

COULSDON AMATEUR TRANSMITTING SOCIETY

G4FUR



M1FUR

CATS WHISPERS



Affiliated to the RSGB

November 2008

SYCOM – Official CATS Sponsor

Visit www.sycomcomp.co.uk

CATS Committee

Chairman: Steve Conway G7SYO

Secretary: Andy Jackson G8JAC

Treasurer: Derek Hands G1PGS

Members: Steve Beal G3WZK

Stuart Barber G6CJR

Dennis Noe M0 NDJ

Frank Emery G3ZMF

CATS Whispers Editor: Andy Jackson G8JAC

Regular Society Meetings

These are held on the second Monday in each month at:-

St. Swithun's Church Hall, Grovelands Road, Purley, Surrey CR8 4LA 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.gsl.net/cats **Email** : cats@gsl.net

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

Forthcoming Meetings

Mon 10th November – The CATS Quiz hosted by Frank G3ZMF

Mon 8th December - Annual General Meeting

Monday 12th January 2009 – CATS New Year Dinner



CATS is Twinned with the

Crescenta Valley Radio Club

Glendale California USA www.gsl.net/cvrc

DEREK ROY HILLS



22nd October 1937 - 5th October 2008

The funeral of CATS member Derek Hills G6MFM was held at Croydon Crematorium on Thursday 16th October at 1.30pm. Many members of Derek's family and friends were present for the ceremony, which was conducted by Canon Arthur Quinn.

The society was represented by committee members G8JAC and G3WZK who was accompanied by XYL Jenny, and members G3YCR, G4FKK, G6YOG and G0KZT.

The family had requested "no flowers" at the funeral and in accordance with their wishes, the committee has made a donation on behalf of the society and members to the suggested charity, Cancer Research UK.

Before he died, Derek made it known that he wanted his radio possessions to go to CATS for disposal and the secretary has collected the items and put them temporarily into store. With the agreement of the family, the items will be made available at the forthcoming CATS Bazaar on the 16th November in the form of a Silent Key sale and all proceeds will be passed to the family.

Derek also had some items of CATS property that he was using. These are now available for any member to take out on loan for personal use and comprise an ICOM IC737 100W HF transceiver and SM8 desk microphone, BNOS 25A power supply and a Welz SP220 power meter. Contact G8JAC if you would like to use these items

October meeting report

Our October meeting was presented by our own Steve G3WZK and was entitled Sub-Sea Cables. The title gave a general idea of what we were to hear but it rapidly became apparent that there was a great deal more to the subject than just dropping a cable into the sea between countries and attaching a device to the ends.

We were taken to the start of electric communication – in fact to 1753 when the first electric communications system was proposed although it wasn't until 1774 that the first practical messaging system was produced using a separate wire for each character. The electric telegraph arrived in 1837, refined by the adoption of the Morse code in 1844.

The first true sub-sea cable was laid between England and France in 1850 but quickly failed due to damage by a fishing boat's anchor.

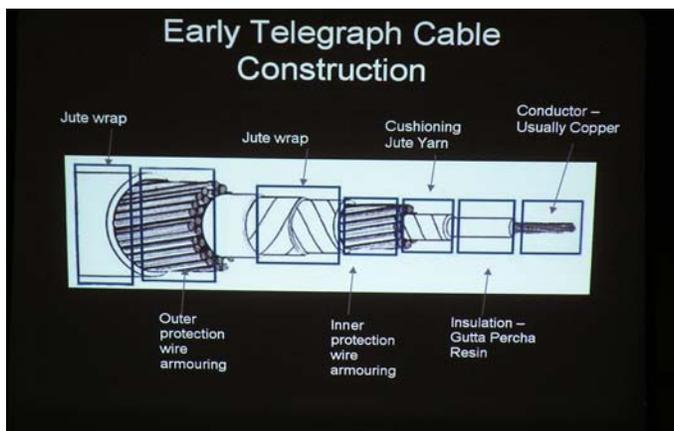
The transmission of speech came with the invention of the telephone in 1876 but to get between countries it was still necessary to use telegraphy even after Marconi first transmitted wirelessly in 1901.

The process of laying cables was presented in great detail, along with the stories of initial failure and eventual triumph. The first attempt to lay a cable across the Atlantic was as early as 1855 but the development of the necessary techniques and the cables to do it was long and expensive.



Steve G3WZK illustrating a point during his excellent lecture.

By 1866 a reliable link had been established through cables laid across the Atlantic and commercial and government traffic was being handled at the rate of \$10 per word. This produced revenues of \$2,500 per day for the operating company – a huge amount of money for the time.



Until the invention of amplification, the only way to overcome losses over long distances was to make the cable low resistance; the need for robustness to resist natural and accidental damage meant cable weighing 9 tons per mile at the shore ends. The transmission of speech over such long distances was impractical until the invention of amplification in 1911, after which the problems of submerged amplifiers, reliability and power feeding had to be overcome.



Samples of sub-sea cables were on display.

Steve next took us into the science of circuit exploitation with explanations of the various techniques to put more conversations through a circuit such as frequency division multiplexing, phantom working (including double and triple phantom circuits!) and into the digital era with most sub-sea cables now being fibre optic. This introduced the audience to such ideas as wavelength division multiplexing and marvelling at the sheer amount of data that can be put through a single fibre.

To sum up, we were treated to a technically absorbing lecture that had obviously been extremely well researched with the added bonus of Steve's working experience. If you missed it, you missed a treat,

CATS Future Activity News

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. Invitations have been made to our neighbouring clubs to join us for the occasion so we expect a challenging and interesting social evening.

The idea is to have teams of 4 or 5 and questions will be grouped in subjects. Each team gets a "Joker" which can be played in the round that you think you will do best in and gets you double points for that round. We are reliably informed that the winning team will receive fabulous prizes (at least I *think* that's what Frank said).

December is the month in which we hold the Annual General Meeting of the society.

Please see the separate formal calling notice elsewhere in this issue.

Nomination forms for the election of the officers of the society for 2009 and for ordinary members to serve on the committee will be sent to all current members by post or email as appropriate.

There will be the usual blatant bribe to get you all to attend in the form of wine and hot mince pies, which will also kick off the festive season.

Following the pattern set in the past two or three years, we will be hold in the annual CATS New Year Dinner again in **January**. We move the venue around to give a good variety and so that all members get a chance to attend, and this year's choice is the Woolpack in Banstead High Street. A number of members have used this well-known pub for informal meetings for a good few years and Danny and Angie who run the pub are looking forward to welcoming us all on **Monday 12th January 2009**.

All members and their partners are invited to our big annual get-together so put the date in your diaries now!

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!

The CATS shirt project

We are awaiting delivery of the completed shirts from the supplier and hope to be able to deliver them to members soon. The process of getting the sizes, embroidery info etc together has taken rather longer than we expected and we have to admit that now isn't perhaps the best time to get new summer shirts. But look on the bright side – they will be great for those first warm spring days!

The CATS BAZAAR

Preparations for our biggest event - the 31st annual CATS Radio and Electronics Bazaar on Sunday 16th November are now in place.

The venue is, as usual, the scout hall at the rear of the council car park in Lion Green Road, Coulsdon. CR5 2NL or TQ296594 is the entrance to the car park for those who rely on SatNavs, and the entrance to the hall is at the rear. Remember, parking is FREE on Sundays.

All of the available tables have been taken plus for the first time, we have traders outside the hall on the grass area.

Help is needed from members for several things in order to make the event the usual success: On the Saturday evening before the bazaar we will be setting out the hall. Tables have to be put out and labelled up ready for the traders to come in first thing on the Sunday morning so we need a work party at **17.00 on Saturday 15th**. This usually only takes an hour or so. Please confirm with G8JAC if you can help with this.

On the Sunday morning we open the doors to the traders at 08.00 to get all their wares into the hall and get their tables set up. The doors open to the public at 10.00 and members are needed to help with admissions, generally oversee things and Jim G4WYJ, Barbara M3WYJ and Prue G4RWW have kindly volunteered to do their usual essential job of providing tea and coffee, and of course the famous Coulsdon hot sausage rolls.

Our CATS Bring & Buy service will be operating and members are needed to staff this major attraction to the bazaar. Also on this stall we will be selling G6MFM's items. There are a lot items to be disposed of and a large quantity of components and the sort of bits that people come to the bazaar for, but this needs people to oversee and actively sell on the stall to get the best results.

And at the end of it, there's the clearing up.
Please let G8JAC know that you can help.

Membership Matters

Annual General Meeting of the society

In accordance with the rules of the society, notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Coulsdon Amateur Transmitting Society will be held on Monday 8th December 2008 at St. Swithun's Church Hall, Grovelands Road, Purley, Surrey CR8 4LA, commencing at 20.15 hours.

How To Run A Net

I've been operating Amateur Radio now for a little over 24 years. I have never been interested in chasing "DX" and very rarely get involved in calling said "DX". This is usually because the standard of operating generally falls below what I would expect Gentlemen (but not apparently Ladies) to use. Further, and as most of the "DX" is on HF, my meagre set-up puts me at a great disadvantage. I do not remember that there was any specific instruction on how to run or join a network.

The only regular nets that I am involved in are those run by our radio society, CATS. These are all on VHF where for some reason, my perceptions of good operating standards are generally found. But, one area that seems to score poorly is how to actually run a net! This got me thinking, how do you run a net?

I had a look through some textbooks and found only two references to "Net Etiquette". This was from the Amateur Radio Operating Manual (4th edition circa 1995). There was a suggestion that the order for stations to rotate would be in call sign order (i.e. G0KZT, G1PGS, G3WZK, G4FKK, G6MFM, G7SY0, G8JAC) and because the stations were in Call-Book order then everyone would know where they would fall. Me thinks..... that sounds rather complicated and unnecessary (*it's how military nets are conducted. Ed.*). The other reference referred directly to DX pile-ups.

I know I have fouled things up in the past and I'm the first to admit it. But, I generally try to keep the order as what appears in my logbook. Who called in first and use that as the "Batting Order". Those who are "late on parade" will naturally be last on the list. But then I think, should there be a net controller? Someone who invites each station to call in? This appears to be the most common heard way of operating a net but I fear that this involves someone making the initial call for the net to commence which, because of the fear of the responsibility, are reluctant to do so. But, I believe if we keep these following points in mind, maybe we won't go too far wrong:-

- Write the batting order down (maybe difficult if driving) as defined by the first person that initiated the net. This order should be repeated each time a new station joins the net by whoever has **control of the net** i.e. the next station to transmit.
- Leave a generous pause between each net member so that others may join or leave the net. As those stations call in, place

them at the bottom of the list. As callers leave, simply cross them off the list and move on to who would have been next.

- Keep each of your overs as short and to the point as possible.
- The responsibility of the net falls to everyone and not one single person, thus encouraging more members to make that initial call.

The TRANSPONDER net is very different as both CATS and CVRC are attempting to co-ordinate their respective members. We also have to be aware of the "time-out" timer of the WB6ZTY repeater and local Echolink reset timers. It is usual

to wait for several "pips" before transmitting. In general each side of "The Pond" transmits first before passing it back to the other side. Thus, it would be worth waiting for the UK side to commence before calling in. Then I guess the appropriate bullet points would keep things in order.

I don't mean this article to be a definitive guide to Network operating but merely a talking point and a way of making our club nets more enjoyable.

73 de Andy G0KZT

Low Power Contesting – 4 year score comparison

I have delved into the archives and updated the overall scores for the Low Power contests for the last 4 years since we have taken part.

144	Points	QSO	Multipliers	Total Score	% points +/-	Overall Position
2005	9050 (6492*)	64 (46*)	55 (47*)	497750 (305124*)	-192626 38%	9 th /13
2006	5372 (3870*)	37 (27*)	47 (38*)	252484 (147060*)	-105242 41%	11 th /13
2007	10048 (8966*)	61 (57*)	61 (58*)	612928 (520028*)	-92900 15%	6 th /6
2008	8452 (7749*)	65 (61*)	62 (60*)	524024 (464940*)	-59084 11%	5 th /5

432	Points	QSO	Multipliers	Total Score	% points +/-	Overall Position
2005	3060 (3071*)	34 (34*)	31 (31*)	94860 (95201*)	+341 +0.36%	5 th /9
2006	3686 (2130*)	33 (21*)	32 (24*)	117952 (51120*)	-66832 56%	6 th /6
2007	3123 (2664*)	23 (19*)	29 (27*)	90567 (71928*)	-18639 20%	6 th /6
2008	4235 (4251*)	39 (39*)	45 (45*)	190575 (191295*)	+720 +0.38%	5 th /6

(*) denotes adjudicated score

I was particularly pleased with the 70cm 2008 result as it implies there were no errors and the additional points were probably the different ways our contest software calculates the distance between two stations.

Andy Briers G0KZT
Contest Secretary

Editor's note: Andy has kindly agreed to continue as contest secretary for 2009 but needs support and feedback from members. Have you let him know your thoughts about contests for next year?

CATS Publicity

A major problem that is affecting almost all radio clubs is poshly known as “demographics” – the fact that we’re all getting older and the hobby doesn’t attract new and younger participants as it used to. The reasons are complex, but what is the solution if the hobby is not to fade away and die? One answer is publicity. Getting what we do into the public eye and that’s what the CATS publicity officer Steve G3WZK has been doing. Most members are aware that Steve has put a lot of work into the CATS website but it takes a bit of interest to go to the site in the first place. So Steve’s approach has been to put CATS and amateur radio in places where it stands out to the casual reader or passer-by.

People in the CR6 area of Surrey receive a free magazine that promotes local businesses and activities and in the latest edition (November 08) The magazine carries a full-page article on Steve, CATS and amateur radio on page 42. A couple of other CATS members are featured during our field operating activities this year. An on-line copy is available at <http://www.cr6.biz/>

The next step was to email some details to the Croydon Advertiser but this produced much more interest than was expected and a reporter was rapidly dispatched up to Steve’s QTH in Warlingham for an interview. The reporter found this of such interest that a photographer was called in and this went so well that the Advertiser decided to do a major item on amateur radio in their area. After entertaining the press for an hour or two and with many photographs taken, the reporter asked to see a “real” contact taking place so a quick call via GB3NS elicited the help of Frank G3ZMF to show amateur radio in action.

Steve thought that would be the end of it, but before long another call from the Advertiser was received asking for a video shoot to be put on their website to be about CATS, G3WZK and amateur radio in general. A contact with G8JAC on 2 metres was arranged to ensure a guaranteed contact with good technical quality and DX CW and SSB contacts on 20 metres were also recorded. In all some 30 minutes of video was shot although this will be severely edited down for public viewing.

At the time of writing it is not clear exactly when the article in the Advertiser will be published or the website footage made available but keep your eyes open for it! A full report will be in next month’s CATS Whispers.

Well done Steve!

Vintage Amateur Radio

A fascinating glimpse of amateur radio as it was before WW II can be found in a film which is available to view at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBGIdf0VjQ4>

DIY PCBs?

Dave G8VXB has kindly passed on a link to a website with a good write up on making home made PCB’s:

http://www.atv-projects.com/Making_PCBs.html

Local Rallies & Events

Sun 1st Feb 2009

South Essex Amateur radio Society

24th Canvey Radio & Electronics Rally
The Paddocks Community Centre, Long Rd, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 0JA

Situated at the southern end of the A130 off a new mini roundabout)

Doors Open 10:30 am. Major Amateur Radio & Electronic component exhibitors Selling New & Used equipment. Refreshments including Bob’s Bacon Rolls. Disabled / wheelchair friendly site. Free Car Park.

22 February 2009

Bredhurst R&TS (BRATS) Radio Rally

Rainham Girls’ School, Derwent Way, Rainham, Kent (just off A2 & M2/J4). Open 09:30/10:00. Parking. Talkin 2m. SIGs, Catering, Lectures, Trade. Admission £2.50. Details: O.wheeler@btopenworld.com

For Sale & Wanted

WANTED

Mike Buckley M1CCF is looking for a Yaesu FRB-757 relay box used to interface the Yaesu FT757 transceiver with an external amplifier. Either a box to purchase or a loan of one to prove the system is required.

If you can help or point him in the right direction, contact him on 020 8651 2727 or email on M1CCF@talktalk.net.

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/g3oou/ or <http://www.g3oou.co.uk/>
7 November - Origins of the UK Pension System by
Victor Johnson G1PKS and Tuned Circuits by Bob G300U
5 December – Christmas social

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.

26 November – EMC by Peter Metcalfe G8DCZ

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
4th December – Annual General Meeting

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

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

SRCC

Ray Howells G4FFY 020 8644 7589
Club Nets –
Sunday 0930hrs, 1905 kHz
Daily natter channel – 144.214MHz at 19.30.
Website – www.g3src.org.uk
Meetings: 1st & 3rd Mondays at Trinity School,
Shirley Park, Croydon CR9 7AT 7.45pm for 8pm
1st December – Servicing a watch by Maurice G4DDY

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.

20th November – Mini-talks with Bob G300U
11th December – Christmas junk sale

THAMES VALLEY A.R.T.S.

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

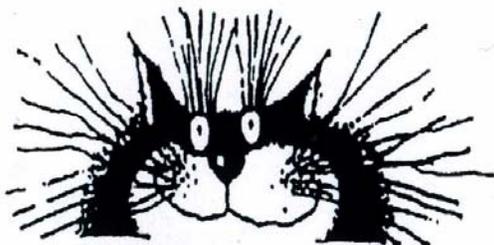
WIMBLEDON & DISTRICT ARS

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.

28th November – Surplus equipment sale

CATS Whispers is published monthly by
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**COULSDON
AMATEUR
TRANSMITTING
CATS SOCIETY**



RADIO And
ELECTRONICS
BAZAAR

**At the 1st Coulsdon Scout Group HQ
ACCESS VIA FREE
PUBLIC CAR PARK (Rear of)
IN LION GREEN ROAD
COULSDON**

**FLEA MARKET AND
TRADERS STALLS
SALE OF NEW AND
SECOND-HAND
EQUIPMENT**

**SUNDAY
16th
NOVEMBER
2008**

SYCOM

OFFICIAL CATS SPONSOR
www.sycomcomp.co.uk

**10.00 AM
TO
1.00 PM
Admission £1**



**Bring and buy -
Bring your gear and we will sell**

To book a table or for more information
Please e-mail cats@qsl.net