

COULSDON AMATEUR TRANSMITTING SOCIETY

G4FUR



M1FUR

CATS WHISPERS

December 2007



Affiliated to the RSGB

SYCOM – Official CATS Sponsor

Visit www.sycomcomp.co.uk

CATS Committee

Chairman: Steve Conway G7SYO

Secretary: Andy Jackson G8JAC

Treasurer: Derek Hands G1PGS

Members: Rob Cole 2E0AYT

Stuart Barber G6CJR

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 20.00 to 22.00hrs.

Society Nets

1st 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 10th December - Annual General Meeting

Mon 14th January 2008 – CATS New Year Dinner

Mon 11th February 2007 – DF receiver project by Terry G4CDY



CATS is Twinned with the

Crescenta Valley Radio Club

Glendale California USA www.qsl.net/cvrc

November meeting Report

November, when it's usually cold, damp, miserable or being England, all three at once, is a good time to have an activity inside and in the warm. A quiz fits that bill and so it was that the 2007 CATS Quiz was held under the able stewardship of Rob 2E0AYT with technical assistance from Steve G7SYO.

21 CATS members and friends assembled for the contest and we were especially pleased to welcome our friends from SRCC in the form of a team comprising Bernie G8TB, XYL Blanca, Pat G4FDN and John G3BFP.

The quiz was arranged in rounds of ten questions and soon had us all alternately wracking our brains for the answer that we knew we knew if only we could remember what it was, and groans of annoyance when the answers were given, punctuated by exclamations of "Of course!, Idiot!".



Studied expressions as a question is pondered.



Quizmaster Rob 2E0AYT running the show with modern technology.

A break half way through for tea and biscuits, although some members came prepared with beer and snacks, then back to the quiz.

In a tight finish, the winners were the Maydays comprising Steve G3WZK and XYL Jenny, Derek G6MFM and Mike G6YOG. They are just visible at the far end of the hall in the first picture. In joint second place were the Jacksons with just three members, Andy G8JAC, XYL Jan and Paul M3JXN, tying with Steve's Gang who by some devious means had managed to field five players!.

The winners were suitably rewarded with liqueur chocolates.

A very enjoyable evening, and many thanks to Rob for putting it all together.

CATS Activity News

The **December** meeting is, as is usual, devoted to the business of running your society by means of the **Annual General Meeting**. See below for more information.

CATS New Year Dinner 2008

Following up on last year's successful New Year dinner, we are going to do it again for 2008. The date is **Monday 14th January** and the venue this time is the Good Companions in Hamsey Green. Time is 7.30pm for 8. So far, 31 members and guests have confirmed attendance so it looks to be heading for an enjoyable evening.

The Good Companions restaurant has its own private bar so gather there for a pre-meal drink. For real ale fans the pub serves Westerham Ales British Bulldog, Shepherd Neame Spitfire and Fullers London Pride.

There's ample free parking but if you don't want to drive, the good old 403 bus stops right outside.

More information including the menu on offer and location details can be found at: <http://www.thegoodcompanions.com>

Still haven't booked? Then contact G8JAC pronto to avoid disappointment and missing out on a good evening.

In **February** we will be preparing for the annual CATS fox hunting event with a DF project by Terry G4CDY.



The CATS Bazaar rolls on

Regarded by some members as the highlight of the CATS year, our annual bazaar was held again at the Scout HQ in Coulsdon, and measured by money and attendance this year seems to have been our most successful bazaar yet.

Despite grave fears about the weather, in fact it was a really nice, bright morning when we opened up for the traders to set out their tables just before 8am on the Sunday and thankfully it stayed fine until after the bazaar had ended and all the clearing up had been done.

Preparation of the hall had been done the evening before and thanks go to the usual stalwart band for turning out including G0GNO, M3JXN, M3IGP, 2E0AYT, G6CJR, G0SDB and a couple of others who I've forgotten.

All the available tables had been let to traders and this year we were pleased to have an official RSGB presence in the form of our regional manager Alison G8ROG who set out a table with many of the RSGB products and books.



A crowded hall with a view across the goodies on the SRCC table.

With the crowd beginning to form outside the doors, we opened a few minutes before 10am and we were off into a couple of hours of hectic trading. As last year, we ran a bring-and-buy table where visitors could bring items that they wished to sell and leave them safely on display while they enjoyed the bazaar. As well as these items for sale, we also displayed a range of silent key items kindly donated by James G0SDB and other varied items donated for CATS funds.

Sustenance and refreshment for the event was ably provided as usual by our good friends Jim G4WYJ and XYL Barbara M3WYJ, assisted by

our own Prue G4RWW and together they dispensed countless cups of tea and coffee plus of course the famous Kennedy's hot sausage rolls.

There's a bit of bad news about the sausage rolls by the way, this will be the last year that we will have these delicious snacks as Kennedy's the family butchers that has served the Croydon area for 130 years will cease trading at the end of the year. A sad loss.



The CATS Bring and Buy stall at the bazaar.

As usual our friend and CATS sponsor Sycom supported us with a good display of kit and components enabling everyone to browse and buy those small components that are becoming so difficult to find.

Some potted facts on the bazaar:
32 tables with 20 traders and clubs.
162 visitors paid at the door.
Furthest travelled trader: Simon G3GRL, from Nottingham.

Furthest travelled visitor (as far as we know):
Dave Parker KB2USM from New York City.
Sausage rolls consumed: Four dozen.
Cups of tea and coffee: we lost count!

Some comments heard during and after the event were that it was always nice to come and meet up with other local amateurs and friends and that the CATS Bazaar is always a valued social occasion as well as a radio rally. Apart from everyone enjoying themselves and the obligatory re-distribution of priceless radio goodies, a very healthy sum was raised for CATS funds and our thanks go to all the members who gave their time and labour to make the event a success for another year.

The Annual General Meeting

Yes, it's that time of year again!

As previously notified in the October and November newsletters, the Annual General Meeting of the Coulsdon Amateur Transmitting Society will be held on **Monday 10th December** commencing at 20.15. It should be mentioned that for the health and well-being of the society, this is one of the most important meetings of the year and one which every member should make the effort to attend if possible. It's the time to find out what the committee that you elected last year have been doing, how the society stands financially and is the occasion for members to have their say about the society and how it is run.

Elections will be held for the following committee posts to serve for 2008:

Secretary

Treasurer

Five Ordinary members, from which one will be elected to serve as Chairman of the society.

Your attention is directed to society Rules governing the conduct of the AGM, specifically: rule 7.2 that states that all committee members shall retire at the AGM but may seek re-election if they so wish.

At the date of writing, the secretary has not received any nominations for committee posts or notification of any matters to be raised at the meeting by members.

A form was sent to members with the November newsletter for the nomination of members to serve on the committee, and further forms will be available at the meeting. Nominations should be seconded and have the agreement of the nominee to being nominated (i.e. no nasty surprises or "ambush" nominations please!) Nominations may be sent by post or email to the secretary or at the meeting **before** the commencement of the AGM.

The outline agenda for the meeting will be:

Chairman's address

Minutes of the 2006 Annual General Meeting

Secretary's report

Treasurer's report

Announcement of subscriptions for 2008

Appointment of independent auditor for 2008

Election of officers for 2008

Any Other Business

To make the evening a seasonal occasion and as a blatant bribe to encourage the maximum attendance, wine and hot mince pies will be served during the meeting as well as the usual tea and coffee. We hope that as many members as possible will attend the meeting.

Society Property

The AGM is an appropriate time to review the items of society property that are out on loan to members. These loans were taken out at the March meeting and have automatically been renewed. The loans can of course be further extended but all members should have the opportunity to borrow any item of kit to use it or for testing, evaluation, or self-training. The only conditions are that the member accepts responsibility for the value of the items on loan and that the loan is to the member for personal use only. However an unavoidable consequence of the kit being distributed amongst the members is that it's easy to lose sight of what is available. Therefore, the list of what is available for loan is being re-distributed to the membership.

If you wish to borrow something, please let the secretary know what it is that you are interested in and the member currently holding it will be asked to make it available to you.

If you have an item on loan that you no longer require, please bring it to the AGM or let the secretary know that you wish to return it.

If no-one wants a particular item, then the existing loan will be automatically renewed and you need do nothing.

Finally, the AGM is the ideal time to renew your subscriptions for 2008. The treasurer will have his receipt book ready and will be pleased to lighten your wallet.

Is It My Receiver or is 20 Metres Flat?

I've had grave concerns for my Kenwood TS-2000 and in particular receiving signals on 20 metres. During the evenings I have not been able to hear ANY signals with a noise level of S5. I then thought, is it our new digital cordless house telephone blocking the receiver? Or is it the baby monitor? Nope! I had a tune around at 0930hrs and heard an EA7 at 59+10dB so I think the receiver is OK.

Has anyone else experienced this total wipe out during daylight hours? I have never seen (or should that be heard?) 20 metres so bad.

Andy GOKZT

Contesting for 2008

Contesting 2008 – Which, When, Where???

Right, time to put our thinking caps on and start to think about what contests we would like to take part in during 2008.

We've dipped our toes into the water on the dizzy heights of VHF and UHF but I know a number of members would like to try their hands at HF contests. Many years ago CATS used to enter the SSB Field Day on 6th/7th September and I think this is one we could seriously consider. However, one of the factors to consider is that quite a few contests are CW only. I would need to know if there are any members who would like to do such a contest. Us non-proficient CW operators, one of whom is myself, could play a supporting role to those who would like to have a bash with the key. Again CW only is National Field Day, another 24hr event on 7th/8th June or RSGB Low Power Contest on 20th July (with an hour break for lunch!!).

Amongst the series available are the 80 metre club championships. Broadly speaking, these could be of interest to CW, phone and data mode operators alike as each mode is catered for on individual dates. They run from February to July and take place during weekdays for 90 minutes each.

Also, the RSGB have introduced the RSGB 80m Club Sprint Contests from August to November, again for 90 minutes each. Quirky rules but could be fun!

Another one is the RSGB 21 / 28MHz Contest in October that takes place on a Sunday from 0700 to 1900hrs.

That's basically HF. VHF&UHF we are a bit more familiar with but at the time of writing this article, the 2008 calendar had not been published. There will no doubt be the usual activity and Club Championship contests on Tuesdays, the Back Packer's series (separate events for 6, 2 and 70cms). I would expect that we would like to try our hands again at the Low Power VHF and UHF expected in August. VHF NFD? If we chose to do that one, we'll need to move back to Crossways Farm as SRCC have "Grandfather" rights to the Woldingham site. There will be the 144 MHz Trophy that usually takes place on the same weekend as SSB Field Day (HF).

I picked up a cheap rotator at the CATS Bazaar that I intend to service and make available for our contesting. It has 2" in and out brackets and should be robust enough to turn our meagre mast. On the subject of masts, I believe the Committee have considered upgrading our mast, as there was some concern about the banana shape of it this year.

I am prepared, if you'll have me, to act as your Contest Secretary. In the meantime, please give some consideration to what you which contests you would like to do. I expect that the full contesting calendar will be published soon. As a first step, put the above dates in your diary!

73 de Andy G0KZT



New CATS Kit

Curiously conveniently, we have some late-breaking news regarding G0KZT's comments on masts above.

The mast that we have used for several years for field activities and contesting has always – if the truth be known – been a bit of a lash-up, made of old scaffold poles, clamps and nylon rope, and as we highlighted in the September issue, given to bowing banana-like under certain conditions. It's also not the easiest or safest thing to erect either. So your committee has been keeping an eye out for something better to replace it. A suitable mast has now become available and has been acquired for the society.

It's an ex-military SCAM 12 mast manufactured by Clark Masts Ltd and after a check-up and any thing needed is attended to, G8JAC, M3JXN, G0KZT and G0GNQ will be working out the best way to integrate our existing antenna kit with it into an outfit that can be easily taken to site and put into action. The 12 in the name is the height in metres which in English is around 40 feet. It is a pump-up type mast that can be erected with a hand pump, but we have also acquired a small compressor to do the job. Being made to military standards it's robustly constructed to say the least and should easily cope with anything that we are likely to put on top of it.

More news when we've had a go at putting it up.

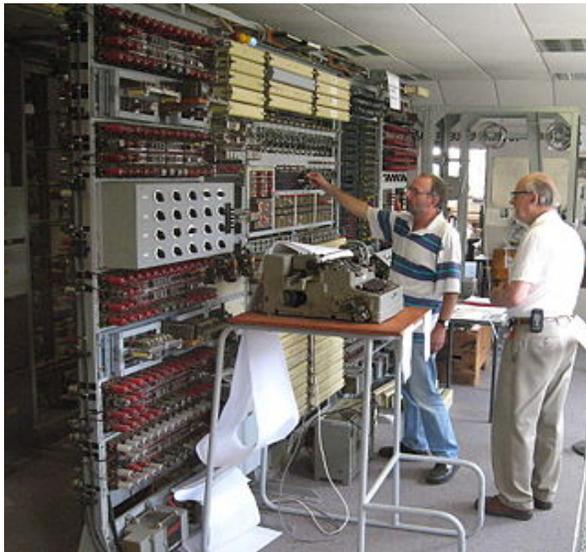


TransPONDer net news

The last TransPONDer net for this year took place on Saturday 1st December when several CATS members took the opportunity to wish our friends in our sister club a personal Happy Christmas. Now that the USA has also reverted to winter time, the net returned to the normal 17.15 GMT local time on the usual frequency of 145.2875 MHz with the link to the Internet hosted by G4CDY's MB7IPL node. We were also joined via Echolink by Mark W6MW who called in from Atlanta. Next net and the first in 2008 will be on Saturday 5th January.

Bletchley Park

You may have noticed the story recently about the completed Colossus project at Bletchley Park being put into competition with a modern PC to break messages encoded by the German WW2 Lorenz machines. The PC won, but the reconstructed Colossus did what it was designed to do and successfully decoded the Lorenz wheel settings in about six hours. See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/7098005.stm>



Tony Sale, leader of the Colossus Mk II reconstruction project.

This all brought about the feeling that it was about time that CATS organised another visit to Bletchley Park. Anyone interested? A Sunday visit is thought to be most convenient for the majority of people and March or April has been suggested. Stuart G6CJR has kindly volunteered to provide a minibus for transport if required. Who's interested? A sheet for names of who would be interested in going on a visit will be on the table at meetings and we'll arrange a trip on the most popular day.

For Sale & Wanted

FOR SALE

Yaesu G650 rotator used for one season only. In very good condition. £250



MFJ 1263 microphone control centre. In mint condition, never used. £ 60



MFJ 969 Mk.2 deluxe tuner. 300 Watts
Used for one season only. £ 70



MQ-24SR TGM Four Band 2-element Hybrid Quad Antenna with Enhanced Reflector
Used for one season, good condition. £150



Watson W30 30 Amp power supply
Good condition. £ 35

Global SWL AT1000. Suitable for short wave listener. £25

Alec M0WHY. Montem, Jail Lane, Biggin Hill, Kent. TN16 3AU Telephone: 01959 575113

Email: alec12345@tiscali.co.uk

All items to be collected from from Biggin Hill.

EDITOR'S NOTE: these are stock illustrations, not the actual items for sale.

This space is available to any member (and others subject to approval) to advertise any radio-related items.



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

18 December – Mince pies and natter night.
15 January – Annual general Meeting.

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/

4 January 2008 An introduction to Morse
1 February – Annual general Meeting and construction contest.

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.

14 December – Christmas fish and chip supper.
30 January – Annual General Meeting.
27 February – Web 2 applications by GOVYN

DORKING & District RS

Club Nets –
Sunday 0815hrs 3.770 Mhz
2030hrs 144.775 MHz
Meetings are held at the Friends Meeting House, Butterhill, South Street Dorking at 1930hrs.
Email: wb@g3jvk.co.uk

December – no formal meeting.

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

8 December – HARC Christmas dinner.

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/>
December 14 – Christmas Quiz & mince pie night.
January 4 – Meet the committee & round table evening.
January 25 – Battery Operations.

MITCHAM & DISTRICT ARS

(G3HFY) – Last Wednesday of each month 1930hrs at ATC HQ, Commonsides 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

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

Note: SRCC Meetings are currently being held at Trinity School, Shirley Park. Check with SRCC if visiting.

7th Jan - History of our Local Weather with Ian Currie

4th Feb - Experiments and Displays of Tesla Coils with Ian Daniels G4VTD



SUTTON & CHEAM RS

John Puttock G0BWV 020 8644 9945

Club Nets –

Monday 20.00hrs 145.500 MHz

Saturday 11.00hrs 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

13th Dec - Christmas Junk Sale - (2nd Thursday this month only)

17th Jan - 'Flying Experiences in Australia' by Andrew Vine MØGJG

21 February - 'Fun with APRS and GPS' by Olof Lundberg - GØCKV

THAMES VALLEY A.R.T.S.

Trevor Farris M0CDB 013 7245 767

Club Net Only – G3TVS

Saturdays 1400hrs on 40m

WIMBLEDON & DISRICT ARS

Website – www.gx3wim.org.uk

Club Net –

Mondays 2045hrs 145.500 MHz

2nd & last Friday of each month at Martin Way Methodist Church, Buckleigh Avenue, Merton Park SW20. 7.30pm for 8pm.

14 January – Christmas social.

11 January – Microwave update with Jim Gale G4WYJ.

Want to be more up to date?

Many of our neighbouring clubs send us their newsletters electronically and printed versions are made available for members at CATS meetings. We also send *CATS Whispers* to them so that their members are informed about what CATS are up to.

If you would like to receive other clubs' newsletters by email it's simple: just let CATS secretary know and interesting local amateur radio news and articles will be delivered to your mailbox as soon as it is available. Several CATS members already receive this service – why not you?



Local Rally & Event Calendar

Dates for your diary:

Sunday **10th February 2008**

HARWELL RADIO RALLY

At Didcot Leisure Centre, Mereland Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 8AY.

3rd February 2008 South Essex ARS mobile rally. "Paddocks", Long Road, Canvey Island.

Saturday and Sunday **1/2nd March 2008**

FIREPOWER VINTAGE RADIO & JUNK SALE

At Firepower, the Royal Artillery Museum in the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich SE London SE18 6ST. Easy access by train to Woolwich Arsenal Station, buses pass the door and Free car parking.

Sunday **6th April 2008**

Radiofairs spring Amateur Radio and Electronics show at Kempton Park.

10 August 2008 Flight Refuelling ARS Hamfest.

Tailpiece

Well, we've reached the end of another year, the 32nd year of the society's existence. While CATS remains an active and vital society, it's an unfortunate fact – shared with other clubs – that the activities and the work of running and organising things falls mostly on the same devoted few. Indeed, there are some members that we never see from one year's end to the next and while we of course value their membership, we'd like to see them now and again.

Perhaps a good resolution for the New Year might be to do something for CATS. Write an article. Present a talk. Do a stint at a contest operating day. Help out at an event. Take on a committee post.

Anyway, CATS has had another good year and we should be proud of that and of our society. The committee and editor would like to wish all members and their families a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

73.



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