

# COULSDON AMATEUR TRANSMITTING SOCIETY

# G4FUR



# M1FUR

## **CATS WHISPERS**

### June 2007



Affiliated to the RSGB

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### **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 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 11<sup>th</sup> June – CATS Annual DF Hunt – Banstead Woods

Mon 9<sup>th</sup> July – DF hunt discussion and contest planning, plus  
Concorde video.

Mon 13<sup>th</sup> August – Annual CATS Summer Bar-B-Q at G4RWW



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

## May meeting Report

Our May meeting evening saw a return visit to the British Vintage Wireless Museum in Dulwich. We had previously visited in 2003 and when circumstances required us to find an evening activity quickly, a return visit to see Gerry Wells' unique collection was an obvious choice.



CATS members and guests about to start the tour of the museum.

As well as the CATS members who made the trip, we were pleased to welcome several guests for the evening.



The curator of the museum, Gerry Wells.

Steve G7SYO writes:

Gerry provided his interesting stories about the equipment and adding the normal humorous additions in his own inimitable style.

He mentioned a few new items on his agenda. Evidently a New Zealand film crew are making a film based on his book which will be entitled 'The Valve Man'. Although a release date on DVD was not mentioned, it should be a worthwhile view if you have

read his book 'Obsession' which is extremely informative and entertaining.

We spent a couple of hours at the museum and saw and heard the museum's new Valve Amplifier in operation. This is a classic 1930s design using new old stock valves. Although with a £500 price tag I am not sure I will be rushing out to buy one just yet, however tempting and good it sounded, which was in fact the case.

Following the usual pattern of visits, Gerry provided a guided tour of the amazing house, giving freely of his vast knowledge of the development of domestic radio and electronics from the first World War through to the beginning of the semiconductor era. Of course, if there was something that particularly caught your interest, Gerry was always pleased to explain and expand on any item



Early attempts at quality sound reproduction in the "Horn room".



The image of a 1930s radio dealer's shop where accumulators were charged and valves tested for customers.

After touring the house with its rooms of themed displays, the party were taken to the room which doubles as Gerry's bedroom but more interestingly, contains the 405/625 line television standards converter that was donated to the museum. Almost uniquely outside of the professional television industry, here you can watch programmes on a 1960s 405 line monochrome television and wonder at what was then considered a good quality picture. Those members who still have good high frequency hearing were able once again to hear the distinctive 10.125 kc/s whistle of a 405 line television line timebase.



The 405/625 line standards converter rack.

The party then moved to the workshop and storage areas of the museum located in a series of huts in the garden of the main house. The stores maintain a vital supply of new and salvaged contemporary components that are used by a large force of volunteers to maintain and refurbish museum exhibits and to repair donated sets that can be sold on to enthusiasts to provide vital revenue to fund the museum's upkeep.

The stores are a goldmine of veteran components and although the museum does not operate as a retailer, they will attempt to help out with a genuine restoration if they can. Cupboards and shelves of condensers (we are talking vintage, remember) transformers, knobs and fittings, and

of course, valves. Literally thousands of valves produced during the 20<sup>th</sup> century from the earliest balloon triodes to huge water-cooled transmitting valves.

However, valves do eventually wear out and stocks of spares eventually get used up, so what then? Obvious answer – make your own, and that is exactly what the museum is capable of. Old valves can be dismantled, new heaters, cathodes and getters installed and then the repaired valve is evacuated and tested. The highest level of amateur radio in fact!



The valve manufacture and repair area.



Pick a voltage – any voltage. Some of the huge range of original transformers in the storeroom.

As is traditional at a visit to the museum, visitors were invited to take tea and cakes in Gerry's kitchen, which is a most enjoyable way of concluding a visit and a good time to ask all the questions that have come to mind as you travel round.

If anyone else feels enthused to make a visit, Gerry can be contacted on 020 8670 3667.

## CATS Activity News

In **June** we were to have put into practice what we learned and built under the guidance of G4CDY and participate in the annual CATS DF hunt, however as explained above, we will have to take part in the hunt with what we have available. Terry will be providing two “foxes”, an easy one and a more difficult one to locate.

The location for this will be Banstead Woods with the initial rendezvous and setup between 19.30 and 20.00 in the car park in Lower Park Road. The map reference for this is TQ273582.

Whatever else happens, this event always seems to involve beer somewhere along the line so not to be missed!

Our **July** meeting has become a little “fluid” as some of our plans have had to be postponed or moved around for one reason or another. Consequently, we will use this meeting for a “post mortem” on June’s DF hunt activity and a planning session for our August contest weekend. Steve G7SYO will also be presenting a film on the development and flying career of Concorde, that has very recently become a topical subject with news of a serious attempt to restore at least one of the remaining aircraft to flying condition for semi-commercial use.

Our **August** meeting will be the now traditional barbeque and social evening, hosted as usual by Prue G4RWW. To get the number of sausages right Prue needs to know who’s coming. Tell any committee member or Prue direct that you are attending.

## Membership news

There is no CATS membership news to report this month; our membership currently stands at 37.

## TransPONDer net news

Our regular transatlantic net with members of the Crescenta Valley Radio Club in Glendale CA was carried on with the June net which managed to get seven members chatting via Terry G4CDY’s MB7IPL node. On the English side were G4CDY, G0KZT, G8JAC and M3JXN. In Glendale we had W6MW, KE6URZ and AD6IZ.

Next scheduled net is Saturday 7 July at 17.15 BST.

## Strange but true

THE MORSE CODE  
Is an anagram of  
HERE COME DOTS

## New CATS kit

Due to the kindness of the widow of a local SWL, CATS have now added a Yaesu FRG-7700 general coverage and amateur bands receiver plus accessories to our inventory of kit that is available for member’s use. The kit comprises the FRG7700 receiver, FRT-7700 matching/tuning unit, FRV-7700 VHF converter module and YH-55 headphones. The antenna matching unit gives facilities to connect and match a range of antennas and the VHF converter module extends the basic 0.5 – 30 MHz coverage of the receiver by three bands, 50-59 MHz, 118 – 130 MHz and 140 – 150 MHz giving 6m, 2m and airband coverage.

Our benefactor was not licensed but served as a RAF wireless operator at the end of the war. If any member wishes to take out the equipment on loan (see loan arrangements and conditions in the current CATS rules), let the secretary know.



The CATS FRG-7700 now available for loan.

## Bring down the Tower of Power!

Anyone who has ever been to the QTH of Prue G4RWW cannot have failed to notice the telescopic tower with mounted tri-band beam and 2m vertical antennas that is a feature of her garden. In fact it has long been a landmark for travellers along Addiscombe Road.

The tower was part of the station of Ron G6LX but Prue now feels that she is unable to do the station justice and would like the tower and its complement of antennas dismantled and removed. She has asked if a team of members would be interested in removing the antennas prior to removal of the tower itself. The tower is designed to tilt over for maintenance but the relentless growth of nearby trees may have restricted the available space. Prue offers free beer and cakes for the workers. Contact her QTHR if you can help.

## Help wanted for the Brownies

Almost exactly a year ago, several CATS members put together an demonstration station and a support package for the Coulsdon Brownies which enabled almost the whole contingent to gain their communications badge by learning the phonetic alphabet and using it to send a brief message, pass a message over the radio and generally learn something about amateur radio.

We have received a request to do a similar activity again, this time for the Brownie group in Waringham. The secretary has to declare an interest here, as his granddaughter is a member – so that's one volunteer sorted then! Assistance from members is sought for this venture, which will be in October, so plenty of time to get something prepared. If you can help, please let the secretary know.

## CATS Contesting

CATS have a persistent tradition of contest participation although in recent years this has generally been confined to VHF and UHF contests. We are now better equipped to operate in the field than ever before and the next contest on the horizon for us is the annual RSGB 2m/70cm low power contest to be held over the first weekend of August.

Most people are aware that Andy G0KZT is the CATS Contest secretary and he has been making the necessary arrangements for our camp site which will be at our usual location for the past few years, on Woldingham Ridge.

Andy writes:

### **August Low Power Contest Weekend**

It's all systems go for a weekend of contesting at our now established site in Woldingham with permission being granted by the farmer to use his field. The dates for your diary are 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> August.

There are two separate contests taking place each with a limit of 25 watts from the transmitter. There are no restrictions on aerials (or number of arrays) and it has already been suggested that we have two radios working alongside each other to assist in spotting additional stations. On the Saturday is the VHF 2-metre entry that commences at 1500 local time and finishes at 2100hrs. On the Sunday, the UHF 70cms event takes place from 0900 until 1300hrs.

The event will start at 1200 noon on Saturday with set-up for the 3 O'clock start. This will involve assembling the two 17 element Tonna beams, the mast, and tents etc. with sufficient time to test everything. At the close of the contest, it is

usual that the aerials for changed for the two 19 element Tonna Yagis in readiness for the early start on the Sunday morning.

I am proposing that we have a family style barbeque in the evening from around 1700hrs. The weather has generally been favourable (indeed very hot so don't forget your sunblock!) and there is plenty of space for kite flying, radio experiments or whatever you want to do. There will also be the TransPONDer Net taking place too at 1715hrs so we can involve our friends from the Crescenta Valley club.

I am co-ordinating the event on behalf of the Society. We need volunteers and offers of assistance throughout the weekend including personnel to remain on site overnight and to operate generally. If we do chose to have more than one radio in operation, this will put an extra strain on manpower. One of our weaknesses is keeping the station active throughout the operating period, especially around meal times. I refer you to the debrief I wrote last year where there were extended periods where no stations were worked.

Next month I will send out an update of progress so far, including a map of how to find the site if you haven't been there before.

Andy Briers G0KZT  
Contest Secretary

## Old friend search

I have been contacted by Phil Crosby, VK2KGC who was a member of the old Purley and District Radio Society in the early 1970s. Phil is looking for information about an old friend from Woodcote School who was also a Purley club member – Martin Brown G3XMW. I consulted our historical guru, G3ZMF who remembers both people and confirms that G3XMW moved to the Brighton area in the late 1980s, but there the trail goes cold and there's no G3XMW in the current call book or on QRZ.com.

Phil passes on greetings to anyone who might remember him and comments:

*"I participated in a record of 5 miles telephony on 23 cms back in the early 80's using klystron oscillators across Happy Valley!*

*These days I am working in radio astronomy at those frequencies, listening to pulsars etc with cooled receivers and digital techniques. All a long way from my pirate days in Coulsdon!*

*I was fortunate enough to work in Antarctica for a while, and scored some interesting QSLs."*

If anyone remembers Phil Crosby or has any information on G3XMW, let the editor know and I'll put you in touch.

## 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

### **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.gsl.net/g30ou/](http://www.gsl.net/g30ou/)

### **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.

**Wed 27 June** - The Hamtronic Experience -  
Memories of Friedrichshafen 2007 - G3YSX, G4ANN,  
G3GRO & co.

### **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@g3jkv.co.uk](mailto:wb@g3jkv.co.uk)

### **.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/>

### **MITCHAM & DISTRICT ARS**

(G3Hfy) – Last Wednesday of each  
month 1930hrs at ATC HQ, Commons  
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.gsl.net/rats](http://www.gsl.net/rats)  
Email [rats@gsl.net](mailto:rats@gsl.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  
4 June – SRCC BBQ at the QTH of G4CCY & G4DDY

We were saddened to hear the news of the sudden and unexpected death of Mary, wife of SRCC secretary Ray Howells G4FFY during the morning of 31<sup>st</sup> May. Further details on Ray's site at [www.g4ffy.co.uk](http://www.g4ffy.co.uk)

## **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](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

June 21st 'Home Brew Radio' by Hans Summers GØUPL

## **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 & DISRICT ARS**

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.

June 8<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> – Construction project

## **For Sale & Wants**

This space is available to any CATS member (or others subject to approval) to place an advertisement. If you're looking for that elusive part or need to make some room in the shack, just pass the details to the Secretary. **It's free!**

### **WANTED**

For a restoration project -  
2¼ in square older style panel meter with  
25 – 0 – 25 microamp centre-zero  
movement. Preferrably around 2000Ω  
resistance. The original was made by Ernest  
Turner who appear to have gone out of  
business around 1987.

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

## **Write for CATS Whispers!**

The editor invites contributions to *CATS Whispers* from any member and on just about any subject. It doesn't have to be on a radio-related subject – just something that the members might find interesting.

Journalistic expertise is not necessary (after all, the current editor doesn't have any!). The bare bones of an idea can easily be put into our current newsletter style.

## **Local Rally & Event Calendar**

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

**15<sup>th</sup> July 2007** McMichael Rally  
Reading RFC, Sonning Lane RG4 6ST

**12<sup>th</sup> August** – Flight Refuelling ARS Rally  
Merley, Wimborne, Dorset

**26<sup>th</sup> August** – Milton Keynes ARC annual rally.  
Holne Chase School, Buckingham Road,  
Bletchley, MK3 5HP. Admission £2, starts 10.00.

**14<sup>th</sup> October** Rusty Radios Rally  
Cottered Village Hall, Nr Stevenage, Herts.

**4<sup>th</sup> November** - West London Radio &  
Electronics show at Kempton Park.

**Note: date now confirmed. CATS involvement  
in this event.**

**18<sup>th</sup> November** CATS 2007 Bazaar.  
**This date is already in your diary  
– isn't it?**

### **A little further afield.....**

**22-24 June 2007**

**International Exhibition for Radio  
Amateurs**, Friedrichshafen, Germany.

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