 06:30, Monday 16:30.

Transmission times are subject to change and expressed in clock time.

January Meeting Review:

Contests,

by Andrew Vine, M0GJH
and Adrian Boyd, G4LRP

G4LRP started the meeting by showing the RSGB's contest committee results pages, and our Chairman was very pleased to tell us that our smallish club featured very high up the lists quite consistently.

Over the years, the AFS CW teams have managed to get in the top 10 and so have the SSB teams. We have been able to generate enough activity to get 2 CW teams and 3 SSB teams together.

The 5th overall result of last year's 80m Club Championship was an excellent result, but with more members help, a higher position would be possible, as all scores count.

Some changes have been made to the rules, in particular the start time is 8:00 till 9:30 clock time. Another change is that a station can be worked twice in the data section: once on PSK31 and again on RTTY.

The latest version of SD (SuperDuper) computerised logging should allow for this, and is free. We then had a demonstration of MMTTY and WinPSK, both free programmes, which use the PC's soundcard to interface to the outside world, plus a PTT transistor interface.

The latter is optional if VOX transmission control can be used.

WinPSK allows two conversations to be decoded simultaneously, so one channel could be used for sending CQ, and the other may be tuned up and down the passband to look for other stations calling CQ.

One point to mention is that AFC is built into these data modes. In MMTTY it is a good idea to turn this feature off when sending CQ otherwise one ends up transmitting on an unknown frequency!

Andrew then took over and demonstrated his ability to send and decode Morse code using a variety of programs. Instead of using the soundcard, he chose to use a USB interface.

Some of these were MixW, CW-Get and CW-Type.

The external antennae picked up rather too much local QRM to enable on-air results, so various members used a selection of keys to send across the room.

The CW decoding software worked very well. A sharp audio filter allowed one to remove any nearby signals and a variable slicing level could be adjusted for minimum gibberish.

Ideally, machine-sent Morse would work best, but there is a tendency of some stations to send a 599 at 40wpm then drop down in speed for the serial number.

The first contest in the 80m series will start on 6th Feb at 8pm, on SSB.

Many thanks to both Adrian and Andrew for showing us these programs.

For Sale

Kenwood Antenna tuner AT230

3 x aerial connections plus one for dummy load (not included). 9 band 1.8 to 29.7 MHz. Switchable 20/200 Watts with handbook.

Offers to G4JHI 01403 252202

Letters to the editor

Ron's (G3PYC) history of the Jodrell Bank radio telescope (HARCNEWS June 2005) made fascinating reading, all the more so as he was able to recall aspects of the earliest planning from personal experience.

I grew up just a few miles away from Jodrell Bank and whilst at Manchester University was very much aware that radio science was making great advances in the field of astronomy.

Atmospheric radio noises were known about and it was clear that a sensitive receiver coupled to a highly directional aerial would be required to locate their source.

Ron listed the various upgrades which came along over the years but it was the early days that made the biggest impression on me.

Construction of the giant supports for the wire

mesh dish could be clearly seen across the Cheshire plain and especially from the near-by Holmes Chapel to Wilmslow main road and also from the Crewe to Manchester railway.

However the very best views were seen by the pilots of 613 Squadron flying deHavilland Vampires from Ringway (Manchester Airport).

Exercises at 30,000 ft, often above solid cloud, would be completed by being directed to be over Shrewesbury at 20,000 ft.

Steering a course of 030 degrees and throttled back to 7500 rpm and at a speed of 250 knots you would come out of cloud over Crewe at around 1000 ft.

Six railway lines run into and out of Crewe and it was quite easy to pick up the correct one, confirmed very soon by the magnificent sight of the massive

construction works at Jodrell Bank.....
(For those interested in aeroplanes:-Wilmslow would soon appear with the smoke of Stockport in the distance.

Downwind vital actions - brakes,

airbrakes, undercarriage, fuel and flaps - followed by a steep left turn to line up with the runway, then a very short transmission "24 finals, 3 greens" and the reply from the tower "24, Clear to land".)



Michael Fadil G4CCA

Please send contributions for the February edition of HARCNEWS to the editor by 17th February.

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 new address:

harc.news@g4jhi.co.uk

If you wish to contact the editor by email for matters not regarding to the newsletter please use any existing address you may have or ask for an alternative address.

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Net Meeting

John G3LYW runs a net each Friday from 2030 local until late on Topband. The frequency 1875 KHz is well established even if occasionally walked over by our friends from Russia.

A few HARC club members have been worked here: G3NPF, LA/G3SWC/P, G3ZBU, G3GRO from Crawley and the regular G4JHI.

Signals from Radio Bath net controller tend to be quite strong in the form of 59+30 most of the time which is not surprising with a 560 feet full wave centre fed antenna at 75 feet high!

Topics tend to be anything that is going along with exchange of signal reports. In the winter months a handful of contacts take place with German stations who occasionally call in such as DJ1OS and DF5QZ.

Other regulars are 2E0KNJ, M0BNZ, M0XAP, G3OHH, G3ORP, G3XDK, G3XGC, G4FSU and G7EUA

The net is open to everyone so if you are passing the frequency you are very welcome to call in.

Web Trawl

Hamcall is an alternative to the popular QRZ database for looking up amateur radio callsigns. Based in the USA and has lists of call signs from all the world.

A free archive of CQ magazines can even be found and an online shop for the radio amateur.

If you already have the CD Rom edition of Hamcall it is possible to log into the service and get more out of your visit.

Even without a login you can make changes to your listing which is then verified for security reasons.

www.dxzone.com

Broadcast Listener

Radio Bulgaria hosts a weekly DX Programme within it's 30 and 60 minute broadcasts. Items of interest are covered for both the short wave listener and amateur radio operator.

Subjects include news of special event stations but does seem to have a rather American flavour.

Broadcast tips covers

information of new and resumed broadcast stations from around the world on short wave.

Transmissions times to Europe are as follows: Fridays 2200, 5800 KHz, Sundays 0730, 9500, 11500 KHz and 1230, 11700, 15700 KHz. All times are UTC and will change to one hour earlier from March 26th.

Radio Diary

Feb 2nd Club Night: WS38 and Arnhem by Wally Blanchard G3JKV

Feb 6th 80m SSB Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30

Feb 15th 80m Data Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30

Feb 16th Social Evening: Queens Head, Barns Green

Feb 18/19th World Thinking day on the Air

Feb 23rd 80m CW Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30

All above times are UTC

Club Meetings and socials start at 8pm