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**The Journal of
Horsham Amateur Radio Club**

March 2008

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Cover photo: A red sky over Horsham

Editorial

For those sending in photographs via email for publication if possible, please leave the file in its original size. I know it makes sending large files difficult but unless you go over 10MB it will probably work ok through many ISP's. When taking photos from your digital camera it is likely that you can change the size and/or quality. E.G. instead of taking at a maximum of 5 megapixels try the 3 megapixel setting.

It will make the file size smaller and more manageable. You can put together several photos using compression programs such as Winzip and send them as just one attachment. www.mailbigfile.com is probably the best ways to send them other than by normal email.

One of the problems that many computer users find especially when buying a new machine is that it may not come with any or very limited graphics software. My preference is Paint Shop Pro which can perform most common operations to your photos. On the 80m Club Championship front reports of long skip and very little in the way of UK stations worked let alone heard so far. As the longer days arrive conditions should improve.

The Junk Sale at the next club meeting will take on the usual format. Upon arrival please get a ticket on the door. Items donated to the club will be sold first and seller items in the order they arrive. Refreshments and raffle will also be available.

David G4JHI

Copy deadline for April edition 17th March

For items sent by email please send to this address:

harc.news@g4jhi.co.uk

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FOXHUNT FOXHUNT FOXHUNT FOXHUNT FOXHUNT
FOXHUNT

The next HARC 2 Metre fox hunt will be held on Sunday 2nd
March 08

Details are as follows:

Start at: Mannings Heath common - NGR TQ 206 290

Start time: 1000

Transmissions: Every 10 minutes until 12pm

Frequency: 144.725MHz

Callsign: G4HRS/P

Clues will be given out at various intervals, so listen
carefully.

I suggest you pack a couple of maps, Dorking, Reigate
and Crawley sheet 187 and Brighton and the Downs sheet
198....

Good Hunting

G4LRP alias 'The Fox'

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February Meeting Review:

The History of Mr Polley, G3PYC

Part 1 - his stimulating childhood

When he was aged three Ron's family moved to Sheffield where his father (MIMechE) worked in steel making and later became a carburettor designer. But these were the difficult inter-war years and soon he had to take a job as a chauffeur/gardener driving a 18hp Lanchester and a 16hp Vauxhall.

Their house was near the LMS railway and as a 4yr old Ron would walk on the tops of the rails on the line that led into the city. He got his first bike, a Fairy Cycle, on his 5th birthday. They moved to Edgbaston, B'ham to lodge with Ron's well-to-do paternal grandfather who had an electroplating business and lived in a posh house with marble staircase and high ceilings.

Ron's family had none of their own furniture until 1937 so he slept on a palliasse in the billiard room which had 2 tables. In 1935 they moved to Acocks Green, B'ham and on his first cinema visit Ron saw "Oh Mr Porter". His parents were strong cyclists and would ride 43 miles to and from friends for a visit. His father got a job at Parkinson's Gas Stoves and later both parents changed to jobs at Joseph Lucas working 7am to 7pm.

In 1937 his grandfather's business partner absconded with company cash and grandfather himself was injured in an accident with a cyanide bath, causing temporary blindness. Ron's family did a moonlight flit to Kent and in 1938 Ron started school in Dartford.

With 500 others he took an entrance exam for the 1 place available at the grammar school but was unsuccessful so he started secondary school in 1939. In October that year they moved to a new house and this time they had their own furniture and Ron got a proper bed. School was now a 3 mile bike ride away.

In Jan 1940 Ron and his sister were evacuated (privately) to Bath c/o Mr & Mrs King. Mrs King was killed in bombing. The house opposite King's got a 500kg bomb. Ron watched the defusing and posed for a photo sitting on the bomb eating a corned beef sandwich donated by the bomb disposal men. Ron attended the grammar school where he often had to fetch the cane from its cupboard so he could receive punishment.

Once, he found a sextant in the cupboard belonging to the headmaster who was a former RN Captain. This chimed with Ron's ambition to be a sea navigator. In due course Ron got aboard the T.S. Mercury with a view to becoming a navigating officer in RN. His parents were now working in Vickers Armstrong's and at age 14 his pocket money was 6d a week.

T.S. Mercury, built in 1878, had a steam engine, two masts and hammocks for the cadets to sleep in. Morning parades were watched from behind window curtains by the Captain's wife, Mrs C B Fry, who seems to have always been picking on Ron over misdemeanours. In 1942 Ron won the offer of a place at Ambleside RN College by getting top marks (98%) in the entrance exam.

Ambleside was the next ranking college below Dartmouth. Mrs Fry must have been a mean dragon because she contrived, by interfering with his sight test, to get Ron disqualified on the grounds of poor eyesight, hoping that would let through the second in the entrance exam, an Admiral's son, with 92% marks.

This honourable young man refused to take advantage,

the third in line was not good enough to take up a place. Ron left the school in protest and at 14 yrs old took a job in an iron foundry working on the melting furnace in the light foundry. After seeing a fatal accident there, Ron was sent to the heavy foundry where near miss incidents also seemed fairly commonplace.

Ron next moved to a job with Vickers Armstrong's Crayford gun barrel mill. His father, uncle, and grandfather also worked there. The mill was as long as a ropewalk and the 20ft high milling machines needed two men to change a cutter. They made a very wide range of guns from the Prince of Wales' ten 14" guns down to 2" pompoms. Experimental 3" pompoms were made and fitted to a Mosquito.

When used to attack an enemy ship the recoil from such big canons nearly took off all of the plane's airspeed so their use had to be abandoned. Ron moved to the drop forge shop, initially a classic drop machine, then on to a hydraulic machine. Air raid warnings were largely ignored when they became so frequent and peoples' garden shelters were so unpleasant for spending the night.

If staying in the house, blankets were rigged inside bedroom windows to catch bomb blasted glass. During the Battle of Britain, Ron and his friends watched dog fights from Dartford Heath. They found unexploded 20mm canon shells and took them home. The ARP made a fuss about the danger. Ron and his pal found a uex 3.7inch AA shell but had to surrender it to a gang of bigger boys who took it away from them.

Later it exploded, killing the one holding it and another three died later. Complete streets of terraced houses were wiped out by 800kg landmines. In Nov 1940 Ron rode pillion on his father's Brough Superior 1000cc motor bike to Coventry to see the devastation there. Later in the war the south of England and Ron's family were exposed to attack by the V1 and V2 weapons.

One V1 landed and exploded 30yds from Ron. Yet another exploded close to Ron and his 8 ½ months pregnant mother causing the death of a new brother. Ron was walking in the vicinity when 184 were killed at New Cross Woolworths by V2 rocket. Ron, now at night school, could watch V2's re-entering the atmosphere as he travelled home. At this stage in Ron's fascinating and entertaining story, time had to be called, with a hope that he could continue on another occasion.

G4FQR

Web Trawl

Remember the days when you could switch on the television and see the girl on the test card..... Those days have now gone since the introduction of 24 hour programming. However Sky has recently introduced a test card for high definition TV which can be viewed on HD equipment on the Sky Arts HD channel at 2am apparently!

For those of us who are missing those memories look no more and visit the MHP Test Card gallery. Here you will find photos of test cards, tuning signals, continuity announcers and apology captions going back many years. There can also be found some information about camera and studio equipment and Channel 5 as it was once known now just named Five.

The Ident Zone features logos and short animations that have appeared before the start of a programme. If that isn't enough there are links to other sites that feature related material that will be of interest.

www.meldrum.co.uk/mhp

HARC Subscriptions

A reminder that subscriptions are now due for this years club membership.

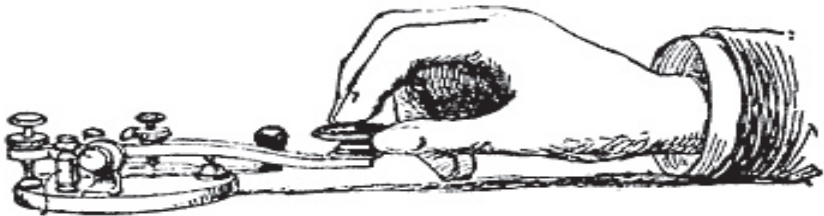
Please forward £15 to the Treasurer which can be paid by cash or a cheque payable to H.A.R.C. Alternatively payment direct to Paul Barnett, 8 Parsonage Road, Horsham, RH12 4AR.

Broadband Morse Practice

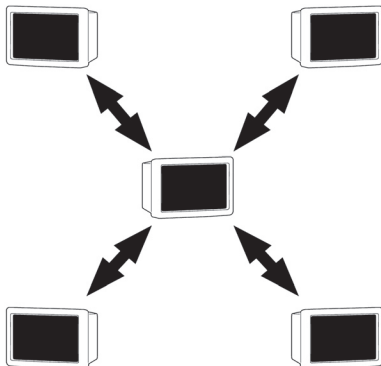
– let's try using Skype

It occurred to me that we could try having Morse practice sessions using Skype, the free to use 'phone or video-phone service that is available to anyone with broadband. Skype allows up to 9 people to share in a conference call, plenty of scope for a morse practice session. The video function is optional.

I regularly have 4 way video conference calls with my family but perhaps if the group gets very large it might be better to dispense with video – it's not really needed. Please send me an email if you would like to have a go: david@davidmilnejones.plus.com (G4FQR)



(Above) Clipart courtesy FCIT



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Diary

Mar 2nd, HARC Fox Hunt 10:00

Mar 3rd, 80m Data Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30
RST + SN

Mar 6th, Club Night: Junk Sale

Mar 12th, 80m CW Club Championship 20:00 - 21:30
RST + SN

Mar 15th, Dutch National Radio Flea Market - Rosmalen
09:00 CET www.radiovlooiemarkt.nl

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

Mar 27th, Social Evening - Blue Ship - The Haven

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

April 7th, 80m CW Club Championship

All above times are UTC except where indicated

Committee/Club Meetings and Socials start at 8pm