NEWSLETTER

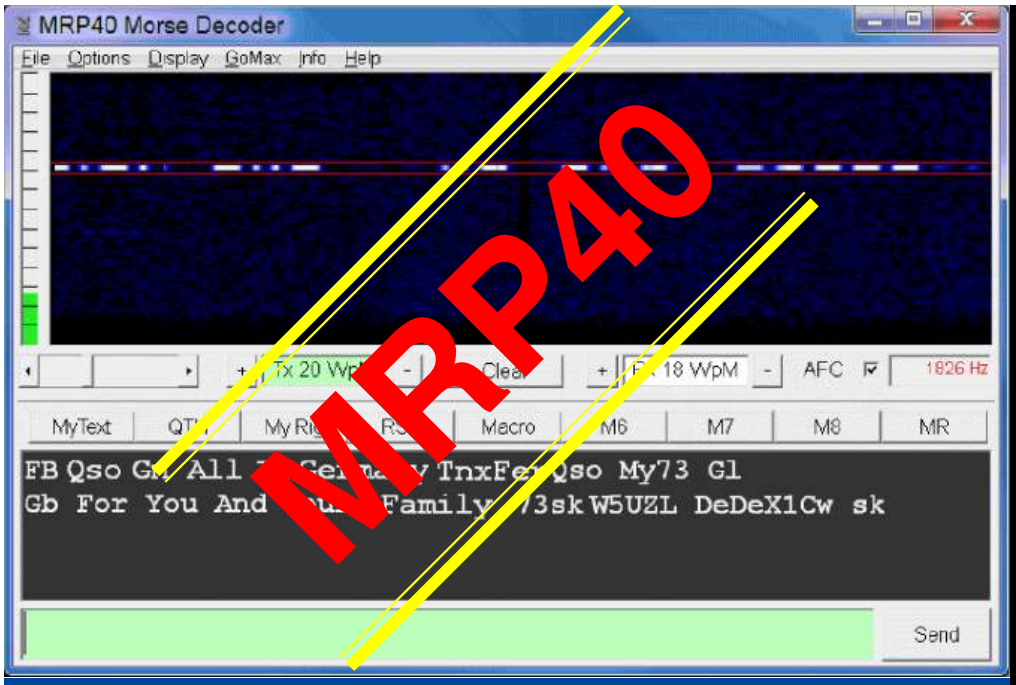
www.g3mdg.org.uk

C.D.A.R.S.

MARCH 2023 CHESHAM & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Free? | Get into Bletchley Park (including the NRC) for nothing, yes absolutely free.

We meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at the Ashley Green Memorial Hall, Ashley Green, HP5 3PP



Is using software to send/receive Morse considered to be cheating?

With the abolition of required Morse for the Full licence, is it a good thing to use software as a substitute for the 'real' thing, and if it is, is it helping keep the mode alive?

It's coming back

Morse Code is making a comeback, and it's being done by people as young as 5 years old, check out the Mail Online article.

Spurred on by K-Pop bands TXT and NU'EST using Morse in their music/videos, kids as young as 5 are learning the meaning of Morse Code.

CW

Don't know Morse code but want to take part in a contest? Dave (G8FMC) tells you how to.

Welcome

Dave (G8FMC) gives us his first Chairmans Ramble.

Bouvet Island DXpedition

Malcolm (G3ZNU) tells us about the Bouvet 2023 DXpedition.

SPOTLIGHT

This month we show you the home of W1AW, ARRL's HQ.

Want to write something for the newsletter? Then you can contact me on bryanpage1@btinternet.com

If you have anything for sale, why not drop me an email and I'll put it in the 'For sale' page.

Morse links

If you're interested in Morse code, here are a few useful links:

FISTS CW Club

Promoting Morse Code for 36 years 1987-2023

https://fists.co.uk

Wikihow

How to learn Morse Code

https://www.wikihow.com/Learn-Morse-Code

The Ham Whisperer

Morse Code Course

http://www.hamwhisperer.com/p/morse-code-course.html

LEARN MORSE CODE

LEARN MORSE CODE in one minute !

http://www.learnmorsecode.com/

Welcome to LCWO.net

Learn Morse Code (CW) Online!

https://lcwo.net/

Tools for learning Morse Code

https://www.aa9pw.com/morsecode/

Celebrating the unique art form of Morse Code

https://cwops.org/

Morse Code by Ray Burlingame-Goff (SK - 29th July 2021)

http://www.g4fon.net/

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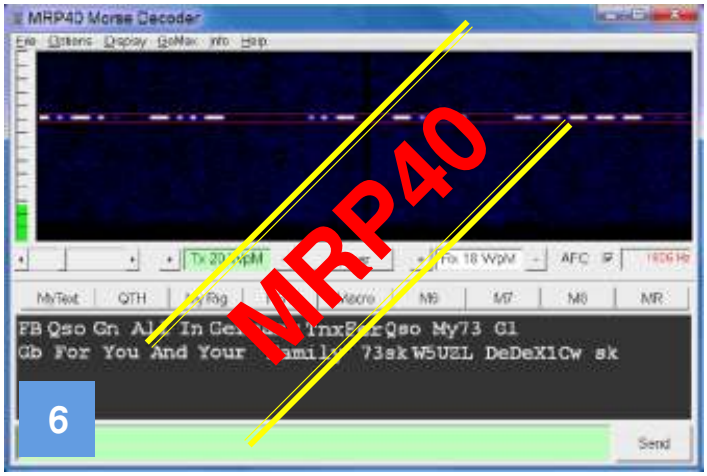


Other

Welcome

My thanks to those who thought the new format was the right way to go, its been a long time coming and rightfully deserves to be done!. Yes, I know the front page looks like Practical Wireless for which I make no apologies, it's a style I like, and besides, RadCom styling gets a look in too!

Thanks to Dave (G8FMC) for taking on the role of club Chairman and for getting his contribution to the newsletter in promptly.

Morse Code

Morse Code takes centre stage this month with 3 articles:

1. My review on MRP40, an encoding/decoding software package that's very capable and asking "is it considered cheating"? Have you had experience of other Morse encoders/decoders, and if so what were they and how did they stack up, feedback welcome.

2. The Mail Online describes the comeback of Morse Code where K-Pop groups TXT and NU'EST use Morse code in their pop videos to provide hints about upcoming songs, children as young as 5 years old are taking to it, it also states that studies show it's (Morse code) good for the brain. This is only an extract of the original article, at the end you'll find the URL to the original article on the Internet.

3. Dave (G8FMC) explains how to use CW in a contest, even if you don't know CW.

Bletchley Park

Free entry to Bletchley Park (providing you're a member of the R.S.G.B.) is on topic this month, known to most of you but for the benefit of our new members, and those who don't know, see page 8 for details. Why not take advantage and have a day at Bletchley Park, even if it's just to visit the NRC! Please be aware that the NRC is occasionally closed for maintenance purposes so do check the RSGB news for any announcements.

Moonrakers

For those not aware, Moonrakers offers club members a 5% discount (no loyalty watts but the discount is greater) on purchases at their shop, or online, just quote "CDARS5".

Olivia Digital mode

Group.io email traffic is quite heavy this month with quite a mention of Olivia, they're trying to revive interest in this digital mode and are now going the route of having QSO parties (this was started by JS8Call, who have a QSO party on the 2nd weekend of the month - that's a 48 hour party!), it would appear the emphasis is going away from 'rubber stamped' QSO's and more to the conversational type.

AFS Superleague

A comment from the 432MHz adjudicator: "Chesham and District ARS `A' were runners up but can claim some bragging rights as the only Society who fielded 3 teams, with the 'C' team still finishing in the top half of the table." So even our C team performed well.

Bouvet Island DXpedition 2023

Thanks to Malcolm (G3ZNU) for his article on the Bouvet Island DXpedition 2023, next month I'll write up about previous attempts.

Jeremy Browne - G3XZG Memorial Tankard

Finally, the committee have purchased a tankard in memory of Jeremy Brown (G3XZG), its picture is on page 21. When details are released as to what the tankard will be awarded for I'll post them here in the newsletter.

Bryan M0IHY

Chairmans Ramble


Dave (G8FMC)

Hi all. I write this as my first 'Chairman's Ramble' since taking on the role at the AGM.

Thanks to Malcolm for giving me a little breathing space by penning last months few words.

I agreed to attempt to follow Jeremy as Chairman, only on the condition that a number of the tasks Jeremy performed over and above just chairing meetings, would be shared around other committee members. It looks like I did not manage to duck this task!

So, I am now Chairman and also the Contest Coordinator. We have an enlarged committee with a complete cross-section of Foundation, Intermediate and Full licensees. We hope this will ease the load on any one individual and widen the input; hopefully to the benefit of the club as a whole.

Unlike Jeremy, I do not 'do' CW (although see my other article!) and am primarily a 'Contester', rather than general ham. I do intend to try to spend more time on HF, exploring the improving propagation as we move further into this sun-spot cycle. Hopefully this means I may have a bit more to report of general interest as time goes by?

A few weeks ago I did spend a few early mornings (woke up early and could not get back to sleep!) monitoring 80m and 40m for a short while. During the winter months at dawn and dusk there is often 'Gray-line' enhanced DX propagation when both ends of the QSO are in the twilight zone. In practice that means from the UK; contacts with USA, Canada, Caribbean via short path, plus Japan, Australia and New Zealand via long-path, are possible. Long-path in this case is almost the same beam heading where the NZ path is via Sth America; at least double-hop with reflections from the Atlantic and Pacific? For instance on 6th January I heard ZL4RMF on 40m at S 3-4 working OZ8BV (who was 59 + 60dB) for quite a chat. For this I was using a Vertical, rather than a Dipole. Low angle radiation helps for long-skip DX. I may say more about such antennas another time, either in the News Letter or a short session at the club?

Last night I check the LF bands before turning in at 'silly-O-clock' (this morning!) and heard KG8YA on 80m in Columbiana, Ohio, near Pittsburgh. He was 5 and 5 on my Inverted-L, but completely inaudible on my Dipole! He went QRT before I could fire up the 400W PA!

Contest update:

The AFS Superleague series of 8 contests has now finished, helped by a few 'Associate Members' borrowed from other clubs, as well as some support from our 'partner' club Northampton. We are most grateful for these contributions which make a big difference and increase our 'visibility'.

At one point we were in 2nd place, but then slipped to 3rd behind Camb-Hams and Grimsby during the 40/80m sessions, both big hitters in this field.

At the time of writing we are awaiting the 70cm results from the last session, after which we hope/expect to hold 3rd place out of 57 other 'Local' clubs. A very creditable effort from a modest resource. Until next time.

73 Dave K, G8FMC

MRP40 encode and decode software

Credit: http://www.polar-electric.com

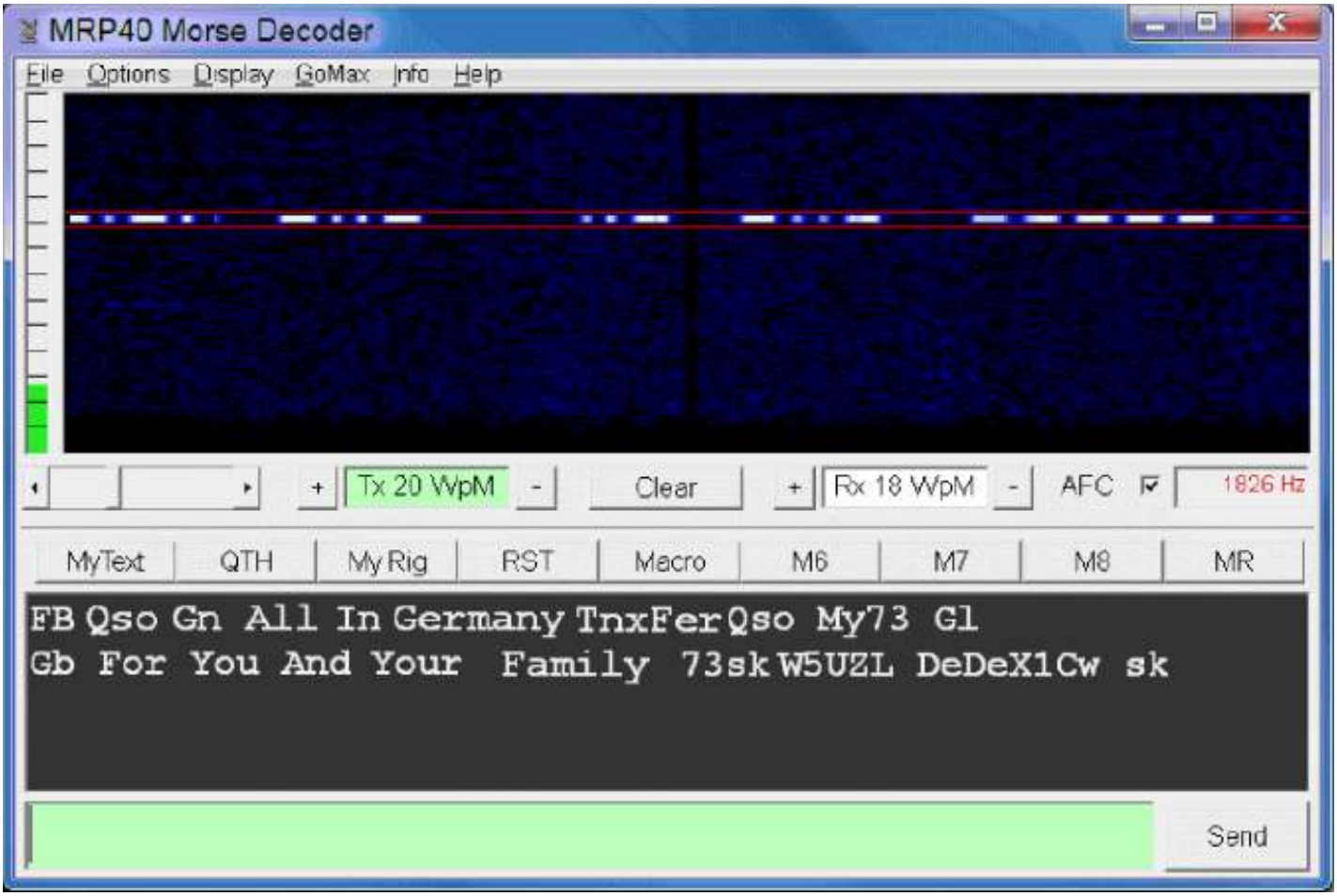
Doing an Internet search on “MRP40” returns a Morse decoder, a printing blanket, a sprinkler body, a high-pressure regulator, and last but not least strong wallpaper paste!

You may consider MRP40 as ‘cheats’ software, and you’d be right, perfect Morse sent every time and it’s decoding ability is very good, the one argument I would use is that it keeps the mode alive and in time you tend to use your ears to do the decoding (because you associate the sound with the character being displayed), which can’t be a bad thing.

The advertising spiel says:

> MRP40 is a powerful and highly-effective ham radio software program that decodes received CW audio that has been fed to a computer’s sound card. The decoded text is displayed on the computer’s monitor. For transmitting CW, the program encodes keystrokes from the computer’s keyboard. Hams use MRP40 to send and read QRQ (high-speed) CW, to help read weak DX signals, and to improve CW contest scores.

... With MRP40 you are number one on the air! ...



MRP40 decoding a signal

It’s compatible with most keyers including Winkeyer USB (K1EL), DigiMaster CW Interface (G4ZLP), SignaLink (recommended), RigBlaster Advantage, Microham (USB Interface II and microKeyer II), or you can just do it yourself (see the January 2022 newsletter, page 9 for details).

Bryan M0IHY

Performance:

- Very good decoding of weak, noisy and fading signals
- Almost 100% copy in heavy CW contest conditions and local QRM
- Decoding now better than famous MRP37 Morse Decoder (MS-DOS version, no longer for sale!)

Features:

- Morse Code Decoding up to 60 wpm
- Text- and Graphic Display
- High performance software CW filtering
- Automatic speed recognition
- Automatic Gain Control (AGC)
- Automatic tracking of "drifting" signals (via AFC)
- Automatic formatting of received text, correcting unspaced words... read more...
- Transmitting Morse Code 0.4 to 60 WPM via USB-COM Port, Soundcard and Winkeyer
- Beacon transmitting mode

There are 3 ways to transmit:

1. Recommended: Use AFSK (audio frequency-shift) keying by sending CW audio to the transceiver from the computer's sound card. The rig operates in SSB transmission mode. The signals generated by MRP40 have sine waveform and a smooth envelope, so no annoying key clicks. The rise and decay times of the CW-signals are automatically adjusted to the sending speed, so a minimum bandwidth is occupied, especially for QRS (slow sending). Note: When using AFSK for sending, one can activate the PTT via Com Port by selecting the check box named "Activate PTT pin" in MRP40's menu under "Options - Tx-Settings."

2. Key your transceiver via the RS232 serial Com Port, or key your transceiver via Soundcard output. This requires an interface box between PC and transceiver. You can also build yourself a neat little interface like suggested in QST Magazine issue 02/2007, or check out the newsletter for January 2022, page 9.

3. Winkeyer USB

System Requirements:

- Soundcard: any general purpose. (e.g. PCI or On-Board Sound)
- CPU: Pentium 450 MHz or faster
- Operating System: Win95 / Win98 / WinMe / Win2000 / Win XP / Win 7, 8, 10 / Snow Leopard / Parallels Desktop 5
- Mac running OS X 10.7 and using Windows 7 running in Parallels 7

There is a registration fee of 52.50€ but the software is fully functional for the first 30 days, thus giving you a chance to determine whether it's what you want, or not. I have owned my copy of MRP40 for several years now and have moved it between various computers over that period of time, simply email your request for a change of computer quoting the number generated by the program (computer specific), I have never waited more than 24 hours for a response.

Do I regret getting MRP40? No, it gives me another mode to operate.

I have never really been into Morse but as I have a Begali and Kent key, I really should make the effort, there is no substitute for practice, MRP40 does get me on the air though!

http://www.polar-electric.com has an article by M0OIC regarding his use of MRP40 and the fact Fists invited him to join even though they were aware of his 'keyless' CW, it's worth a read.

There is far more information available than space permits here, pop over to http://www.polar-electric.com to see the rest, and remember, it has a 30-day fully working trial, give it a whirl, the worst case scenario will be that you remove it from your computer!!

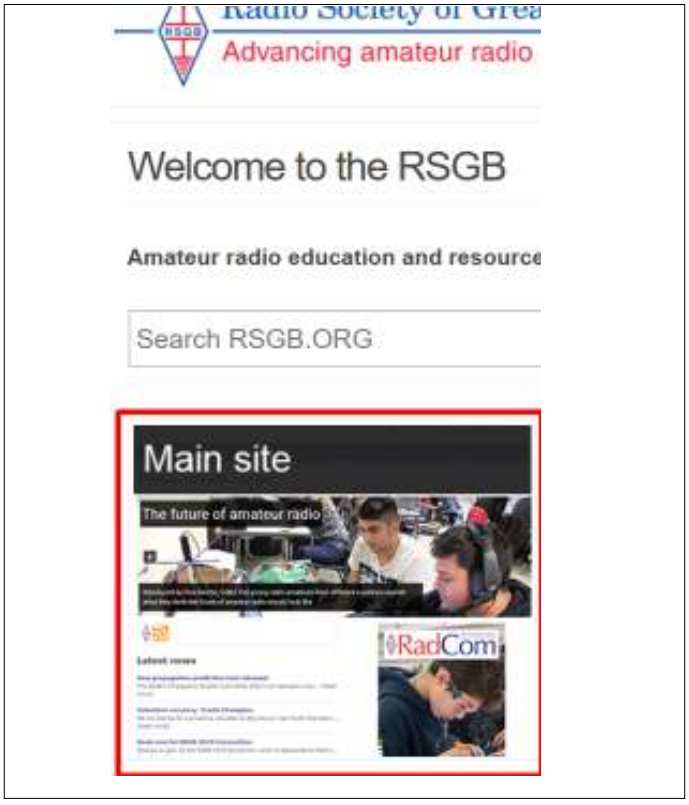
Bryan M0IHY

Visit Bletchley Park for free

If you're a member of the R.S.G.B. then you're entitled to free entrance to Bletchley Park, which includes the National Radio Centre.

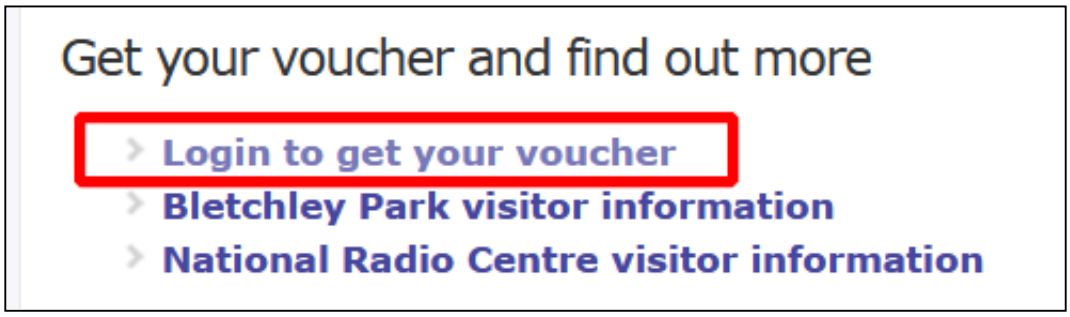
Follow these steps to get your free ticket:

1. Log onto https://rsgb.org and select "Main site"



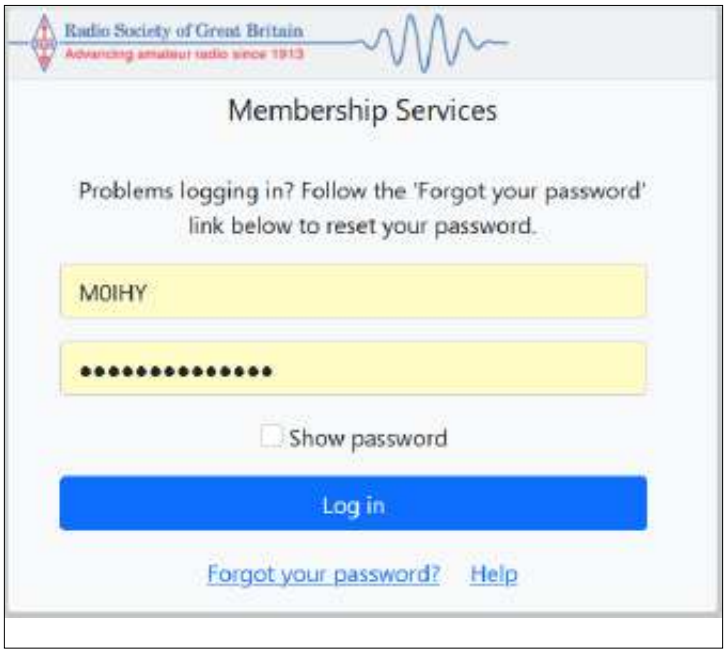
2. Select "Membership" followed by "Bletchley Park free admission vouchers"

3. Select “Login to get your voucher”



If there is a Membership Services message, scroll to the bottom and select “Proceed to Login”.

4. Enter your callsign and password.

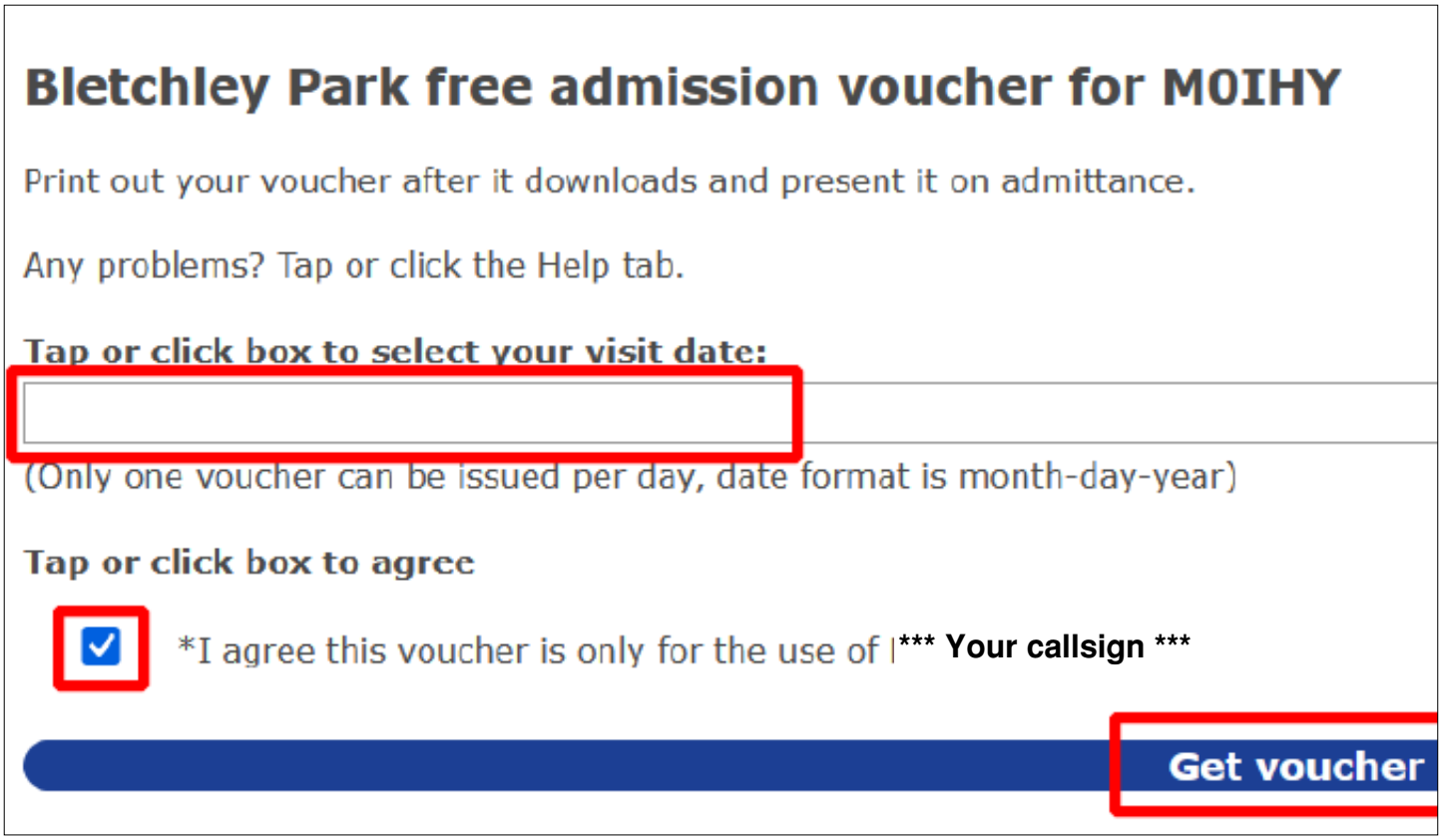


5. Select “Visit Bletchley Park - Get free admission to the world-famous Bletchley Park site.”

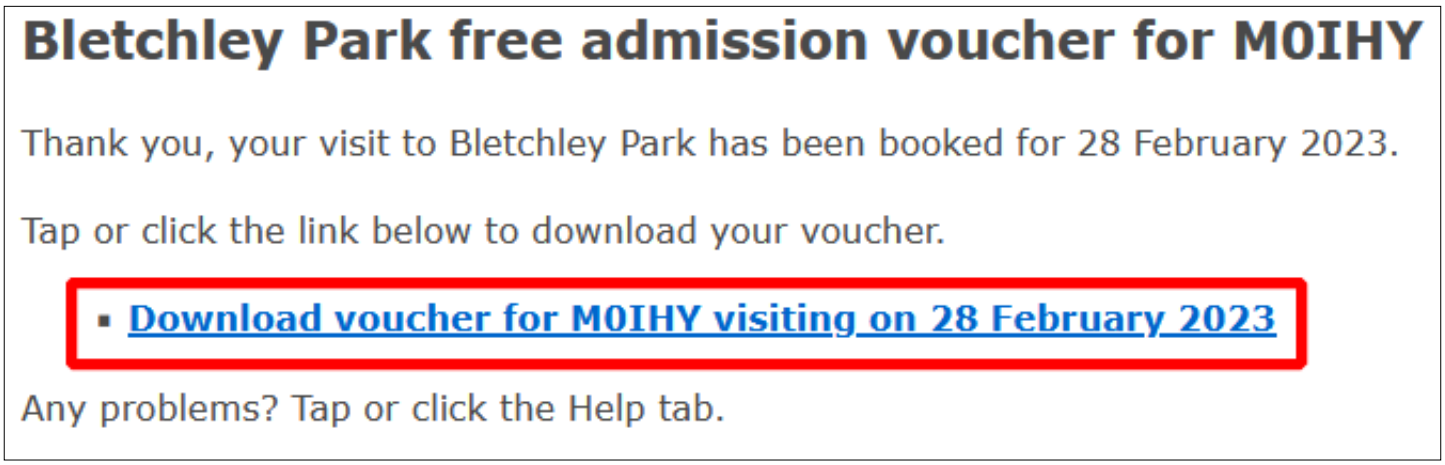
6. Click "*I agree this voucher is only for the use of (*** Your callsign ***)"

   Tap in the box below "**Tap or click box to select your visit date:**" and select a date, as an example, I selected the 28th of February.

   Click on "Get voucher"



7. Click on "Download voucher for...", in the example below I've chosen to visit on the 28th of February.



8. Your voucher is downloaded into the Downloads area on your computer and is named

   BLETCHLEY-PARK-FREE-ADMISSION-VOUCHER-YOUR CALLSIGN-YOUR DATE.PDF

   Print this off and produce it at the admissions area at Bletchley Park for your free entry.

Bryan M0IHY

Morse Code is making a comeback!

Credit - Mail Online (Eirian Jane Prosser)

This is an extract from the original article.

Children as young as FIVE are learning the once groundbreaking form of communication - spurred on by K-Pop bands who use it to leak hints about upcoming songs to fans. More and more young people around the world are opting to learn Morse Code. Several K-Pop bands use it in their videos to provide hints about upcoming songs.

Forget TikTok and Instagram - children and teenagers want to learn Morse Code!
Despite being created 180 years ago and not being a requirement for amateur radio operators to learn since 1990, it has been kept alive by radio enthusiasts - and now more young people are getting involved.

A combination of pandemic lockdowns forcing youngsters to learn something new, and the use of Morse Code by popular K-Pop bands, has led to 'a renaissance' in teens wanting to learn the once groundbreaking form of communication.

From five-year-olds to 99-year-old war veterans, people all over the world are tapping in to communicate with others on the radio.

Morse Code is making a comeback with more children and teenagers wanting to learn the skill.

Source: History.com

In Long Island, 70-year-old Howard Bernstein said he has loved radio since he was a young child, listening to shortwave radio and the BBC from across the pond. 'Radio is in my genes', he told MailOnline, as he recalled first learning Morse Code 57 years ago, at the age of 13. His father had been a radio operator who used the skill to communicate with allies while flying a B-17 out of RAF Polebrook in Northamptonshire during the Second World War.

Now, more than half a century later, Bernstein is teaching the same skill to hundreds of children and teenagers - some young as five - who are turning their backs on social media for a few hours each week to learn Morse Code. In 2017, Bernstein and his friend Richard Collins decided to form a community group for fans of amateur radio in and around New York.

The Long Island CW Club soon started gaining traction, with more and more recruits joining from other states across the US. Soon enough, the club had become a global hub for amateur radio fans, attracting members from 47 countries worldwide, including a considerable number of Brits. Mr Bernstein said: 'It all began online and on Zoom. I found this very early on because I was coincidentally using this for work.'It really helped propel the club, and then when Covid hit that spurred it on even more.

Source: Britannica

'The majority of people using ham radio are over the age of 50 but there's a lot of younger people coming through now, which is really refreshing. 'There's really a renaissance with the youth coming back to learn Morse Code.'

Today, 3,500 members log on each week to practice their skills and learn more about the communication form - 400 of those being children and teenagers. Each week, the society runs around 80 classes and forums on Zoom, in what Mr Bernstein calls an 'around the clock' operation. Classes allow people to learn Morse, practice it in conversation with other people and listen to presentations about the history of the code or discussions about how it could be used in the future in military warfare or even in space.

He added: 'We had no idea kids would be interested in this and we did not think about it until one of our members, who worked with kids for a living, offered to teach them during the Covid lockdown. 'Over the

pandemic people were joining more'. 'Parents loved their kids learning it as it was still quite academic'. 'We started with the kids of members and continued to grow from referrals.'

But why are younger people trying to learn the code, when there are so many other distractions online?

South Korean K-pop boy band, TXT have used Morse Code in their music, music videos and even to send messages to fans about upcoming releases. K-Pop band NU'EST have also used Morse Code in their songs and music videos. Their music video help me shows a person tapping Morse Code at the beginning of the song.

Mr Bernstein said people are 'tiring of cell phones and computers - everything that gives instantaneous gratification'. Further to that he says it is 'a very efficient way to communicate' and has a 'romantic element' to it.

Back in the UK, Michael Stanton, 56, who helps run the Long Island CW Club from Thatcham, West Berkshire, said K-Pop is partially responsible for the surge in popularity from younger generations. South Korean boy bands NU'EST and TXT have both used Morse Code within their music videos, and even communicate hints about upcoming songs to fans.

Mr Stanton explained to MailOnline: 'I found that young people between the age of 11 and 14 enjoy it but when they get older, they have more going on, exams, drinking, partying, dating - all those sorts of things. 'It is then only when people get to around 40 or 50 that they realise they have more money and time to get into amateur radio. 'However, during the lockdowns, the Internet exploded, the ways of communicating got better and lots of the radio things we were doing moved to the internet - including the ability to use Morse Code. 'This made it more accessible to all age groups. 'At the same time there have been a few K-Pop bands, TXT being the most notable, that have been using Morse Code.'

K-Pop fans have lapped up TXT and NU'EST's use of Morse Code in their songs, music videos and even promotions on their website. At the start of TXT's song Crown, Morse Code is used to spell out the title before the song gets underway. Similarly, NU'EST's song Help Me spells out its title at the start of the song, as translated by Bernstein. NU'EST even had flashing lights, communicating in Morse Code, on their website to reveal the titles of their upcoming songs. This prompted young fans of the bands to scour the internet trying to find out the hidden meaning of the beeps. 'These bands have used Morse Code quite a lot in their music and communicating with fans. It is mostly written down, but in their music, they obviously use the sounds,' Mr Stanton, who learned the skill 35 years ago, explained. 'And that sparked quite a lot of interest amongst the younger generation, teenagers who think "hey my pop idols do this Morse Code thing, it seems quite cool, I can have secret conversations with people using it".'

In a world where technology is continually advancing, Morse Code appears to offer an escape for some, providing a focus on communicating with others away from the pesky troubles of using social media. Using Morse Code can improve your brain health, study reveals. A study by the department of Neurology at Bochum University in Germany in 2017 revealed that learning Morse Code can improve your brain health. The scientists found that learning the skill increases neuroplasticity, which is responsible for making new neuron connections.

Neuroplasticity helps the human brain with things such as learning and memory, keeping the brain remain young and less at risk to age related cognitive disorders, such as dementia.

During the study, published in the National Library of Medicine, researchers were able to substitute Morse Code for language learning and measured the changes in the brain's white matter structure. It was used instead of a language because it is faster to learn and is easier to control. The study concluded that learning Morse Code increased white matter plasticity, activating a higher cognitive network in the brain.

To view the complete article, go to:

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-11640643/Morse-Code-making-comeback-Children-young-FIVE-learning-it.html

Bryan M0IHY

Bouvet Island DXpedition 2023

Bouvet story-part 1

Ken Opskar LA7GIA

The team at Brize Norton before they went

DX-peditions to remote frozen islands like Bouvet 3Y0J are extremely dangerous. Bouvet happens to be the most remote island on the planet. More people have flown to outer space than set foot on Bouvet.

On 31 January 2023 I and three others landed on the island. Our mission was to secure our route up the glacier to our camp site and install a buoy and rope system to get gear ashore.

Each of us only carried a small bag to the island with extra gloves, socks, and a few personal items. No big deal at the time because the next zodiac run would bring us our essential supplies. Suddenly the seas became very violent and rough. There was no way to get any more gear on the island. Several attempts were made, but the conditions were life threatening for the zodiac team and the resupply mission was aborted.

Now we were faced with the fact we had to spend the night on Bouvet Island without any shelter, extra cold weather gear, or sleeping bags. The rest of the team was safely aboard the Marama but worried for our safety.

We sheltered at the bottom of a narrow ravine which provided some shelter from the wind. We used our waders and rope from our climbing gear to provide some insulation from the cold wet ground. We stacked up the climbing gear bags and our small personal bags across the ravine to provide some protection from the wind. Lastly we deployed our two emergency blankets to lay on. Then we hunkered down for the long cold

night. It was bone shaking cold and uncomfortable, but we survived the night as probably the only people to sleep under the stars at Bouvet. Actually, none of us got much sleep, we would doze off only to be awakened by the cold.

Bouvet story-part 2

Day two finally came and it was nice to see patches of blue sky amongst all the clouds. We were all exhausted and cold, but the toughest day of my life still lay ahead.

While the rest of the team aboard the Marama was busy preparing our zodiac which entailed quite a lot of work, we had time to explore Cape Fie. This tiny sliver of land next to the enormous glacier which covered approximately 95% of the island was very rugged terrain. There was a small penguin colony near the edge of the cliff with Chinstrap, Gentoo, and Emperor species living together. They were fun to watch and photograph.

We surveyed the area and found a semi flat location to erect the tent and choose some places where we hoped to install antennas. We also found a good location to install the winch system to bring equipment from the beach up to the camp area. While we waited, the sun appeared and we found ourselves catching a most needed nap.

Once the zodiac was ready, the team on Marama would communicate with us on the vhf radio and we would coordinate the plan. This was a risky operation trying to land the zodiac, but we needed the basic essentials like food, water, our bags with cold weather gear, sleeping bags, and the tent to survive. The sea was again rough with large swells. This was going to be a fight.

The Marama crew did an Incredible job getting a line to us on the beach. Charles was a skilled and brave zodiac driver. We were wearing our waders in an attempt to stay dry, but the swell was high with waves rushing up the beach all the way to the glacier.

The team on Marama loaded the zodiac and tied down all the gear. Next, the Marama crew would use one of the boats zodiacs to tow our zodiac out to the buoy and attach it to the line so we could pull it to shore. With the huge surf and high swell, this was going to test our ability to the limit and beyond.

The fight began. The four of us on the beach went over the procedure we planned. We were to pull in the zodiac and anchor the lines. Then unload the gear and secure it at the glaciers edge. As the zodiac neared the beach, we were fighting the swell and the weight of the zodiac loaded with all the gear. This was incredibly difficult and dangerous. We had to time it just right, but Bouvet had different plans. Once we landed the zodiac on the beach, we had to hold it while at the same time un-tie the straps and ropes securing the gear. The waves kept coming and there was little time to do this. As we battled the next wave would hit and drag the zodiac back out to sea. We would pull it back to the beach and secure the anchors only to have the next wave pull the anchors and zodiac back to sea. This became an ongoing war and during the fight we were all pulled under the sea multiple times. Finally we managed to use a knife to cut loose the gear and stow it next to the glacier. Then the next wave came pounding in. We see our bags of cold weather gear and sleeping bags being washed back to sea. No choice, let go of the zodiac and try to grab our bags near the next breaker. We got lucky and saved them. We found a ledge on the glacier to secure them so the tide could not grab them and wash them back to sea. The fight intensified. The next wave came blasting in and now the zodiac filled with water. The next wave pulled the zodiac back over the anchor and we heard the rupture. We all dug deep and fought hard. This was one fight we were determined to win. We set the anchors many times securing them with huge rocks. The swell was intense. We used the bag of stakes which weighed 100 pounds and huge rocks together with us pulling the line, but the sea just launched and pulled the anchors and zodiac away. The fight seemed to take hours and hours. Finally with most of the gear secured on the glaciers ledge, we focused on securing the zodiac. By now we were exhausted, cold, and wet. Still fighting the waves, we finally managed to drag the zodiac to the glaciers edge. Then a huge wave rolled in and the four of us held the zodiac with all our might. In the mayhem we could only watch as the sea claimed our tent and bag of stakes washed out in the blink of an eye. They were gone forever. From our climbing gear we used three large stakes driven deep into the beach and secured the zodiac into place. Then we finally secured the loop line anchors. Now it was time to haul our gear to the ravine where we slept the night before. We changed into some dry clothes and had a bite to eat.

When I packed my gear for this DX-pedition, I included a small two-man tent in my duffle bag. Not Bouvet rated, but good enough to keep us out of the wind and rain. We carved out the area at the bottom of the ravine and set up the tent. With our air mattresses and sleeping bags three of us climbed in and enjoyed a warm night's sleep. Ken, also resourceful packed a tarp and erected a nice shelter which kept him dry and warm. This experience told us how hard it would actually be to activate Bouvet.

Bouvet story-part 3

The wildlife on Bouvet consists of seals, penguins, and other bird species. The beach at Cape Fie was occupied by a number of fur seals. They are quite territorial and if you get too close, they would show their tusks and teeth as a warning to stay away. If you got too close, they would chase you and try to bite you.

As day one reached dusk and the resupply attempt was aborted due to rough seas, we were walking down the beach toward the ladder to make the short climb up to the glacier. There wasn't much light, and I had my parka hood up. Mike AB5EB was a few steps ahead of me and looking back, he yelled "Dave". I knew instantly to run towards him as a fur seal was about to have part of me for dinner! I lunged forward taking three steps falling down on the last but avoided the beast. We all laughed.

On day two after our fight with the swell and big waves securing the zodiac and setting the loop line, we were happy to have our gear and a chance to rest. Later in the afternoon, the team on Marama prepared two barrels with additional supplies and a container of water. One barrel held four survival suits and the air pump for the zodiac. The other barrel contained trail mix, protein bars, sandwiches, a few oranges, thermoses of hot tea, four cokes, hard boiled eggs, and other miscellaneous items. The Marama crew brought them out to the buoy and attached them to the line. The barrels were airtight and floated well. We pulled them on shore and immediately took them off the beach and up onto the glacier. We were all exhausted and hungry. We ate the sandwiches and eggs washing it all down with the cans of coke followed by the oranges.

We stowed the barrels and brought the water, protein bars, and trail mix to the ravine where we set up camp. It was time to calculate how many calories we had and how long the supplies would last. We were set for a few days. The rest of the day we rinsed our wet clothes in the glacier stream to get the salt water out and set them on the rocks to dry.

On day three, we all woke up early. We wanted to check the swell and see if the zodiac was still on the beach. Fortunately the zodiac was still there, but the anchors holding the loop lines had washed out to sea. We could see the rope floating in the water.

We had a patch kit and air pump to repair the hole in the zodiac. There was a tear some four inches long. We formed a plan so we could do the repair safely while keeping dry. We would each wear our survival suits while on the beach. The beach was clear, there were no seals to contend with. Once we dried the area around the tear, we installed the patch and inflated the zodiac. The repair was a success.

There would not be any attempt today at trying to land more equipment. Conditions would not allow it. We spent the remainder of the day drying out more clothes and exploring Cape Fie. Trail mix, protein bars, and water we on the menu. Would we be able to get off the island and form a new strategy? This was what we were thinking about and discussing among each other.

Day four the swell was manageable. We called Marama and requested they try a beach landing with the zodiac to bring us back to Marama one at a time. I was first to go. I wore the waders in an attempt to keep dry. When the zodiac beached, we had to turn it around and wait for the best time to go. Of course I got knocked down by the breaking swell and sea water entered my waders getting my clothes wet. Seems like you could never catch a break. I arrived back to Marama with team members offering any assistance. They knew we had been through hell and it was a good feeling that my teammates and the Marama crew where there for us. The remaining three were all returned to Marama but in survival suits after seeing how I got drenched. We still intended to activate Bouvet, we weren't giving up.

After being stranded 4 days on Bouvet - we decided the DX-pedition had to be downscaled. We needed to adapt to the WX at Bouvet and go onshore when Bouvet allowed us during the short WX windows that

occurred.

2 days later we went onshore with a minimal amount of equipment: 2 radios, 2 PSU, 2 computers, one tent, 5 antennas, 60m coax, 50 litres of gasoline and one generator, no amplifiers + essential supplies to survive.

73, 3Y0J

The team on Bouvet Island

Malcolm G3ZNU

CW corner

CW for those that don't do CW!
(or How to enter a CW contest when I can't do Morse!)

CDARS although not big on HF contests, have for a number of years made a serious attempt to enter the AFS series that covers 160m through to 70cm in 8 events.

The 40m/80m CW session (7th January 2023) is often a challenge to get a full team of 4, particularly since the premature passing of Jeremy G3XZG.

I had previously managed to persuade 'technology' to do what my brain has consistently failed to do over many years, for a couple of 80m CC events. The results were very modest but better than nothing (just!)

For HF contests I use (the almost ubiquitous) N1MM+ logging program. For Data I use FLDigi integrated into N1MM+. There is a CW decoder in FLDigi, but I have previously found that it is not very good (as others have found!)

After some searches & try-outs I found that a simple program called 'CW Decoder' by WD6CNF, which is a free download, actually worked quite well (most of the time).

This seemed to automatically pick up the audio feed from the radio to the PC, without needing to be integrated into N1MM+.

My main radio is the Elecraft K3s. When in CW mode the small VFO 'B' display will also display 'decoded CW' when accurately tuned. The big problem is that this VFO B display is only about 9 characters long & with no permanent record. This means that one dare not blink or glance away for fear of missing some vital characters! 'CW Decoder' has a window that keeps the decoded messages 'on-screen' until cleared manually or scrolling off-screen. I developed a technique of looking at the K3s display, then glancing across to the PC display to check if the same exchange info was displayed. (my useless memory could just about remember a S/N) There was good correlation MOST of the time but not always. So not 100% but when both decodes agreed it gave me good confidence.

For a good success rate a reasonably strong signal, preferably without co-channel QRM is required. Interestingly the speed of incoming CW does not matter much for successful decoding. Thus machine sent CW up to at least 30 wpm is comfortably decoded. Interestingly manually sent fairly slow CW, which often has slightly larger gaps was challenging with random extra characters inserted!

This 'CW Decoder' can send as well as RX, but I have only used the macros within N1MM+ to send. In practice one only needs 2 or 3 'F' keys for a contest. (I only did S&P) I set the TX PC speed to about 18-20 wpm, as that matched many others. (Irrelevant really as I had no idea what was going out, except for viewing it 'on-screen' slightly after the event!) BTW some use a 'Keyer' to ensure accurate timing. I did not, but had just the 2 programs running so my PC did not have to 'multi-task' too much, which I believe can screw timing? Since there was just 1 reverse UBN I guess my sent CW must have been fairly good?

In the 4 hrs of this years contest I managed 69 QSO's, enough for me to make the last place in the 'A Team'. This is compared to Malcolm G3ZNU on 161 & our lead station John G4CZB (Northampton) on 277! So not great but a bit better than some. I was a little miffed at 3 errors, but John had 4 errors & Malcolm also 3 errors, so OK all things considered. All my errors were with serial numbers. I guess I should have asked for repeats from those that only sent once?

So, although feeling somewhat 'out-of-control' I guess it was productive?

I believe Bryan M0IHY has paid a little money for another CW reader called MRP40 that he feels is better than my one. Maybe I will try that some day.

73, Dave K, G8FMC

Spotlight - Newington, Connecticut

QSO with W1AW, 'ARRL' HQ - Hiram Percy Maxim memorial station

Band:	28.419MHz	**QTH:**	Newington, Connecticut
Mode:	SSB	**Coordinates:**	41°41'14"N 72°43'48"W
Date:	27th January 2023	**Time Zone:**	UTC-5
Time:	16:38 GMT	**Population:**	30,536

Seal

Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station building.

I was tuning across the CW end of 10m one afternoon when I chanced across W1AW in QSO. I recognised the callsign as the headquarters station of the ARRL, and was about to call them when they said they were QSYing to SSB, and gave the new frequency. I quickly retuned and waiting for them to appear, and when the operator put out a call I was ready to be the first caller. To my surprise he came right back and I had a very pleasant QSO with Joe, the operator.

Unlike the RSGB headquarters station GB3RS, which is at the National Radio Centre at Bletchley Park, W1AW is located at the ARRL headquarters building in Newington, Connecticut. But it's not always been thus.

The original ARRL HQ station was licensed with the callsign of W1MK and located in a National Guard building at Brainard Field in Hartford, Connecticut. After eight years of operation this flood plain location was destroyed by the waters of the Connecticut River in a 1936 flood. During this same year Hiram Percy Maxim, president and co-founder of the ARRL, died after serving 22 years as the organization's president. It was decided by the ARRL board of directors that a new station would be built as a memorial to their recently lost president and that the new station would assume his callsign of W1AW. On September 2, 1938 the new station was dedicated with the ceremonies being broadcast nationally over the radio. The Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station building appears much as it did when first built in 1938 and is now located next to the ARRL headquarters which was built much later, in 1963.

The station was constructed on what was then 7 acres (28,000 m^2) rural in Newington, Connecticut, purchased for $2,200 from Ms. Elsie Starr (the only nearby resident and namesake of today's HQ framing Starr Avenue).

The station's dedication on September 2, 1938 was of such significance in its day that it was carried live nationally on the CBS radio network; this was accomplished with the aid of Connecticut powerhouses WTIC and WDRC. The station was staffed by Hal Bubb, W1JTD, and George Hart, W1NJM.

The station was soon affected by a hurricane, losing power and proving the wisdom of installing emergency generators. It would be years before they were used once installed.

W1AW

The night of December 7, 1941, saw Hart and Bubb alerting the nation's amateurs that the FCC had closed down amateur stations, following the attack on Pearl Harbor. This continued for several months until W1AW itself was ordered off the air by the FCC. This condition would exist until October 31, 1945, following Japan's surrender. On that day, W1AW returned to the air to announce the methodical reopening of amateur radio activity.

In 1964, an addition and other renovations were made to the station following the closure of the La Salle Road offices in favor of the newly constructed offices used today by the ARRL. By 1988, under the tutelage of Chuck Bender, W1WPR, the Maxim station was renovated again, adding such amenities as a new kitchenette, toilet, workshop and a meeting room (on the station's second floor). Further improvements included glass walled operating studios, new operating tables, and modern rack mounted equipment placed within climate controlled spaces.

Malcolm G3ZNU

Contest Corner

March

HF

Day	Date (2023)	Time UTC	Contest Name
Mon	06 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC DATA
Sat-Sun	11-12 Mar	1000-1000	Commonwealth Contest
Wed	15 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC CW
Thu	23 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC SSB
Mon	27 Mar	1900-2030	RSGB FT4 Contest

VHF

Day	Date (2023)	Time UTC	Contest Name
Wed	01 Mar	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC
Sat-Sun	04-05 Mar	1400-1400	March 144 432MHz
Tue	07 Mar	1900-1955	144MHz FMAC
Tue	07 Mar	2000-2230	144MHz UKAC
Wed	08 Mar	1900-2100	432MHz FT8 AC
Thu	09 Mar	2000-2230	50MHz UKAC
Sun	12 Mar	1000-1200	70MHz Cumulatives # 2
Tue	14 Mar	1900-1955	432MHz FMAC
Tue	14 Mar	2000-2230	432MHz UKAC
Thu	16 Mar	2000-2230	70MHz UKAC
Tue	21 Mar	2000-2230	1.3GHz UKAC
Tue	28 Mar	1830-2130	SHF UKAC

April

HF

Day	Date (2023)	Time UTC	Contest Name
Sat	01 Apr	800-2000	FT4 International Activity Day
Mon	03 Apr	1900-2030	80m CC CW
Wed	19 Apr	1900-2030	80m CC SSB
Mon	24 Apr	1900-2030	RSGB FT4 Contest
Thu	27 Apr	1900-2030	80m CC DATA
Sat-Sun	29-30 Apr	1200-1200	UKEI DX CW Contest

VHF

Day	Date (2023)	Time UTC	Contest Name
Sun	02 Apr	900-1200	Spring 70MHz Contest
Tue	04 Apr	1800-1855	144MHz FMAC
Tue	04 Apr	1900-2130	144MHz UKAC
Wed	05 Apr	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC
Sun	09 Apr	900-1200	Spring 50MHz Contest
Tue	11 Apr	1800-1855	432MHz FMAC
Tue	11 Apr	1900-2130	432MHz UKAC
Wed	12 Apr	1900-2100	432MHz FT8 AC
Thu	13 Apr	1900-2130	50MHz UKAC
Tue	18 Apr	1900-2130	1.3GHz UKAC
Thu	20 Apr	1900-2130	70MHz UKAC
Sat-Sun	22-23 Apr	1400-1400	MGM Contest
Tue	25 Apr	1830-2130	SHF UKAC

Any other business

Jeremy Browne - G3XZG Memorial Tankard

Pos	Club	50MHz	70MHz	144MHz	432MHz	160m	80m CW	80m DATA	80m SSB	Total
1	Camb-Hams	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	980	7,980
2	Grimsby ARS	955	833	935	917	967	932	930	941	7,410
3	**Chesham & DARS**	**909**	**944**	**968**	**972**	**933**	**682**	**837**	**863**	**7,108**
4	Sheffield & DWS	864	889	903	889	667	727	907	882	6,728
5	Norfolk ARC	727	500	774	833	900	909	977	961	6,581
6	Colchester RA	591	722	742	583	633	841	698	784	5,594
7	West Kent ARS	455	111	581	500	533	568	767	745	4,260
8	Torbay ARS	818		613	778		295	558	529	3,591
9	Bristol CG					800	955	953	686	3,394
10	Echelford ARS					700	750	814	902	3,166
11	Newbury & DARS					833	818	651	667	2,969
12	Gloucester AR&ES	182	167	194	389	133	659	860	196	2,780
13	Rugby ATS	136	778	484	611	233	136	140	255	2,773
14	Cray Valley RS						977	791	1,000	2,768
15	Tall Trees CG	45	389		28		659	744	569	2,434
16	Surrey RCC	364	222	355	528	167	273		510	2,419
17	Guildford & DRS	636		710	667		386			2,399
18	Swindon & DARC	227	444	516	417			442	235	2,281
19	Reading & DARC						795	419	843	2,057
20	Spalding & DARS			323	444	567			627	1,961
21	Hereford ARS	773		839	306					1,918
22	Martlesham RS			548	750	600				1,898
23	Brimham CG					33	886	372	471	1,762
24	Horsham ARC					433	409	512	392	1,746
25	Trowbridge & DARC			710	944					1,654
26	Isle of Man ARS			806	806					1,612
27	Southdown ARS	500	333	290	167	300				1,590
28	RAF Waddington ARC						500	605	431	1,536
29	Christchurch ARS						477	302	647	1,426
30	Blackwood & DARS						227	395	627	1,249
31	Scunthorpe Steel ARC						523	674		1,197
32	Bolton Wireless Club	682			361		23		118	1,184
33	Braintree & DARS						455	349	333	1,137
34	Stockport RS						614	23	451	1,088
35	Weston-super-Mare RS						250	465	216	931
36	Aberdeen ARS						364	256	176	796
37	Malvern Hills RAC					100		326	314	740
38	Duddon Contest Team				639					639
39	Northern Fells CG		611							611
40	Medway ARTS				194	400				594
41	Dragon ARC						159		412	571
42	St Tybie ARS	273			222					495
43	Stevenage & DARS					367		70	39	476
44	Parallel Lines CG				472					472
45	Goole R&ES					467				467
46	Norfolk Coast ARS						318	93	20	431
47	Coulsdon ATS			419						419
48	Hornsea ARC					333	23		59	415
49	Fort Purbrook ARC				333					333
50	Exmoor Radio Club							279		279
51	Leicester RS			32		200				232
52	Horndean & DARC			226						226
53	Bangor & DARS							209		209
54	Wigtownshire ARC						205			205
55	Itchen Valley ARC							186		186
56	Kings Lynn ARC				139					139
57	Hilderstone AR&EC			97						97
58	Wythall RC						68			68
59	Redditch AR & CG		56							56
59	Wrexham and Marches ARS				56					56
61	Poole RS							47		47
62	Cockenzie & Port Seton ARC						45			45