

COULSDON AMATEUR TRANSMITTING SOCIETY

G4FUR



M1FUR

CATS Whispers – December 2005



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Affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

CATS Committee

Chairman: Rob Cole 2E0AYT
Secretary: Dave Young G8VXB
Treasurer: Derek Hands G1PGS
Members: Steve Conway G7SYO
Cliff Groves G6FPQ
Len West G0GNQ
Ian Peck M3IGP

CATS Whispers Editor: Andy Jackson G8JAC
email address for contributions:

Regular Society Meetings

These are held on the second Monday in each month at-.
St. Swithun's Church Hall, Grovelands Road, Purley at 2000hrs to 2200

Society Nets

1st Saturday of Month - 1715hrs Crescenta Valley / CATS Net on Echolink
normally via MB7IPL on 145.2875 MHz.
Sunday mornings - 1100hrs. Call on S20 (V40) then to 145.2875MHz.
Sunday evenings - 1700hrs. 3.700 MHz +/- QRM
Wednesday evenings - 2100hrs Call on 70.450 MHz then to clear frequency.

CATS Website

Email :

Forthcoming Meetings

Mon 12th December – Annual Ger
Mon 9th January 2006 – Digital Imaging (Subject to confirmation)
Mon 13th February – Antenna construction project for the DF contest



Twinned with the Crescenta Valley Radio Club
Glendale California USA www.qsl.net/cvrc

November Meeting report:

Quiz time returned to CATS again with the well-tried formula that has proved popular in the past. Eight rounds of fifteen questions with a Joker that can be played by each team to double the team's score in that round meant that a maximum score of 135 points was possible.



Studied expressions as teams search for the answers

Our friends from SRCC entered a team and our own Cliff G6FPQ twisted some arms and brought along a team from his workplace, all of which swelled our numbers to a respectable 23 and allowing six teams to compete. Questions were set by the Quizmaster for the evening, Andy G8JAC, ably assisted by XYL Jan who kept the scoreboard up to date.

The evening started with the answer to the question set in last month's *CATS Whispers*, Who was the Quiz Inquizitor from 1960s TV? The answer: Michael Miles who hosted the long-running gameshow Take Your Pick. The round categories for the evening were General Knowledge, TV & Film, Christmas, Sport, America, Musical Mystery, The World Last Week and Pot Luck.

TEAM	1 GENERAL KNOWLEDGE	2 TV & FILM	3 CHRISTMAS	4 SPORT	5 AMERICA	6 MUSICAL MYSTERY	7 THE WORLD LAST WEEK	8 POT LUCK	Joker Points	TOTAL
Swithrairs	16	4	7	6	5	3½	8½	7	✓	57
The Dummies	8	10	22	8	9	3	4	8	✓	72
Dry Joints	10	9	9	7	11	20	10½	13	✓	89½
Stuck in a Jam	6	7	8	6	26	7	8	7	✓	75
OlderLanters	7	7	16	7½	10	5	7	7	✓	66½
Wasters	5	7	10	5	8	4½	5½	16	✓	61

The final scoreboard

The winning team were the Dry Joints with a score of 89½ points. Runners-up were Stuck in a Jam (a reference to the horrendous journey home from Kempton Park the week before!) with 75 points.



The victorious Dry Joints.
(L-->R), Guest, Colin G3YCR, Mike G6YOG, Gerry G8NNT.

Everyone seemed to enjoy their brain-wracking and our thanks goes to Len GØGNQ and Ian 2EØAYT for providing tea, coffee and seemingly endless biscuits at half time.



Christmas TransPONder

The last TransPONder net for 2005 was well attended with G4CDY, G4FKK, G6CJR, G8JAC and 2EØYPR on our side, and W6MW, AD6IZ, KE6ZRP, KE6URZ, KE6MMU, K6POI and newly-licenced AD6VX signing in over in Glendale. The next net is on Saturday 7th January at 17.15.

Kempton Park Rally

An excellent turnout of CATS members to help man the Bring and Buy stall meant that we had a successful day despite the attendance at the event being somewhat down on last year, according to an empirical survey (i.e. your Editor's guestimate).

The rally was held on the same day as Remembrance Sunday which may have had an influence on this, however respect and tradition was maintained by the broadcasting over the PA of the sound of Big Ben and the guns in Hyde Park, and the observance of the Silence within the hall. A further unexpected problem was a serious incident on the M25 that closed the motorway at J8 and caused traffic mayhem in SW London and Surrey for the rest of the day.

A steady flow of various radio related kit was booked in at the stall and some really good bargains were quickly snapped up.

Elsewhere in the hall on the Chiltern Radio Club stand, some serious sized and very interesting radio equipment from the old Soviet bloc was on offer along with a large amount of military kit, all from the estate of a Silent Key. One of the members told me that they had only scratched the surface of what was available from the estate, at which point I had a glimpse of what my family are in for when I go for the last QSO!

Contests for 2006

The committee intend that CATS will enter the RSGB March 144/430 MHz competition which will be held over the weekend of 4/5 March 2006. This will probably be a field station at the best VHF location we can manage.

Put the date in your diary now.

Other dates that we *could* participate in (dependent on enthusiasm from the members!)

20/21 May – 144MHz May contest
17/18 June – 50 MHz Trophy Contest
1/2 July – VHF National Field Day
5 August – 144 MHz Low Power
6 August – 430 MHz Low Power

PLUS of course, the ARRL HF Field Day contest during June 24/25 from Lightning Point, Angeles National Forest, California.

Any other suggestions about contest participation are most welcome but even more so, practical offers to organize, operate or help.

Future Of Amateur Radio Poll - Results

The results of the consultation exercise held by Ofcom during the year have been published and are summarized below:

The majority of radio amateurs want to keep the existing amateur radio licensing regime or change to a longer licence renewal period rather than switch to a licence for life, according to an Ofcom commissioned MORI poll into the future of amateur radio in the UK. The survey of 1,572 amateurs also revealed that two-thirds of amateur radio licensees believe that the current licensing arrangement is "about right".

Ofcom is keen to issue amateur radio licences for life. But 52% of respondents to the MORI survey said they prefer either the existing arrangement or an extended renewal period. Among members of the RSGB, the life-time licence is even less popular, with around two-thirds favouring the current arrangement or a longer renewal period. Only a third preferred a life-time licence.

Interestingly, support for the lifetime licence was less among frequent radio users than among those who use their radios irregularly. Of those who wanted a longer renewal period, 60% preferred a five year renewal period, 23% a three year renewal period and only 10% a ten years or more renewal period. The survey also showed that only a tiny minority (1%) wanted to abolish the licensing arrangement altogether, radio amateurs generally believing that the licensing system was vital in maintaining standards of on-air operation. Less than 1% wanted to replace the current Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced licenses with something else.

Radio amateurs were generally also not keen on Ofcom's plans for web-based electronic licences, with only two in five giving their support to this idea in spite of Ofcom offering to provide a licence postal service for those who don't have access to the Internet.

To view the report in full please see the Ofcom website.



<http://www.ofcom.org.uk/radiocomms/ifi/licensing/classes/amateur/morireport/>

Report © RADIO SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CATS help JOTA

Our well-known Scouting member Stuart G6CJR was the driving force behind local participation in JOTA – Jamboree On The Air this year with a successful operation from the Scout HQ in Banstead. Assistance was provided by CATS members Len G0GNQ and Ian M3IGP, along with members of the Sutton & Cheam Radio Society in giving Scouts, Brownies and Guides an introduction to amateur radio and putting the callsign GB4BDS on the air for the event.



Len G0GNQ explains circuits to the next generation at JOTA.

Your committee are thinking about activities for next year. Windmills-on-the air has been suggested; a listen on HF on the right weekend will find dozens of windmills being activated, and as they are mostly on high ground, they do get out well and contacts are eagerly sought. Your ideas are also eagerly sought.



CATS New Year Dinner

Spurred on by the success of the 30th birthday dinner, it has been decided to hold another CATS dinner, not around Christmas, when everyone's busy and getting heartily sick of turkey and trimmings anyway, but to celebrate the New Year. The chosen date is **Friday 6th January** and the place: **Botley Hill Farmhouse** located on the B269 Limpsfield Road at the top of Titsey Hill, a couple of miles south of our usual competition site. Easy to find on account of the huge Air Traffic Control antenna mast next door! The date is provisional at present and needs **YOU** to confirm your interest with Dave G8VXB by the end of the AGM please.

CATS AGM

The formal notification of the society Annual General Meeting was published in last month's *CATS Whispers* and individual notices with details of the agenda, elections and with nomination slips were sent out to email recipients on 21st November, and to postal recipients shortly after. The AGM is expected to commence at approximately 20.15. Light seasonal refreshments will be available.

NEW Echolink ID

The Echolink node run and maintained by CATS member Terry Giles G4CDY is being given a unique identity under a re-licensing exercise organised by Ofcom. The node will henceforth be identified as **MB7IPL**. All the internet linking nodes are being given callsigns in the MB71** series and the PL suffix has been chosen to indicate Purley. Safeguards to enable rapid shutdown in the event of problems have to be put in place if the installation is to be licenced to run in un-attended mode and in the case of MB7IPL this can be achieved either by issuing a shutdown command from the radio or the internet side, or in extremis, by visiting the site and shutting the station down manually. The likelihood of this actually being required is remote, but as with everyone else's licence to transmit, it can be demanded by the licensing authority. At present, operation is still on an attended basis pending issue of the licence, after which it will be available 24/7, to use the modern ~~idiot~~ sorry, idiom.

Mayday!

No, not the large hospital in Croydon, but the internationally recognised radio call used in times of distress or emergency.

The two are connected by Croydon however. It was a Selmeston (East Sussex) man who invented the Mayday distress signal. The international emergency call was devised by Frederick Stanley Mockford, born in 1897 in that village. While he was a senior radio officer at Croydon Airport in 1923, he was asked to think up a word that would indicate distress and would easily be understood by pilots and ground staff all around the world in an emergency. As much of the international air traffic at the time was between Croydon and Le Bourget in Paris, he proposed the word Mayday, from the French 'm'aidez' meaning 'help me'. This was officially adopted as the international distress call for aviation in 1927 and to this day the Mayday call can be quickly and clearly understood, irrespective of the radio frequency on which it is broadcast.

Editorial

And so, we reach the end of another year. 2005 was a special year for CATS because it was our 30th, an anniversary that we celebrated with some enthusiasm. It's also the end of my year as *CATS Whispers* editor, so it's appropriate to look back at what we did over the year.

Our monthly meetings during the year: (run by)
January: Rig power connectors (G8VXB)
February: Film show (HF antenna presentation was unavoidably cancelled)
March: Echolink demo (GØKZT)
April: Construction evening (G8VXB)
May: Hands-on rig measurements (G8VXB)
June: Surplus equipment sale (G0GNQ/G6FPQ)
July: DF hunt (G7SYO)
August: CATS Barbeque (G4RWW)
September: 30th birthday dinner (G8VXB)
October: Kinesiology (Arranged by G7SYO)
November: CATS Quiz (G8JAC)

In February we commissioned a survey of the members to try to find out what members were interested in CATS doing and what they wanted. This received just six responses out of a membership of 37.

Eating: we had two formal dinners, both well attended by members and family/guests.

Operating: We participated in the Low Power 144/430 MHz contest in August and came fifth in the 430MHz section. We operated from Croydon Airport control tower, putting the museum and the airport back on the radio map.

CATS Whispers received and published contributions from G8VXB (1), GØKZT (11), G4CDY (1), G6CJR (1), G6FPQ (1) and G6MFM (1) along with much rambling from the editor.

Our alliance with our sister club in California, The Crescenta Valley Radio Club, based in Glendale, continued to flourish with monthly "TransPONDer" nets via Echolink and we will be continuing that relationship next year with a visit by CATS members in June.

Overall, I think we had a successful year although the response to the membership survey was disappointing to say the least. It is quite clear that the activities are organised and mostly attended by the same recognisable few as has been the case for the past few years, with the majority of members content to just attend the occasional monthly meeting or in some cases, just to be a "silent" member.

CATS Whispers was sent to the great majority of our members by email with 28 receiving it in this way, and is normally published on the first Wednesday of each month. The remaining members received a reduced size paper version either by post or at the monthly meeting although there were some difficulties with mailouts earlier in the year. The monthly newsletters of several local clubs were also emailed to those CATS members who had asked for the service.

Finally, may I wish all members and readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Andy G8JAC Editor.



For Sale and Wants

FOR SALE

Slim Jim Antennas. 144 – 146 MHz, 3-5 metres co-ax with BNC plug supplied. VSWR 1.15:1 or better across the whole band. £15 each.

430 – 440MHz Slim Jims, 1.3 :1 or better across 10 MHz. With co-ax & plug £13 each. Other frequencies 144 MHz and up made to order.

Mad Frank G3ZMF
Tel: 01737 218463 (weekends)
01483229062 (work 08.00 – 16.00)
07881974952 (mobile)

WANTED

I'm looking for a 19-inch table-top style cabinet to accept a 10½ in high panel, with 15 inch depth.

Andy G8JAC
Tel: 020 8651 2727 or
g8jac@btinternet.com

Other Club News & Contact Information

BROMLEY & DISTRICT ARS

Website – www.bdars.org.uk
Email bdars-news@talk21.com
3rd Tuesday at Victory Social Club,
Kechill Gardens, Hayes, Kent
7-30pm for 8pm

December 13th - Xmas Short Talks and
Mince Pies Night

The Crystal Palace Radio and Electronics Club

Meets on 1st Friday of every month at
7.30pm at All Saints Church Parish
Rooms, Beulah Hill.
Club Net – Wednesdays 2000hrs
145.525 MHz
www.qsl.net/g3oou/

6th January - Printing Techniques II,
Nick M3FUB

CRAWLEY ARC

www.carc.org.uk
Club Nets –
Tuesdays 2000hrs 145.550 MHz
Fridays 1900hrs 1.970 MHz
Every Wednesday at Hut 18 Tilgate
Forest Recreational Centre, Tilgate
Forest, Crawley from 7-30pm, and
Sundays, 10.30 until 13.00.

December 14 - DF Receiver Design
and construction of a Top Band version
by Derek G3GRO

January 24th - AGM

DORKING & District RS

Club Nets –
Sunday 0815hrs 3.770 Mhz
2030hrs 144.750 Mhz
Meetings are held at the Friends
Meeting House, Butterhill, South Street
Dorking at 1930hrs.

HORSHAM ARC

Club Nets –
Saturdays 2130hrs 144.725MHz
Sundays 1000hrs 3.722 MHz
Meetings: 1st Thursday at The Guide
Hall, Denne Road, Horsham.
Latest news – www.harc.org.uk

MID SUSSEX ARS

Club Nets –
Sundays 0800hrs 3.740 MHz
Sundays 1100hrs 145.350 MHz
Wednesdays 2000hrs 145.350 MHz
Daily 1330hrs 21.330 MHz
Every Friday at Cyprus Hall, Cyprus
Road, Burgess Hill West Sussex for
7.45pm
Info – <http://www.msars.co.uk/>

MITCHAM & DISTRICT ARS

(G3HFY) – Last Wednesday of each
month 1930hrs at ATC HQ,
Commonside West, Mitcham.
Details Mike Knott G0WCR
Tele: 020 8764 4716

REIGATE ATS

Club Net –
Thursdays 2000hrs 145.500 MHz
Sundays 2000hrs 3.740 – 3.760 MHz
Website www.qsl.net/rats
Email rats@qsl.net
3rd Tuesday at RNIB Redhill College,
Philanthropic Road, Redhill for 7-30pm

December 13 – Cheese & Wine party



Surrey Radio Contact Club

Club Nets –

Sunday 0930hrs 29.111 MHz

Friday 2030hrs 144.325 MHz

Thursday 1900hrs 145.500 MHz

Website – www.g3src.org.uk

Meetings: 1st & 3rd Mondays at
T.S. Terra Nova, 34 The Waldrons,
South Croydon 7.45pm for 8pm

9th January - From 50Hz to 2GHz with
G3ZPB

SUTTON & CHEAM RS

Club Nets –

Monday 2000hrs 145.500 MHz

Tuesday 1030hrs 3.700 MHz

Tuesday 1500hrs 144.300 MHz

Friday 1100hrs 433.500 Mhz

Saturday 1100hrs 3.700 MHz

Saturday 1200hrs 145.500 Mhz

Website – www.scrs.org.uk

3rd Thursday at Sutton United Football
Club, The Borough Sports Ground,
Gander Green Lane, Sutton 7-30pm for
8pm

8th December - Christmas Junk Sale

THAMES VALLEY ARTS

Club Net Only –

Saturdays 1400hrs

7.070 – 7.085 MHz

WIMBLEDON & DARS

Website – www.wadars.thersgb.net

Club Net –

Mondays 2045hrs 145.500 MHz

2nd & last Friday of each month at St.
Andrew's Church Hall, Herbert Road,
Wimbledon SW19. 7.30pm for 8pm.

9th December – Christmas social

Local Rally & Event Calendar

Dates in 2006 for your diary:

6th January - CATS New Year dinner

12th February - Harwell ARS rally, Didcot.

11th March – Crystal Palace Radio &
Electronics club Spring Sale

12th March – CATS visit to the
Greenwich Observatory

16th April - West London Electronics
Show, Kempton Park (Radiofairs).

18 June The Worthing & District ARC
Newhaven Fort Rally 2006, between the
ramparts of the Newhaven Fort Museum
Admission (Rally/Museum) £2.50.

13th August - Flight Refuelling ARC
rally, Wimbourne, Dorset.

12th November – West London Electronics
Show, Kempton Park (Radiofairs).

And Finally.....

The bad news – subscriptions for 2006 are due on 1st January. The society rules allow two months “grace” in which to renew your membership, otherwise an additional fee is payable on renewal. Standard rate is a paltry £10 per year, with 50% discount for those over 65.

The treasurer will be pleased to receive your subscription by post or in person at the AGM.



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