

# COULSDON AMATEUR TRANSMITTING SOCIETY

## G4FUR



## M1FUR

# CATS WHISPERS

## May 2006



Affiliated to the RSGB

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### **CATS Committee**

Chairman: Rob Cole 2E0AYT  
Secretary: Andy Jackson G8JAC  
Treasurer: Derek Hands G1PGS  
Members: Steve Conway G7SYO  
Stuart Barber G6CJR  
Dave Young G8VXB  
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 2200hrs.

### **Society Nets**

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of Month - 1715hrs Crescenta Valley / CATS Net on Echolink  
Normally via MB7IPL node on 145.2875 MHz.  
Sunday mornings - 1100hrs. Call on S20 (V40) then to 145.2875MHz.  
Sunday evenings - 1700hrs. 3.700 MHz +/- QRM  
Wednesday evenings - 21.00hrs. Call on 70.425 MHz

### **CATS Website**

**Email:**

### **Forthcoming Meetings**

Mon 8<sup>th</sup> May – GB200T: Celebrating Trafalgar by Bob Treacher  
Mon 12<sup>th</sup> June – Test and Measurement of members' kit  
Mon 10<sup>th</sup> July – Annual 2m DF Hunt



CATS is Twinned with the  
**Crescenta Valley Radio Club**  
Glendale California USA [www.qsl.net/cvrc](http://www.qsl.net/cvrc)

## April Meeting Report

Our meeting for May was a genuine link with the past; in this case the historic past of Bletchley Park and the code breaking that went on there during the war years. Our guest for the evening was Ken Myers, a Post Office Engineering Department employee who by a mixture of ability and good fortune found himself at the very forefront of the war effort.

Ken came to give us an insight into some of the activities at BP as it was known and specifically into the Colossus machines that were used for breaking into the Lorenz code system, the successor to the Enigma machines, that the German High Command were convinced was so complex as to be unbreakable.



Ken Myers with a piece of genuine tape from a Colossus Mk. 2

For the first part of his presentation, Ken outlined the activities at Bletchley Park, from its beginnings as an outpost of the Government Code and Cipher School through to the establishment of a unique collection of men, women and machines dedicated to their unique task. Ken held us all spellbound with his description of the efforts to break into the complex codes, the successes and the agonizing periods of failure before a breakthrough occurred – sometimes with the unwitting help of lazy or undisciplined German operators making procedural errors that exposed weaknesses in the system.

We learned that there were at least ten *Colossi* machines built, an initial version called Colossus 1, and further improved models known as Colossus Mk 2. However, these were preceded by a lesser-known machine given the name *Heath Robinson* after the famous cartoonist who was famed for drawing unfeasibly complicated machines to perform simple tasks.



Rapt attention from the CATS audience

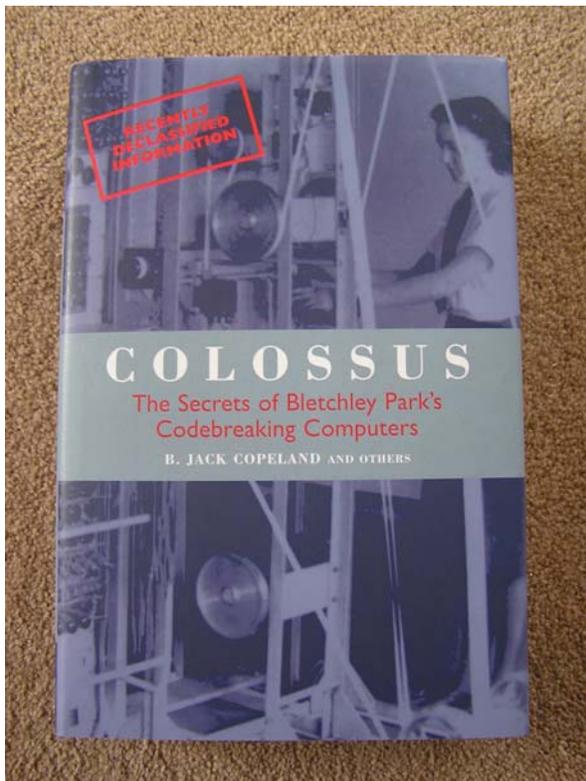
After a very interesting 45 minutes, we broke for refreshments during which Ken was keenly questioned by club members on various aspects of the subject. After the break, we were given more anecdotes and examples of the daily life at Bletchley Park.



Hands on a piece of WW2 history at the Colossus lecture.

We had an extremely informative evening made even more interesting because we were able to spend it with someone with the ultimate provenance of having actually been there and involved at the time. Our grateful thanks go to Ken Myers for taking the time to talk to us.

Ken has recently contributed to a new book about the codebreaking methods used which it has been possible to publish because more of the information about the activities at Bletchley has been de-classified as recently as 2004. The book is by New Zealand author Jack Copeland and is entitled *COLOSSUS - The Secrets of Bletchley Park's Codebreaking Computers*.



The book is a collection of material from previously published work, new information and contributions from people who worked on the projects. I have started reading it and it looks to get quite technical in its coverage.

The book is published by Oxford University Press at £18.99.

## **CATS Activity News**

A last-minute reminder about the spring Radio and Electronics fair on 7<sup>th</sup> May, organised by Radiofairs at Kempton Park racecourse and perhaps more commonly known to us as the Kempton Park Rally.

We are running the Bring and Buy stall as usual and at the time of writing we have sufficient volunteers to run the stall and give everyone a chance to enjoy the show as well.

The date of the CATS visit to **HMS Collingwood** near **Fareham**, Hants is awaiting confirmation

from the museum but will most likely be on a Monday in June or July, this being the normal opening day of the museum. HMS Collingwood is an active naval base so the names of visitors and car registrations etc will need to be notified in advance.

Also imminent is the well-known Dunstable Downs rally on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

This is easily accessible near M1 J10 and is one of the major rallies in England. However, as only one member has indicated an interest in attending, it looks as if I'm going on my own!

## **Helping out the Brownies**

Readers may recall that we were recently asked to assist the local Brownie troop in Coulsdon with earning their Communicator badges. The date for this is **Tuesday 23rd May** when club members led by Andy G0KZT assisted by the other Andy, G8JAC will be running a club station at the Brownie HQ and using the club callsign G4FUR. As this is a formal club activity, we will be adding the "English club indicator" to the prefix so we will operate as **GX4FUR/P**. This gives us the facility of exercising the licence clauses that allow the sending of messages by unlicensed operators – in this case the Brownies.

What we do need are other club members to undertake to come up on the air and give them someone to communicate with.

The commitment is not long, approximately an hour and a half between about 17.15 and 18.45. If you can assist and help give some of our youngest people an interest in amateur radio, then please contact either of the two Andys.

## **What's coming up**

This month, we have a visit by well known SWL Bob Treacher and colleagues from the Cray Valley Radio Society who were behind the highly successful **GB200T** special event station project to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle of Trafalgar. If you've ever wondered what goes into putting on a special event station and how much work is involved, this will be the place to find out.

For **June** we have a **Test and Measurement** night when we will have some top grade professional test gear on hand to test your rig. We will be able to measure receiver sensitivity, signal to noise ratio, SINAD, squelch threshold, display accuracy etc, and for transmitters, frequency accuracy, power output (up to 400W), deviation, modulation percentage etc. If you want to do any servicing adjustments, then we

have to know which pot to adjust so bring along the manual or circuit diagram.

If you want to do any specific tests or test something unusual, drop a line to the secretary and we'll do our best to accommodate you. You can also enter the results in your log, which looks very good if you have a station inspection! We will also have a **valve characteristic meter** on the go courtesy of G4FKK so if you have any valves you're not sure about, bring 'em along!

**July** brings our annual DF hunt. Last year's winner G4CDY will be looking to defend his title and we expect to see some practical results from the antenna building project. No doubt we will end up in a pub somewhere as usual (Sigh!) Details of the venue will be in next month's *CATS Whispers*.

For **August**, Prue G4RWW has kindly offered to host the annual CATS Bar-B-Q again. This now traditional CATS event sees us relaxing in Prue's garden with BBQ, beer and people from not only CATS but also our friends in SRCC.

## **Ofcom announcement**

Ofcom have announced their proposals for the simplification of radio licencing. The proposals cover areas of licencing outside amateur radio and are designed to simplify and reduce the costs of administering the licencing regime and depend heavily on the use of the internet to operate the system. Manual (i.e. non-internet) transactions will attract a fee.

The full text of the proposals is available at: <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/internetlicence/internetlicence.pdf> and there is a brief window of opportunity left if you wish to comment on or object to the proposals. A summary of the changes is published below.

One aspect that has now become clear is that after the date that the proposed scheme comes into operation, a free licence will be issued *via the internet* to existing licence holders. Unfortunately, if your existing licence expires shortly before this date, you still have to pay a year's licence fee for a short period of validity. If it's renewable in October, you're OK.

### **Summary of proposals to support simpler licencing**

1.1 Ofcom is required to make statutory regulations in order to make or change fees for Wireless Telegraphy Licences (the licences under which use of radio spectrum equipment is authorised). This consultation concerns a number of deregulatory proposals for

removing or simplifying fees, expected to start from 1 October 2006.

1.2 Ofcom proposes the following changes to fees-

Class of licence	Current fees	New fees
Amateur radio	£15 per year. Free for amateurs under 21 and over 75 years of age.	Free, for lifetime of licence, if obtained via internet. £20, for lifetime of licence, if not obtained via internet. Concessions for age will not be applicable for licences obtained this way. (Note free option via internet). Existing licensees will be granted free replacement lifetime licence.
Amateur radio variations (e.g. authorising repeaters or internet gateway connections)	Free	Free
Ship radio	£20	Free, for lifetime of licence, if obtained via internet. £20, for lifetime of licence, if not obtained via internet. Concessions for qualifying charities will not apply to licences obtained this way (Note free option via internet). Existing licensees will be granted free replacement lifetime licence.
Ship portable radio	£15	As above
Citizens' band radio	£15	Free, assuming Ofcom will also make related exemption regulations (separate consultation to be issued shortly).

1.3 This consultation covers proposed changes to licenses previously managed by the Radio Licensing Centre (i.e. amateur radio, ship radio, ship portable radio and citizens' band radio licences).

1.4 The proposals follow Ofcom's policy statement to introduce lifetime licences announced on 14 February 2006. Ofcom announced that where possible, it would encourage licences to be issued via the internet.

1.5 Ofcom believes that these new proposed arrangements will significantly benefit individuals and businesses, saving them time and money, reducing the administrative burden on spectrum users and simplifying the application process (see Impact Assessment on page 6).

1.6 Ofcom intends to publish other consultations shortly which will address light usage of business radio spectrum, changes to other Wireless Telegraphy fees and further licence exemption.

1.7 Any comments about the proposals in this consultation should be sent to [SpectrumPricing@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:SpectrumPricing@ofcom.org.uk) by 16 May 2006.

## TransPONDer net news

The May TransPONDer net takes place next Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> May and a good turnout to chat to our friends in California would be appreciated. 145.2875 MHz using MB7IPL as usual. In case you had forgotten, CATS are mounting their most ambitious expedition yet in July with three of our members travelling over to Glendale as guests of the Crescenta Valley club to take part in the annual ARRL HF Field Day competition. Flying across the Atlantic to LAX will be Andy G0KZT, Andy G8JAC and Prue G4RWW. The usual host at the western end, Mark W6MY is in Ohio this week and hopes to join in via Echolink. In Glendale the contact will be hosted by Larry AD6IZ in his absence.

## The CATS 4m net

At a guess, there are at least a dozen members with 4 metre rigs including the very useful Ascomm sets that were obtained a few years ago, so it's rather surprising that more people don't make use of them. There are three or so diehards who regularly make it onto the Wednesday evening 4m CATS net and in recent weeks they have been joined by a couple of members of a 4m enthusiasts group located in the Dartford bridge area. 4 metres is often the "forgotten band". Britain is unusual in Europe in having an allocation and the low level of useage makes it an ideal chat band. The drawback is that there is no amateur gear equipped with the band so it tends to be the province of the home brewer or the modifiers of commercial gear. 70MHz is also in range of modern military kit and G8JAC often uses sets of the Clansman range on 4m.

The lack of use makes 4m a prime candidate to be taken away should a more lucrative use be found for it so – Use it or Lose it!

## For Sale & Wants

This space is available for any CATS members to advertise surplus kit or to search for those hard to find items that they need. *CATS Whispers* has a surprisingly wide readership and unlike ebay, It's free! Just drop a line to the editor.

### 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. **Crystals** – loads available, 0.5 to 70 MHz, various holder styles. Let me know what frequencies you need.

### **Mad Frank G3ZMF**

☎ **01737 218463 (weekends)**  
**01483 229062 (work 08.00 – 16.00)**  
**07881 974952 (mobile)**

### WANTED

Older-style tabletop rack cabinet to accept a 19 inch rack panel 10½ ins (6U) high and with 15 inch depth. This is the sort of cabinet I'm after:



**Andy G8JAC**  
[g8jac@btinternet.com](mailto:g8jac@btinternet.com)

☎ **020 8651 2727**

## Other Club News & Contact Information

### **BROMLEY & DISTRICT ARS**

Website – [www.bdars.org.uk](http://www.bdars.org.uk)  
Email [bdars-news@talk21.com](mailto:bdars-news@talk21.com)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at Victory Social Club,  
Kechill Gardens, Hayes, Kent  
7-30pm for 8pm

18<sup>th</sup> May – On-air for World Amateur Day  
followed by quiz evening.

### **The Crystal Palace Radio and Electronics Club**

Meets on 1<sup>st</sup> 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/](http://www.qsl.net/g3oou/)

5<sup>th</sup> May – hands on Aerials & Feeders

### **CRAWLEY ARC**

[www.carc.org.uk](http://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.

24<sup>th</sup> May – Spring surplus equipment sale

### **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: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at The Guide  
Hall, Denne Road, Horsham.  
Latest news – [www.harc.org.uk](http://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/>

19<sup>th</sup> May – Radio night & tabletop sale

### **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](http://www.qsl.net/rats)  
Email [rats@qsl.net](mailto:rats@qsl.net)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at RNIB Redhill College,  
Philanthropic Road, Redhill for 7-30pm

### **SRCC**

Ray Howells G4FFY 020 8644 7599  
Club Nets –  
Sunday 0930hrs 29.111 MHz  
Friday 2030hrs 144.325 MHz  
Thursday 1900hrs 145.500 MHz  
Website – [www.g3src.org.uk](http://www.g3src.org.uk)  
Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays at T.S.  
Terra Nova, 34 The Waldrons, South  
Croydon 7.45pm for 8pm

8<sup>th</sup> May – project construction evening

22<sup>nd</sup> may – Fix it & move-it-on meeting.

## **SUTTON & CHEAM RS**

John Puttock G0BWV 020 8644 1614

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](http://www.scrs.org.uk)

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

**18<sup>th</sup> May** – AGM & Construction contest.

## **THAMES VALLEY A.R.T.S.**

Trevor Farris M0CDB 013 7245 767

**Club Net Only – G3TVS**

Saturdays 1400hrs on 40m

7.070 – 7.085 MHz

## **WIMBLEDON & DARS**

Website – [www.gx3wim.org.uk](http://www.gx3wim.org.uk)

Club Net –

Mondays 2045hrs 145.500 MHz

2<sup>nd</sup> & last Friday of each month at

Martin Way Methodist Church,  
Buckleigh Avenue, Merton Park SW20.  
7.30pm for 8pm.

**Note: New location.**

**26<sup>th</sup> May** - Club website technology, by  
Peter Jenner M0PDJ

## **Special Event Stations**

GB150VC will operate from the Firepower museum in Woolwich from 1 – 28 June to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Victoria Cross. Details from Mike M1CCF.

Castles and Stately Homes On The Air  
GB0TOL will be active from The Tower of London and GB8CC from Conisbrough Castle over the third weekend in June.

More info available at: <http://www.cashota.org>

## **Local Rally & Event Calendar**

### **Dates for your diary:**

**14 May** – Dunstable Downs rally.

**18<sup>th</sup> June** - The Newbury and District ARS  
Boot Sale.

**16 July** - Mc Michael Rally, Reading RFC,  
Sonning, Berks.

**13<sup>th</sup> August** - Flight Refuelling ARS  
rally, Wimbourne, Dorset.

**8/9 September** – Leicester Amateur  
Radio Show, Donnington Park.

**15<sup>th</sup> October** – Rusty Radios rally, Cottered  
village hall, Nr Stevenage, Herts.

**12<sup>th</sup> November** - West London  
Electronics Show, Kempton Park  
(Radiofairs). **Note revised date. Radcom is still  
carrying an incorrect date for this event.**

**19<sup>th</sup> November** – CATS Bazaar. Our well-  
known and regarded autumn amateur radio  
event.

This year bigger and better than ever!

### **International:**

**May 19 – 21** – Dayton Hamvention  
Dayton Ohio USA

**June 23 – 25** International Radio  
Amateur Exhibition, Friedrichshafen,  
Germany.

CATS Whispers is published monthly by  
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