

COULSDON AMATEUR TRANSMITTING SOCIETY

G4FUR



M1FUR

CATS WHISPERS



Affiliated to the RSGB

August 2008

SYCOM – Official CATS Sponsor

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CATS Committee

Chairman: Steve Conway G7SYO

Secretary: Andy Jackson G8JAC

Treasurer: Derek Hands G1PGS

Members: Steve Beal G3WZK

Stuart Barber G6CJR

Dennis Noe MØ NDJ

Frank Emery G3ZMF

CATS Whispers Editor: Andy Jackson G8JAC

email address for contributions: www.qsl.net/cats

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 www.qsl.net/cats **Email** : cats@qsl.net

New website host: <http://www.sthost.co.uk/webpace/cats/>

Forthcoming Meetings

Mon 11th August – The annual CATS Bar-B-Q at G4RWW

Mon 8th September – GB3NS - our local repeater by Denis GØ OLX

Mon 13th October – Sub-sea cables by Steve G3WZK



CATS is Twinned with the

Crescenta Valley Radio Club

Glendale California USA www.qsl.net/cvrc

July meeting report

Our July meeting was a visit by Tony Fell G7DGW who was presenting a lecture on "Repairing Amateur Radio". Tony started by outlining how he and others were struggling to re-establish a viable club after the membership of the Kingston ARS had dwindled to just three members. This new club is being established under the guise of Surbiton Heritage Amateur Radio & Electronics Society – also known as SHARES, club callsign MØ SHA. Tony gave us a sketch of his background in teaching electronics from the old RAE courses to teaching professional electronics servicing. Unfortunately, an ill-timed computer failure meant that he was unable to use electronic aids for the evening so it was a case of falling back on a traditional style of presentation.



Tony Fell G7DGW starting his presentation.

The first question of "Why repair?" was answered with typical "amateur" logic – in most cases, especially on older kit, the techniques required are simple and components easily sourced. Typical hourly rates for commercial repair are another obvious reason. It is also not usually necessary to have expensive test kit, much can be done with a multimeter and perhaps a simple oscilloscope and basic hand tools.

The logical steps of fault location were explained – diagnosis, location, repair and test with the comment that total failure is often the easiest problem to locate. Tony went on to relate some of the interesting faults that he had investigated over the years. Capacitors came in for some detailed discussion, emerging as possibly the least reliable of electronic components, especially the electrolytic variety. Early germanium transistors are also failing with age and starting to cause the disappearance of the first generation of solid state electronics.

Some useful tips on selecting capacitors by working temperature range were passed on before moving on to other areas where repairs could be attempted such as RF problems, switched mode power supplies and the ubiquitous digiboxes that are invading all our homes.

The presentation was rounded off with the distribution of handouts about faulting techniques and the generous offer of assistance with finding those hard-to-locate components for older kit.

An interesting and useful presentation for which we offer our thanks to Tony.

Where's the Ulu?

Several people were puzzled when reading the report on the CATS DF hunt about Terry G4CDY disappearing "into the Ulu" It's good old army slang derived from the Malay word for jungle. Now you know!

An old friend re-appears

Frank G3ZMF reports hearing **9V1LF** calling through Echolink to the GB3NS repeater, 9V1LF being the latest incarnation of our old friend Laurence Howells G4DMA. Laurence is also operational on 10.1387 MHz using digital modulation (Dstar?) Keep an ear open for him.

CATS Future Activity News

Looking ahead to **September**, We have a presentation on the GB3NS repeater by the repeater keeper Denis GØ OLX. Find out the story behind the repeater and the problems that had to be overcome to get it back on the air.

Coming up in **October** we venture into the telecoms world under the sea with a presentation by Steve G3WZK on sub-sea cables. Sandwiched between HF radio and satellites as the technology for world-wide communications, sea cables are still in everyday use. As well as the theory there will be examples of the cables used and a chance to examine the technology.

November is CATS Quiz time and this year our Quizmaster is Mad Frank G3ZMF who has been busy compiling a fiendish set of brain teasers for the past few weeks.

Is there something that YOU would like to see as an activity for our meeting evenings? Could YOU present something that would interest other members? Got an idea for something that we could present? Tell a committee member!

Contesting Report

144/432 MHz Low Power 2-3 August 2008

Ok. What happened to the summer? With weather more resembling Autumn, CATS members including Andy G8JAC, Mike M1CCF, Len G0GNQ, Ian M3IGP, Rob 2E0AYT, Frank G3ZMF, Steve G7SYO, Terry G4CDY and Steve G3WZK, along with yours truly participated in a weekend of contesting at the site of Warren Barn Farm in Woldingham. Saturday saw the beginnings of a wet weekend and members braved the wind and thankfully light rain to put the station together. Andy G8JAC had arrived on site first and positioned the pump up mast and the club tent soon followed. This at least gave somewhere dry and out of the wind to assemble one of the 17 element Tonna Yagis. It was decided that the rotator would possibly suffer too much and, of course safety being paramount, we elected to run with just one single beam plus a dual band co-linear on the top. At about 2.00pm the station was ready to go and the station comprised of my Kenwood TS-2000 running at 25 watts with a Heil headset supplied by Frank G3ZMF (ah the luxury of hands-free).



The tables below describe the amount of activity in respect to both events. We narrowly missed a GM on the Saturday that just faded out before any information could be recorded. Note the blip in activity between 6.00pm and 7.00pm. A cunning move was made to S19 where a number of local stations were worked. Not many kilometres but plenty of postcode multipliers!

Once the final bell was rung for the 2-metre section, the mast was lowered and the pre-assembled pair of 19 element Tonna Yagis for 70cm were applied to the mast. The mast was left in the lowered position until the morning. However, stations were worked on afterwards with brief

contacts made on HF using a Windom aerial slung between two poles. The evening was finished off with fish and chips and some much-deserved beers and other teetotal beverages! The overnight crew consisted of Len, Ian, Frank and myself. Heavy rain showers through the night made for an interesting nights sleep. Frank was awakened by rustling at the tent door and shone his torch to reveal a somewhat surprised fox!



G3ZMF handling the pileup, G0KZT logging.

The Sunday morning was greeted with low cloud with visibility less than the Beijing Olympic smog. I believe if the mast had of been at maximum height, the aerials would not have been visible! The mast was cranked up, the generator fired up (it must be said that the new generator purred without any trouble, except when it once ran out of petrol. It used probably no more than about 2 gallons of fuel throughout the weekend) and the operators fuelled themselves up with cereal and for Len and Ian, a full fry-up! We were joined again by Andy G8JAC and a little later by Steve G3WZK. A surprise visitor on the Sunday was Steve G3UFY from the Addiscombe club.

70cms is never going to be a busy band so the low expectation softened the blow slightly. My crude auto-caller using a CD player repeating a single track of "CQ Contest" was put into use at an early stage.

Once 1.00pm arrived, the station was dismantled; probably the threat of more rain gave an incentive to get the tent folded up. As it was, it did get a little damp. By 2.00pm the site was cleared and the site restored back to the farmer.

Below is a summary of the submitted scores for each band. Minimal errors were found and only one duplicate for the 2-metre section. The stations that were unable to provide IARU locator squares were asked for their full postcodes and, post-event, I was able to calculate these respective squares. We can only wait and see how our entries fare in the Open Section of the contest.

Band	Countries	Locator Squares	Postcode Multipliers	Contacts	Points per km	Total Score
144 MHz	6	17	39	65	8452	524024
432MHz	4	14	27	39	4235	190575

144 MHz Time	QSOs	Mult's	Points
14:00 - 14:59	21	31	2989
15:00 - 15:59	9	10	1323
16:00 - 16:59	9	7	2058
17:00 - 17:59	8	6	784
18:00 - 18:59	15	7	815
19:00 - 19:59	3	1	483

432 MHz Time	QSOs	Mult's	Points
08:00 - 08:59	22	29	2695
09:00 - 09:59	10	10	739
10:00 - 10:59	5	4	630
11:00 - 11:59	2	2	171

Best DX 144 MHz: F5SGT/P in IN88KD, 412 km
 432 MHz: G4YTD in IO94TA, 307 km

In summary, this was a successful event for the club. It once again showed that we can put a station together and operate under “adverse” conditions. Those present worked well as a team, either as operators, cooks or general hands. I believe we can be proud of our effort and I also believe we should give serious consideration into doing this event again (hopefully next year the weather will be more like summer).

If anyone would like to see the full results including the logs, then I would be pleased to email them on request. I would finally like to thank all those members listed above for giving up some or all of their weekend. I hope everyone enjoyed the experience and I hope that we can repeat it again next year.

73 de Andy G0KZT

Contest photogallery



Tent erection in typical English summer weather demonstrated by G3ZMF & G8JAC



At least we then had somewhere dry to assemble the antennas



The antenna stack being built up onto the mast before the raising. The tilt-over feature of the mast makes this very convenient.

Pictures from M1CCF and G8JAC



Raised to vertical and cables being installed.



Now it's up, here comes the good weather!



"I can't understand this. He says my audio is a bit low"

Membership Matters

No changes to report.

TransPONDer Net

Although we were prepared and ready with the MB7IPL node up and running, we were unable to connect for our monthly contact with CVRC. Next net will be on Saturday 6th September at 17.15 BST.

CATS on the Web

More updates and information has been added by G3WZK. Have you looked yet?

Put your shirt on it!

Most members have the CATS sweat shirts from a few years back, and because they are sometimes a bit too warm for summer wear and some have been worn so much they are starting to look a little washed out, we are launching a project to buy enough lightweight polo-style shirts to provide one for each member and provide a small stock. The shirts will carry the CATS title and the cat logo and can be additionally personalized with a name, callsign or both. A deal is being set up by G6CJR with a local embroidery company to supply the shirts and do the work, and a form will be sent out imminently so that members can confirm their required size and personalization details. The treasurer tells us that our finances are quite healthy due to successful activities at the Kempton Park rally and our own annual CATS Bazaar, so the cost of one shirt per member will be met from society funds. Should anyone require an additional shirt, these will be supplied at cost.

For Sale & Wanted

This facility is available to all CATS members (and non-members subject to approval) to advertise items they have for sale or are looking for. Submit all items to the Editor G8JAC.

FREE!

*A useful workbench for the shack or the garage. 8ft by 30in wide by 3ft tall workbench with detachable legs. all in steel with 15mm MDF top. **FREE!** but must be collected from Worcester Park. **Contact: Brian G8DIU on 020 8330 0092.***

CATS TRIP TO FRIEDRICHSHAFEN 2008

The Friedrichshafen rally was held this year at the end of June and a group of CATS members decided to visit this in combination with a short holiday. After a few telephone calls and emails, it was decided to have a base in the Schwarzwalde (Black Forest) for a few days and have overnight stops in France whilst travelling. We chose this to make the holiday an economical one, as we would be staying in an area normally used for skiing holidays. We arranged for a travel agency to sort all the hotels and Channel Tunnel bookings. Seven persons were travelling, Mike Rutt G6YOG & Deanne, Mike Buckley M1CCF & Sheila, Prue G4RWW, Steve Tompsett and myself. We left on

the morning of the 25th and after travelling via Ostende, Brussels, and Luxembourg we arrived at Hagenau, near Strasbourg for the evening. Although this entailed having to negotiate a road block between Germany and France, in order to get to Hagenau, (they must have known we were coming!), the Campanile Hotel was quickly found and a meal organised. The next morning found us, after crossing the Rhine, in Germany. We were soon in the midst of the Hoch Schwarzwalde and turned south to travel through the picturesque countryside. After stopping for refreshments we found ourselves at the House of a 1000 Clocks.



Refraining from buying a clock (we were too discerning), we continued on to reach our hotel in

the village of Waldau. This was called the Zur Traube, (The Grapes).



Needless to say, refreshments were again organised and an excellent meal was partaken. After an early breakfast we drove the 100 kilometres to Friedrichshafen in two cars.

The compatriots in one car declined to go to the rally and preferred to visit the Zeppelin Museum and eat chocolate gateau instead. Meanwhile we pressed on to the rally and after quickly parking,

we arrived at the Main Hall. Although we expected the rally to be large, the overall size and rally organisation was very impressive. Costs were less than expected, with parking at £2 per car and entry at £5 (£4 for over 60's). The rally extended over four large halls, (the tables at Kempton would not have filled a quarter of one hall). We walked around most of the stands / tables and this took us virtually all day, apart from a short stop for lunch.



A number of items were bought, mainly microwave components and tools for working with surface-

mount components. Steve bought a Hewlett Packard Counter / Timer.



There were stands from all over Europe most of them unknown to the UK amateur. A wide range of microwave components were available, some at reasonable prices. It was noticed that a number of people were selling high power linear amplifiers and PC controlled receivers. In the main hall were a number of national societies along with some clubs e.g. the Irish Radio and Ballooning Society.

We made a note to return next year and allow two days to visit the rally fully. After a hectic day we returned to the hotel and met up with our compatriots.

They had enquired about a trip around the lake in a Zeppelin, but unfortunately it was too costly (about £300 per person).



The next morning, we drove to the south around the local lakes (and farmyards) in the Schwarzwalde and arrived at the Sauschwanzle (Corkscrew) steam railway on the German / Swiss

border. It is so called, because the line twists and turns along the valley, including a full loop in a tunnel, to enable the train to negotiate the gradient of the line.



After refreshments, we managed to get some tickets, even though the train was fully booked (it will take too long to explain). The Station Master had a small black moustache, a peaked cap and was ordering everyone about and I wondered where I had seen him before. We then started off towards the Swiss border, with plenty of room on the train. The steward brought the drinks trolley along and we all cheered before sampling his

wares. There was only one problem with the journey, we wanted the windows open and the Germans wanted them shut. Well we arrived at the terminus and the German day trippers departed, but unfortunately more got on for the return trip. Eventually, after more games of draughts, we arrived at our starting point. The following picture shows one of the metal viaducts that the train traverses.



After returning to the hotel, we had some refreshments, whilst waiting for an excellent meal. You may wonder how we managed to order all this food and drink without knowing any German;

yes we have wondered ourselves! The next day we went to Konstanz, to get a ferry across the lake to Meersburg.



We made our way to the front of the boat for a seat and an excellent view of the lake. You will have noticed that I have not used any nautical terms here, this is due to the design of the ferry, i.e. the ferry is the same at both ends.



Although this is a vehicular ferry we only went as pedestrians and made the short walk into Meersburg centre, where of course refreshments were available.

We found a very good restaurant that had a terrace by the lakeside.



A trip around the centre of Meersburg was also made. After returning to Konstanz by the ferry, we decided to take a trip further into the Schwarzwalde, before returning to the hotel. A short distance away was a mountain called the Kandel, 1243metres (4100 feet) which we could

drive to the top. We made our way to the Kandel and stopped at the hotel on top for refreshments. While we were having a drink, some locals started to jump off the mountain, admittedly with a bit of cloth attached to them.



Soon the sky was covered with people paragliding.



This sport seems doubly dangerous, when you are doing it with an audience, who are there to see if you are going to make a mess of things. After everyone had taken off, we returned to the hotel for the last night in Germany. The next day we were retracing part of our route through the Schwarzwalde, so that we could stop for souvenirs. Firstly we went to the Clock Museum in

Furtwangen. This has a very wide selection, Roman candle clocks, Tudor clocks, early chronometers and novelty clocks. Well worth a visit but we made sure we left before mid-day! While some tried out the local shops, others had some more refreshment. After completing our shopping, we drove to the Rhine and stopped for a picnic.



While we were there we had a look at the fish weir, although it was the wrong month to see any fish negotiating the weir. We then proceeded to the area around Hagenau in France. In this location are some Maginot Line forts, so we made our way

to the fort at Lembach. Unfortunately we were late in arriving and as it takes two hours to walk round the fort, we only had enough time for a quick view. On the way to the hotel in Hagenau, we stopped at a restaurant and had an excellent meal.



The next day was our return to England which we did, via Saarbrücken, Lille and Dunkirk. Apart from being stopped at a police roadblock, the journey

was uneventful. It was obviously lucky that we did not buy any suspicious items at the rally! All in all a most enjoyable trip was had by everybody.

**Dave
G8VXB**

Local Rally & Event Calendar

10 August Flight Refuelling ARS annual Hamfest. Merley, near Wimborne, Dorset. One of the best "real amateur" rallies in the south, this year there will be extra tables devoted to telephones and telephony.

24 August (August Bank Holiday weekend) Milton Keynes ARS 50th Anniversary Rally at Holne Chase School, Buckingham Road, Bletchley, MK3 5HP.
National Grid Ref: SP861332
Opening time: 9:00 a.m., Visitors' entry fee £2
On-Site Catering. Morse Tests Available.
See www.mkars.org.uk for further details
or Telephone Mike G3LFR: 07973 264473

Kempton Park Rally

After some confusion, the date for the autumn Kempton Park rally is now confirmed as **Sunday 28 September**, rather earlier than previous years. CATS will be running the now famous Bring and Buy stall as usual so volunteers will be needed to help with the event. Remember, one useful benefit of volunteering a bit of your time for the stall is that you get a free entry pass and early entry to the rally. Co-ordinator is Andy G8JAC. Latest details at <http://www.g4cdy.co.uk/>

16th November CATS Bazaar at the Scout Hall, Lion Green Lane, Coulsdon. This will be our 31st bazaar. Make sure this date is in your diary!

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

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.gsl.net/g30ou/

5th September – Raynet by Phil Williams G6AQB

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.

27 August – Members evening.
24 September – APRS by Olof Lundberg G0 CKV

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.
Contact: Walter Blanchard G3JKV
Email: wb@g3jkv.co.uk
Web site:- <http://www.ddrs.org.uk>

HORSHAM ARC

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

15 Aug - Radio Night and Table top Sale
22 Aug G3SXW - "Seven Kilowatts in the Dark
Continent

MITCHAM & DISTRICT ARS

(G3HFY) – Last Wednesday of each month
1930hrs at ATC HQ, Commons West,
Mitcham.
Details Mike Knott G0 WCR 020 8764 4716

REIGATE ATS

Club Net –
Thursdays 2000hrs 145.500 MHz Sundays
2000hrs 3.740 – 3.760 MHz
Website www.gsl.net/rats
Email rats@gsl.net
3rd **Thursday** at RNIB, Redhill College,
Philanthropic Road, Redhill for 7-30pm
Note change of meeting day.

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 Trinity School,
Shirley Park, Croydon CR9 7AT 7.45pm for 8pm

1st September - Software Defined Radio by Martin G3OQD

SUTTON & CHEAM RS

John Puttock G0 BWV 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.

21st August - Visit by Mark Francis of Waters & Stanton

THAMES VALLEY A.R.T.S.

Trevor Farris M0 CDB 013 7245 767
Club Net Only – G3TVS
Saturdays 1400hrs on 40m

WIMBLEDON & DISTRICT 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.

Aug 29 Summer Camp Debrief led by Eric G0 KRT

CATS Whispers is published monthly by
A Jackson G8JAC on behalf of the
Coulston Amateur Transmitting Society. © C.A.T.S. 2008