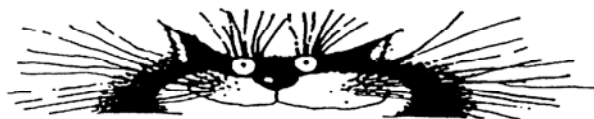


G4FUR



M1FUR

CATS Whispers – May 2005



SYCOM – Official CATS Sponsor
Visit www.sycomcomp.co.uk

Affiliated to the RSGB

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 2200hrs.

Society Nets

1st Saturday of Month - 1715hrs Crescenta Valley / CATS Net on Echolink
normally via G4CDY link 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 9th May – Hands-on rig measurements
Mon 13th June – Surplus equipment sale
Mon 11th July - DF hunt
Mon 8th August - CATS Summer Barbeque



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

Kempton Park Success!

The CATS Bring and Buy stall at the recent Kempton Park Radio rally was a great success with no fewer than 11 CATS members turning out to support their society by helping out on the stall and we even had two non-members, Paul M3JXN and Mike M1CCF, giving us a hand in the busy spells. Well over £2000-worth of kit was taken in, exhibited, demonstrated and mostly sold, netting a grand total of £227 for CATS finances. A great effort that we can all be proud of and valuable publicity for CATS.



Some of the equipment on offer on the CATS Bring & Buy stand at Kempton Park.



Customer's – eye view of the CATS Bring & Buy

April Meeting Report

So who said that amateur radio construction is dead? At the April meeting no fewer than sixteen members and a couple of potential members gathered tools, soldering irons, expertise and enthusiasm to prove them wrong.



Constructors hard at it constructing.

Small electronic kits capable of being constructed in a couple of hours were chosen by members and obtained by Dave G8VXB, and ranged from useful projects such as a BFO and a miniature signal generator to a small light-seeking robot. With the air soon filled with a heady mix of soldering fumes and the occasional expletive as a mistake was discovered, construction began.



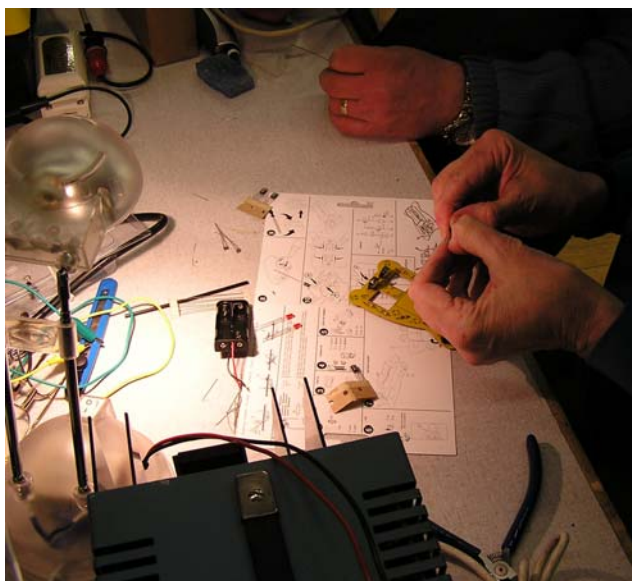
That's upside down! Prue G4RWW helping out Len GOGNQ and Mike G8AAI



G6MFM, G1FPQ and G8KDQ at work on their BFO

A (very) small prize was on offer for the team that managed to produce a working model by the end of the evening with build quality and functionality being taken into account. All the finished items were tested and by a mixture of skill, tenacity and sheer good luck, there were no failures, giving the chairman a hard time awarding the prize. After much consideration and thought, the light-seeking mobile constructed by GØ GNQ and G8AAI was proclaimed the winner after a convincing demonstration on the hall floor.

Well done to all the teams and when you find out what to use your completed kit for, do let us know!



Steady hands and concentration under the spotlight.



It works! The winning kit attacks the G8AAI torch.

Transponder Net news:

This month, the regular date with the Crescenta Valley Radio Club members on the TransPONDER net (first Saturday in the month since you ask) will occur after this newsletter hits the streets. This is useful since that means there is less excuse to forget it this month. The place to be is listening on the G4CDY-L node on 145.2875 MHz at **17.15 BST on 7th May.**

Don't forget that the Crescenta Valley club will be participating in the ARRL National Field day over the weekend of 25/26 June and they would greatly appreciate getting points from CATS members.

The membership survey

A response rate of 6 out of 37 members was achieved for the survey and the results have now been passed to the committee for consideration and as appropriate, action. We can only assume that the majority of members are content with the activities of CATS or at least, are happy to go along with the minority. A full report will appear in the June issue of *CATS Whispers*.

Four Metre Net

From G0KZT

During a recent Wednesday evening net a squawk of protest was heard about us using the calling frequency to hold our net on. The signal was very weak and the callsign G8XML could just be deciphered.

Some of you may be aware that there is a 4-Metre website dedicated to promoting 4-Metre activity. While looking through the forum, again I saw protests about using 70.450 MHz instead of moving to an adjacent frequency. I threw in my views that the 4-Metre band is 99% of the time “dead” and that holding a net for about 40 minutes with adequate pauses was not unreasonable. I supported using the frequency for two reasons;

1, potential callers to the net may not have additional frequencies available (including me if I am using my Yaesu FT740A with its “rock-bound” channel)

2, The lack of activity on the band as a whole.

I would never consider using the calling frequency on any other VHF/UHF band because of the potential of causing unnecessary interference to other users. However, in my opinion, 4-metres does not afford the same luxury of users (unless they are all simply just listening). But in order to keep the peace, maybe we should consider using a different frequency, maybe making the use of Martin G4FKK’s 4-Metre Echolink NoV.

Andy G0KZT

Editor’s comment: The 4m band is indeed dead as a doornail for the great majority of the time and presents the classic “Use it or Lose it” dilemma.

The Editor’s bit

You may remember that I had a little bit of a “go” last month at members who had not renewed their memberships. Well, it has come to light that there may be a good reason for this, as I have been made aware that there have been problems with the distribution of the printed version of *CATS Whispers* recently. Therefore, to be fair to all, no-one has been removed from the distribution list.....Yet. If you need to renew your membership, **DO IT NOW!**

I have reported earlier on the successful CATS Bring & Buy at Kempton Park, however buying at rallies does bring the need for a bit of *Caveat Emptor*. One buyer found that the old but tidy-looking rig that he bought for a bargain price was distinctly less attractive once the covers were removed and the rig put on test, when it was found to be non-functional with extremely poor quality repairs done inside and a crude modification to shift the 10m band down to cover 27MHz CB. Hopefully, the rig will be restorable but it was offered without any guarantee and was said to be part of a Silent Key disposal so no come-backs or returns. When this happens, the benefits of buying from an established dealer become more apparent so if buying at rallies, remember: *Caveat Emptor*. Buyer Beware.

Other club newsletters

During April, the following club newsletters were sent out by email to CATS members who have requested the service.

Surrey Radio Contact Club
Bromley & District Amateur Radio Club
Sutton & Cheam Radio Society
Crawley Amateur Radio Club
Crescenta Valley Radio Club
Wimbledon & District Radio Society

If you would like to be added to the list of recipients, just tell the editor.

The future of Amateur Radio - The Ofcom proposals

Members will have seen the recent documents circulating in the Amateur radio world regarding the recent proposals from Ofcom about future licencing plans and also the robust responses from the RSGB detailing the potential problems that would arise from some of the proposals if implemented. The following article represents the latest proposals from Ofcom and is taken from their website . Copyright and ownership of this article is acknowledged.

The original web page is at:

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

Forthcoming public consultation on amateur radio licensing

On 26 May Ofcom will publish new proposals to reduce the regulatory burden on the amateur radio community whilst retaining the necessary safeguards to ensure the integrity of this important use of the radio spectrum.

The proposals will be published for public consultation; and Ofcom believes it is very important that as many amateur radio users as possible are willing and able to share their views on the different options presented.

In order to receive an email notification as soon as this consultation document is published please register for Updates from Ofcom on radio spectrum matters. Users can register at

<http://www.ofcom.org.uk/static/subscribe/radiospectrum.htm>

For clarity and transparency, below are the key points Ofcom wishes to set out in greater detail in the formal public consultation on 26 May.

Ofcom believes that:

- The amateur radio community is an important radio spectrum user group. Ofcom must continue to take the community's interests into account and ensure that the needs of the community are reflected in policymaking.
- Ofcom wishes to seek the least intrusive means of regulating wherever possible and is committed to reducing the regulatory burden (and therefore, costs) for all of its stakeholders. However, Ofcom will balance against that the need to retain all necessary safeguards to ensure the integrity of radio spectrum use, including use by the amateur radio community.
- Ofcom therefore believes that radio amateurs must hold a valid WT Act amateur radio licence and must hold a valid Radio Amateur Examination Pass Certificate in order to obtain a licence.

The public consultation document will propose two changes only:

1. To make amateur radio licences valid for life (they are currently renewable annually).
2. To make electronic licences (probably issued as Adobe PDF® documents) available online and free of charge.

Specifically, Ofcom believes the following would NOT change if these two proposals were put into effect:

- Existing standards would be maintained.
- There would still be a legal requirement for radio amateurs to hold a valid WT Act amateur radio licence.
- The licensee would retain the responsibility for ensuring that licence details are amended as and when necessary (upon a change of address for example).
- Ofcom would retain the power to revoke the licence should the radio amateur breach the terms of the licence.
- It would still be a requirement to hold a valid Radio Amateur Examination Pass Certificate in order to obtain a licence.
- For radio amateurs who wish to operate overseas, there would still be a licence document available for inspection by foreign administrations.
- Ofcom would continue to hold a database of the names and addresses of all licensed radio amateurs.
- Every amateur would continue to hold their own unique call-sign(s).
- Ofcom would continue to notify amateur radio licence holders of changes to their licence terms and conditions.
- It would still be possible for radio amateurs to apply for a Notice of variation to the licence if required.
- It would still be possible to operate amateur radio repeaters.
- It would still be possible to operate packet radio.
- Current spectrum access rights would be maintained. Ofcom's spectrum management and enforcement activities are not determined according to the level of the licence fee.
- All licensed radio amateurs would automatically receive a 'licence for life'. No action would be required on their part unless their licence had lapsed at the point when 'licences for life' were introduced.
- Ofcom, or its agents, would continue to provide a postal service for applicants who do not have access to the internet or who prefer not to use the internet.

For the avoidance of doubt, whilst the formal public consultation will put forward a number of other options for the future, those options are explicitly not recommended by Ofcom. Specifically, Ofcom will not recommend any options to make the amateur radio service WT Act licence-exempt; however, for transparency and completeness, this will be put forward as an option in the public consultation in order to gather the community's views

Editorial comment: I think it is fair to say that since the absorption of the RA into Ofcom, our regulatory body has changed markedly in its attitude to amateurs and in its experience in matters affecting the radio spectrum and its users. I believe that all amateurs have a duty to keep themselves aware of developments and be prepared to support the national society in defending our privileges and our hobby.

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
17th May – DF construction & antennas
21st June – Annual DF Hunt

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 May – Hands On -
meters & oscilloscopes II
3rd June – Principles of printing
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.

25th May – The history and development
of RADAR by Derek G3GRO

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.

24th May – Natter Nite

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
5th May – Radio Travels
David Miller G4JHI
2nd June - European Navigation
Satellites by G3JKV

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

SRCC

Club Nets –
Sunday 0930hrs 29.111 MHz
Friday 2030hrs 144.325 MHz
Thursday 1900hrs 145.500 MHz
Website – www.g3src.org.uk
1st & 3rd Mondays at T.S. Terra Nova, 34
The Waldrons, South Croydon 7.45pm
for 8pm
9th May – Project construction
6th June – Construction contest

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

19th May – AGM and construction contest

16th June – Summer 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

Local Rally Calendar

8 May 2005

Dunstable Downs Rally & Boot Sale

19 June 2005

Newbury & District ARS rally
Worthing & District ARS + Southern Counties Amateur Radio Forum rally at Newhaven Fort, Newhaven, Sussex.

17 July 2005

McMichael Rally

Reading Rugby Club, Sonning Lane.
Admission £1.50. Free parking, boot sale.
Refreshments, licensed bar & BBQ.

7 August 2005

Flight Refuelling ARS Hamfest
Wimborne, Dorset.

Put these dates in your diary:

30 October - CATS Bazaar

13 November - Kempton Park
(Radio Fairs)

Not quite so local!

20 – 22 May 2005

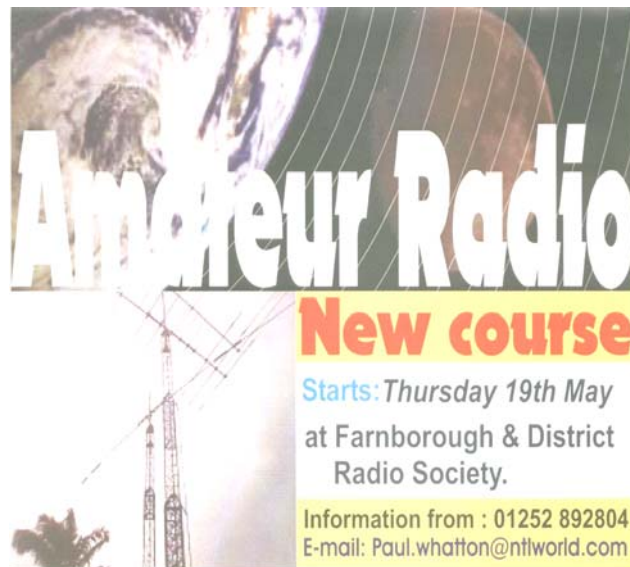
Dayton Hamvention, Dayton OH, USA.

24th – 26th June

30th International amateur radio exhibition, Friedrichshafen, Germany.

Foundation course

Farnborough & District Radio Society is running a Foundation Amateur Radio licence course on the four Thursday evenings between 19th May and 9th June 2005. The course runs between 7pm and 10pm at The Community Centre in Farnborough Hants



The poster features a background image of a radio tower and a satellite in space. The text is as follows:

Amateur Radio
New course
Starts: Thursday 19th May
at Farnborough & District Radio Society.
Information from : 01252 892804
E-mail: Paul.whatton@ntlworld.com

CATS Whispers is published monthly by
A Jackson G8JAC on behalf of the
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