

CDARS.

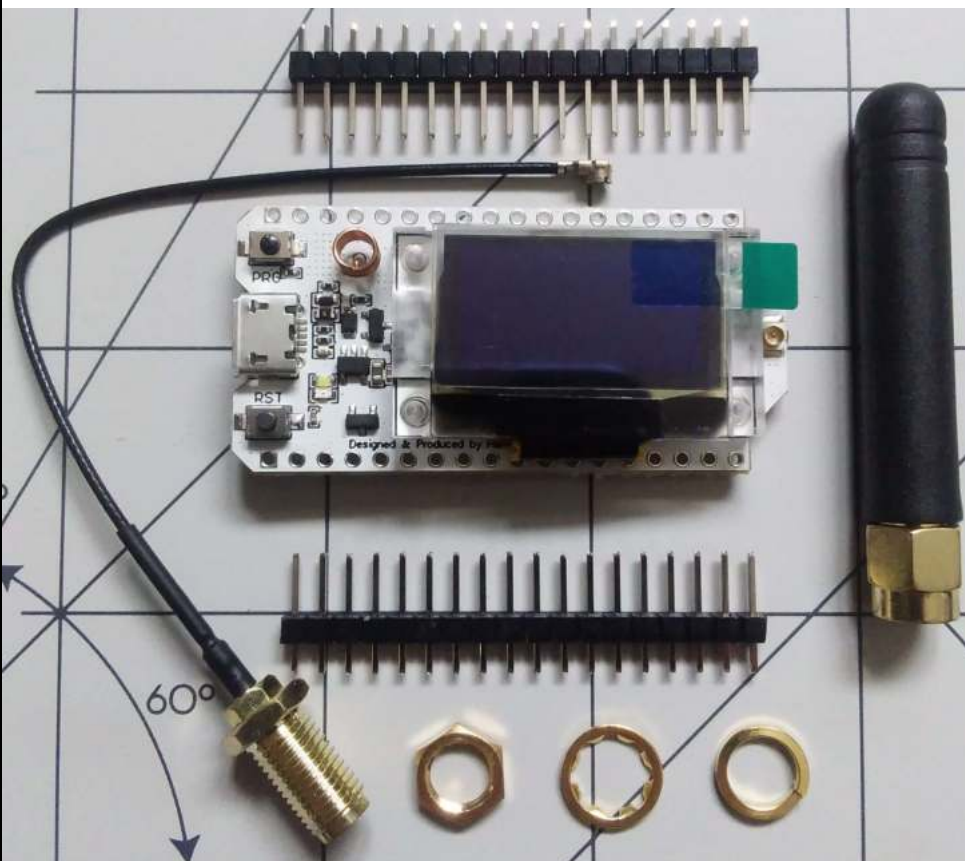
March 2024

CESHAM & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Rugby Radio Station and the Imperial Wireless Chain.

We meet the 2nd Wednesday each month at The Golden Eagle pub in Ashley Green and the 4th Wednesday each month at the Ashley Green Memorial Hall, Ashley Green, HP5 3PP.

Meshtastic Project



LoRa 32 RF Mesh System

Radio Licensing



Increased Power, More Flexibility. The New License Conditions Go Live!

Radio Rally Dates Page



From The Archives

Amateur Radio Articles
From A Bygone Era - The Early
Days of CDARS.

Contesting

February Contest Report and
Updated Calendar for
March and April.

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

Can't find that elusive part or have anything for sale? Why not drop me an email and put it in 'For sale and wanted'.

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/>

Contents

March 2024

Regulars		Contesting / Operating	
Welcome	4	Contesting / Operating	7
Chairmans Ramble	5	Contest Corner	17
From The Archives	12	<i>Contests for March And April..</i>	
For Sale and Wanted	19		
<i>Various goodies up for grabs.</i>			
Dates for your Diary	20		
<i>A number of special events for 2024.</i>			
Radio Rally Dates	21		
<i>Rallies Calendar.</i>			
Features		News	
Rugby Radio Station.	8	The New Licensing Conditions.	15
<i>The Beginning of the Imperial Wireless Chain.</i>		<i>OFCOM Proposals Go Live.</i>	
Projects		Other	
Meshtastic	10	Morse Code Learning Links	2
<i>License free RF Mesh Network Node..</i>			
		Next Month.....	
		* An End Fed Antenna Project by Peter 2E0PTH.	
		* Part 2 of The Imperial Wireless Chain.	

CDARS Committee

Chairman	- Dave Keston (G8FMC)	Secretary	- Malcolm Appleby (G3ZNU)	Treasurer	- Matt Whitchurch (M1DTG)
	- Guy Plunkett (M0GU Y)		- John Hall (G0ODQ)		- Peter Holliday (2E0PTH)
Editor	- Roger Fellows (M7RMF)				

The committee can be contacted via cdars-committee@googlegroups.com

Welcome

With the coldest months hopefully now behind us we now start thinking of trips away. Whether it be days out, holidays or maybe some outdoor radio. During those trips there are always the familiar landmarks that remind us of previous outings or merely to recognise 'where we are' or 'not far to go now'. Many of us will have traversed the M1 or the A5 in Northamptonshire / Warwickshire and seen the huge transmission masts at Rugby. A familiar landmark to remind us how far we have gone or how far we are from home but what were they for? What did they transmit and where to? In the features page this month we find out the history of the Rugby masts from their inception to their final demise.



Roger M7RMF

While on the historical theme there is a new section which hopefully will be of interest. It is entitled 'From The Archives'. As the title suggests it is items from a bygone era in amateur radio. Peter (2E0PTH) has painstakingly searched through magazines from the early sixties. Following on from the item in the January issue found by Malcolm (G3ZNU) we start this new series with more about CDARS as published in Practical Wireless who we thank for permission to use.

As you are all probably aware as of 21st February the changes to the amateur radio license, proposed by OFCOM last year, came into effect. All the proposals are given on page 15 with Phase 1 now implemented. Phase 2 and 3 follow later in 2024 and 2025.

Meshtastic! Yes I wondered what it was too! Mark (M7EFR) has written an article for a project to build your very own RF mesh network node. This could be a club project on a fourth Wednesday if there is interest. More details on page 10.

Don't forget we have the club net on GB3TU on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 8pm. Meetings this month are our informal get-together at the Golden Eagle pub on Wednesday 13th and also at the Memorial Hall on Wednesday 27th where Guy (M0GUY) will be giving a presentation about RAYNET. Both meetings are from 8pm.

Along with all the regular items I hope you enjoy this months CDARS newsletter.

Roger M7RMF

Chairmans Ramble

The AGM is now behind us & yours-truly is still wearing the two hats of Chairman & Contest Coordinator. A small change on the committee; James has stood down to concentrate on becoming a new dad, with John G00DQ stepping in to fill that gap. I expect John to be assisting me with the contest stuff amongst other tasks? Also organising the 'Club Bar-B-Q' as we might call it now, since John will be hosting it at his QTH later in the year!



Dave (G8FMC)

I hope the wind & rain has not downed too many antenna systems? I know that Dave G4RGK in Chinnor (possibly our newest member? Welcome aboard Dave) was away over Christmas & the New Year & came back to a significant amount of antenna carnage at his QTH. A commercial HF vertical broke in half & took-out some of quite a large 70cm EME system of 8 x 27 ele yagis (see his QRZ.com page) & a few other items. I hope you are managing to sort that out Dave.

I guess those on HF might have been benefiting from the improved soil conductivity, with the water-table at times being above ground rather than below?

I have just got back from a few days with my friend John G4KXP in Droitwich (IO82WG). I have known John since early 1972, when we had a Friday night net on 2m with a few locals in the Hemel area, primarily to decide which pub to go to once the net had finished! (pre breathalyser days!) Some of us were running AM (Amplitude Modulation, sometimes referred to these days as 'Ancient Modulation') with one or two posh types with modern rigs running this fairly rare & esoteric SSB mode. SSB had become the norm on HF but on VHF & up was fairly rare at that time. My set-up consisted of a home-brew 144MHz RX converter, feeding into an ex WD National HRO receiver tuning about 6.7MHz – 4.7MHz, backwards! (The scrounged Xtal, expensive back then, was a 5th overtone Xtal intended for about 107MHz. I persuaded it to lock onto the 7th overtone at about 150.7MHz. This worked surprisingly well, due in no small part to a superb oscillator circuit designed by the late Brian Bower G3COJ; a senior design engineer at the BBC Designs Department where I was working at the time)

The TX initially was (I think?) a Pye Ranger all valve PMR (Taxi) radio. This was soon upgraded to a Pye Base Station TX, all valve, with a QQVO6-40A twin-tetrode output valve producing all of about 40W of AM. (For the benefit of the younger members a 'Valve' is one of those old glass bottle devices that has dangerous voltages on its anode(s) & has heaters that glow in the dark!) These ex commercial Transmitters were often fitted with a single Xtal for just one channel.

An early mod was to fit a multi-way switch & a few Xtal sockets. (8MHz Xtals multiplied up x 18 = 144MHz. Hopefully not too much output on other multiples?)

The 2nd mod was to fit a variable capacitor to slightly shift the Xtal frequency, without completely losing lock. These circuits were known as a 'VXO' (Variable Xtal Oscillator). A shift of say 2KHz when multiplied up x 18 = 36KHz shift at 2m, quite useful. A number of us had an Xtal to give 144.250MHz output, so we could 'net' together. If someone only had say 144.276MHz, then when it was his 'over' we would have to chase up the band with the RX to hear him, then chase back down again after! (No dual VFO's back then)

My 3rd mod was to fit a 'Netting' switch which activated the multiplier stages only, NO PA. This enabled one to tune the TX to 'net' (zero beat) onto the station being received. I got rather adept at using this when lots more SSB stations came on-the-air, but I still had no money for such a luxury.

I knew I had done a good job of 'zero-beat' when on about the 3rd over the other (SSB) station would say "you have rather a lot of carrier old-man". I would reply that I actually had a Full carrier, plus the other sideband if he went looking for it!

Anyhow returning to my visit to John G4KXP (Well, most of you know how I can wander off the initial topic with consummate ease! This is called the 'Chairman's Ramble' after all !)

John had many years holding down a rather demanding job, so only had a handful of contacts per year for ages, until recently when he retired. His QTH however is alongside the Canal in Droitwich & rubbish for VHF. John dabbled with Satellite on 2m & 70cm, but has recently got much more into HF. He made a 10m Moxon rectangle (compact 2 element beam) & has had fun quite easily working the world on 10m, with just 100W. He also has a 6m Moxon, but got that up a bit late for last years Sporadic-E season. Hoping for more excitement this year?

There are some very local nets on 2m that he is missing, so he decided to put a 2m Moxon on top. When I arrived the other day after lunch; I was greeted warmly, given a quick cup of tea & then dragged outside. The weather was about to get dire (again!) the next day, so full-speed on the scaffold pole mast being lowered, 2m Moxon fitted & raised again. Even at just about 7m AGL the little Moxon could occasionally hear GB3VHF coming out of the noise. No pre-amp & half the cable run was 7mm M&P Ultraflex, so not a serious installation. John did not expect to hear anything of GB3VHF, so it looks like it is better than anticipated & is not restricted to just immediate locals?

The rest of the visit was spent 'playing' with John's new toy; an ICOM IC-7300, that arrived a couple of days earlier. The last time John purchased a rig was about 20 yrs ago when he got a Yaesu FT-847. In my opinion one of Yaesu's all time better rigs, with many still in use today, even for contests. The new set-up is 7300 for HF & FT847 for 6m, 2m & 70cm (ah no 70cm antenna ATM!) In fact John has built (very professionally) a switch box that can route antennas to either rig, with safety interlock & isolating relays to avoid TX power getting into the other RX. I have to agree with many others that the 7300 seems like an excellent (entry-level?) HF radio, with V good ergonomics & menu-structure. Very pleasant & easy to use. My FTDX-10 has slightly superior RX performance, particularly on 70MHz (which is primarily what I bought it for) & better digital noise reduction, but the ergonomics & menu-structure is rubbish compared to the Icom's, IMHO.

BTW the Droitwich broadcast TX is up on the hill a couple of miles away radiating 500KW! (More info here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Droitwich_Transmitting_Station) The 500KW on 198KHz just-out-of-the-window is no problem to the 7300, but a Xiegu G90 that a mutual friend tried at John's was fine on a short piece of wire, but with a Trapped-Dipole plugged in it just laid on its back & died. One could not tune in anything on any band! SDR's do not progressively overload like analogue radios; they work fine then completely fall-over when a critical overload point is passed. I guess a high-pass filter or pre-selector would help with the obviously inadequate front-end filtering & overload capability? (A coax stub rejection filter would be rather large at 198KHz!)

73 all, Dave K
G8FMC (Chairman & Contest Coordinator)

Contests/Operating

Affiliated Societies (AFS) Superleague 2023/2024:

The final event in the AFS Superleague series was 70cm on Sunday 4th February. We had a really good turnout, with 10 stations on, half were full CDARS members, plus some 'associate members' from other groups. That gives us 2 x teams of 4, plus 2 extras, which is actually more than any other club/group; fantastic support, thanks guys!

As we are still awaiting the results for this final leg, it remains to be seen how well our top 4 (the 'A' team) do against the top 2 teams of Camb-Hams (6 entrants) & Grimsby ARS (just 3 entrants). Currently we are in 3rd position overall behind these 2. Looking at 'claimed scores' there is a chance of CDARS getting 2nd place on 70cm, but probably not enough to overhaul Grimsby in the overall Superleague? Camb-Hams top 4 look very strong, so are likely to win (yet again) the 70cm & take overall 'top spot'.

The UKAC's 2024 (under the CDARS banner for 2024, including NRC & AVRS)

We have made an excellent start to 2024 moving straight into 3rd place after the first 2m event. This was followed with 2nd place on 70cm, 6m, 4m & 23cm. Hereford seem to be making a slow start this year? With some results in for Feb, we find ourselves in overall 2nd place behind Parallel Lines. A splendid start to the year under the CDARS 'Banner'; many thanks to all contributors. That should make some other groups sit up and take notice? Our input on 23cm has dramatically increased this year, thanks to Dave G4RGK & the AVRS boys (well; pensioners!) much appreciated chaps. Sorry that very few CDARS members are equipped with 23cm or above.

VHF Championship 2024

With no chance of improving on our unexpected 2023 overall 2nd place, we will encourage those that can contribute to do what they can, but reserve top priority (3 line whip) for the UKAC's & the AFS Superleague, which starts again with 6m in October. If some members find themselves a bit stretched or have other commitments at weekends, then they won't get censured. We don't want to cause domestic friction, but a bit of forward planning may help to maintain harmony & satisfy most peoples requirements? The first event is the 144/432MHz weekend of 2 – 3 March, with 24hr & 6hr categories.

A reminder that anyone having a bash at the 80m CC's (CW, Data & SSB) should tag their logs to Northampton for 2024; where John G4CZB (using the club call of G8N this season) hopes to have some other NRC input & bring-on some new contributors?

On a final general operating theme; the Ofcom changes are now active as of 21st Feb. Foundation power now 25W & Intermediate 100W. If you feel like adding an 'E' as a SRL then you can. I guess that means that my SSC (Short Contest Call) of 'MOK', which is really too short, can now be 'MEOK'? I wonder if that will lessen the number of times I get asked what the rest of the call is, or will that totally confuse matters?

73, Dave K, G8FMC

(Ed: Full list of license changes on Pages 15/16)

Rugby Radio Station, Hillmorton, Rugby, Warwickshire.

Rugby Radio Station

Rugby Radio Station was a large British government radio transmission facility just east of the Hillmorton area of the town of Rugby, Warwickshire in England. The site straddled the A5 trunk road, with most of it in Warwickshire, and part on the other side of the A5 in Northamptonshire. First opened in 1926, at its height in the 1950s it was the largest radio transmitting station in the world, with a total of 57 radio transmitters, covering an area of 1,600 acres (650 ha). Traffic slowly dwindled from the 1980s onwards, and the site was closed between 2003 and 2007.

The tallest masts on the site were 820 feet (250 m) tall, and could be seen from up to 20 miles (32 km) away, making the site for many years a major local landmark. Since closure, part of the site has been used for a large housing development called Houlton, named after Houlton, Maine, USA the American town which received the first transatlantic phone call from the station in 1927.

History

Following the end of the First World War the British government set about implementing plans for an Imperial Wireless Chain to link the countries of the British Empire. It was decided that the new wireless service would be state-run by the Post Office. The site east of Hillmorton, was chosen in 1923. Part of the site had previously been occupied by RAF Lilbourne between 1915 and 1920.

Its large very low frequency (VLF) transmitter came into service on 1 January 1926 and was originally used to transmit telegraph messages to the Commonwealth as part of the Imperial Wireless Chain. After the 1950s this transmitter, active as callsign GBR on 16.0 kHz, using Morse code and later on 15.975 kHz



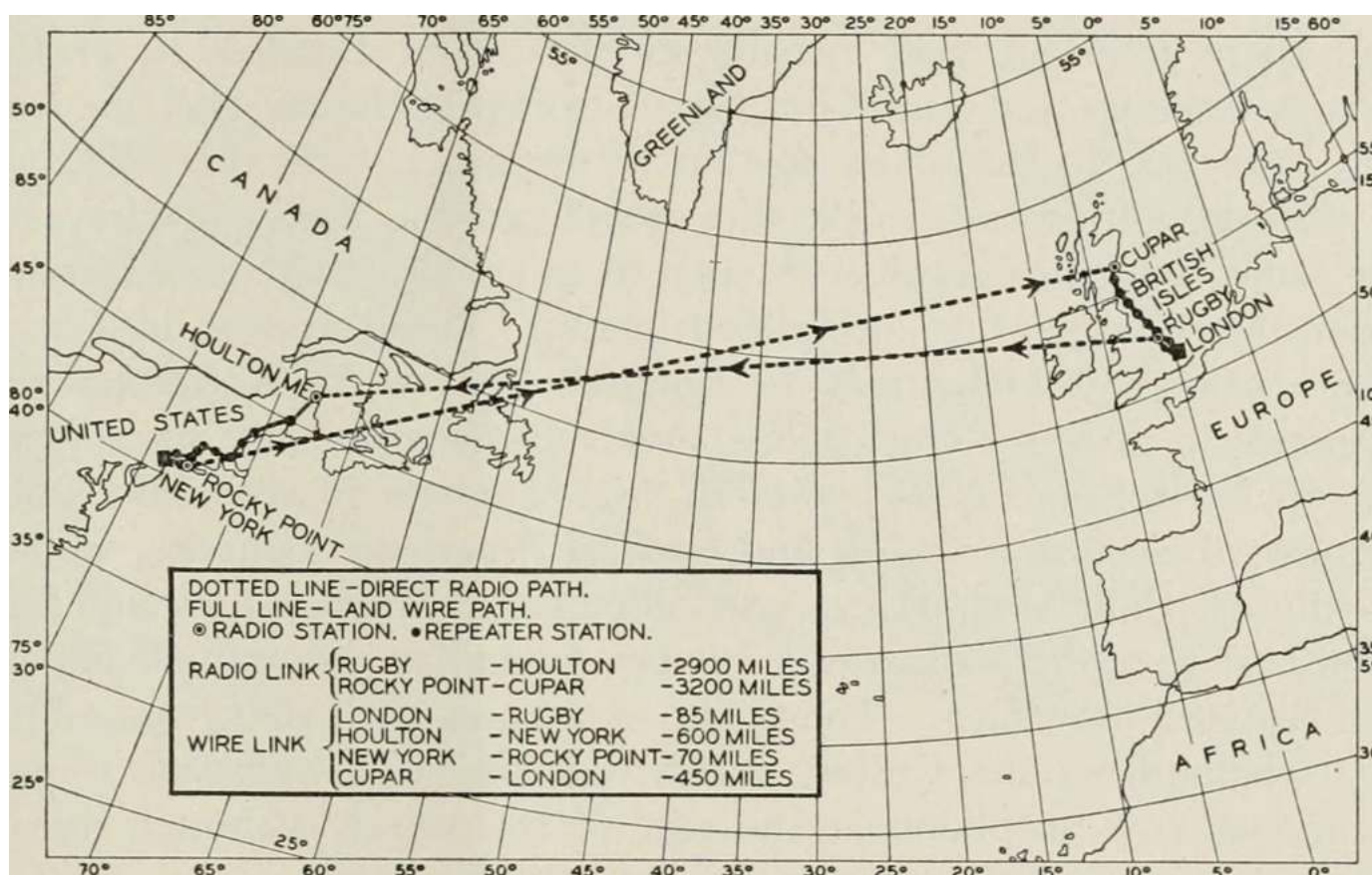
with frequency-shift keying (FSK) and minimum-shift keying (MSK), was used by the British Navy for transmitting messages to submerged submarines. Criggion radio station acted as a reserve. The GBR transmitter was shut down on 1 April 2003 and was replaced by a new one at the Skelton transmitting station.

In 1927, a second transmitter was installed to initiate the first transatlantic commercial telephone service; linking New York and London on 60 kHz using single-sideband modulation. This transmitter was decommissioned in 1956 and became the time signal transmitter MSF. This new function developed from the decision, in 1951, to use the station to transmit modulated standard frequencies for scientific reference purposes. In 1972 these transmissions were consolidated onto the present frequency of 60 kHz and a further reference, that of a time signal, was added. In 1977 this took the form of the rolling slow code in use until April 2007, when BT's contract to transmit the time signal also passed to VT Communications, using their Anhorn radio station in Cumbria.

The aerial system at the VLF transmitter existed between 1926 and 2004 and consisted of twelve 250 metre (820 ft) high, guyed steel-framework masts insulated against ground and carrying an aerial wire. This wire was mainly destroyed by

heavy iceloads in the winter of 1940. After the shutdown of GBR, the facility was only used for transmitting the MSF time signal. Therefore, eight of the twelve masts were obsolete and demolished on the night of 19 June 2004 to 20 June 2004.

A trial transmission of the LORAN-C navigation system was run at the station from June 2005 until March 2007. The remaining four 'tall' masts were demolished on 2 August 2007. The site is now being developed into a large new housing estate named Houlton, the first homes of which were occupied in December 2017. The power and transmission buildings, as well as a water tower have been reused as part of Houlton School.



The link below is to a British Pathe film on YouTube.
 The Worlds Greatest Radio Station aka Rugby Wireless Station.

<https://youtu.be/JziSiOZgAXE?feature=shared>

Source: Wikipedia

Photo Credits to:

Antenna Farm - By G-Man at English Wikipedia

Fallen mast - By G-Man at English Wikipedia

Control Panel - David Jones via Flickr

Map - Internet Archive Book Images

It's Meshtastic (Made of plastic)

No, it's not a new Barbie movie !!

I was browsing through Ringway Manchester's YT channel when this popped up. Apparently it's a bit of a thing for using non-licensed 868Mhz for a text based comms network (a 'Mesh') with a cheap micro controller board, and power supply. Ebay etc are awash with these boards. (but largely out of stock) After purchasing you can download the Meshtastic app, flash the hardware via USB cable, pair it (bluetooth) with a mobile phone/tablet which acts as a handy power source, a keyboard and screen. No cellular connection is required. This is radio to radio direct, albeit line of sight.

From the website:

Meshtastic is a project that enables you to use inexpensive LoRa radios as a long range off-grid communication platform in areas without existing or reliable communications infrastructure. This project is 100% community driven and open source.

Features

- Long range (254km record by kboxlabs)
- No phone required for mesh communication
- Decentralized communication - no dedicated router required
- Encrypted communication
- Excellent battery life
- Send and receive text messages between members of the mesh
- Optional GPS based location features
- And more.....



How it works

Meshtastic utilizes LoRa, a long-range radio protocol, which is widely accessible in most regions without the need for additional licenses or certifications, unlike HAM radio operations. These radios are designed to rebroadcast messages they receive, forming a mesh network. This setup ensures that every group member, including those at the furthest distance, can receive messages. Depending on the settings employed, the Meshtastic mesh network can support up to 100 devices concurrently. Additionally, Meshtastic radios can be paired with a single phone, allowing friends and family to send messages directly to your specific radio. It's important to note that each device is capable of supporting a connection from only one user at a time.



For those of you familiar with Arduino micro-controller boards you may recognise the ESP32 chipset used on the board that allows for bluetooth, and wifi, though wifi is not necessary here. The nRF52 is another slightly more efficient chip, or the RP2040 of Rasberry Pi fame. The origins of this come from the conversion from analogue to digital TV when the 800Mhz band was released from TV to be used in a huge variety of applications. The 'Digital Dividend' as per an Ofcom report in 2010. Alarms, Radio Mics, Data sensors of all types, RFID's etc, allowing low power consumption radio packets of data to be sent. In the EU and UK the frequencies 863 -868Mhz are allocated.

Why bother?

Well let's say you have a group in an Amateur Radio Club. Once everyone is 'meshed in' then messages can be relayed around the group. It's off grid and encrypted. An old phone, or tablet/laptop with the App on it works well, or the small OLED screen on the device can be read (much like the old pagers) as long as there's a battery available for power. The buttons allow you to scroll the screen.

Apart from the fun aspect, which is the main driver, there are a few comments about mainstream comms outages. Perhaps topical at the moment given that the Houthis are considering cutting the undersea cables that run past their coastline connecting Europe with the Far East. It seems you just need a decent sized boat, a rope with a hook on it and a hacksaw! (YT 'What's going on with shipping' channel) Actually Ofcom and other agencies have expressed some concern over use by the usual suspects bearing in mind that it's encrypted comms. For us licensed Ham's the encryption can be turned off to keep within the rules.

There's a fine chap who is 3d printing a case (see below) that includes a decent SMA connector for a small WiFi style antenna, and a battery case inside so that it will stand alone. In one example he has one device in his shack, connected to an old tablet. Another in his loft as a node, with a small Yagi as antenna. His very own repeater. And a third for out and about. He can send a text message from the shack, relayed to the loft node, and out to any other devices within range. Those devices can relay on to others in the area and so on.

Conclusion

Some of you will already know about all this I'm sure, but it is clearly gaining in popularity. The Heltec boards are in short supply and most sites seem to run out of stock very quickly. Also development and features continue to grow. Better antennas, relay nodes for blind spots hooked up to small solar panels, self-contained packs with battery and keypad, and so on.



Photo courtesy of: Chris Ridley @IKB3D
Case available from: www.ikb3d.co.uk

This is a thumbnail sketch of this but of course there's a wealth of info on the net for those of you who would like to know more. 'The Comms Channel' is a good UK one, plus several more.

Myself, I'd like to get one when they come available just for happy tinkering.

Maybe a CDARS Mesh?

Mark M7EFR

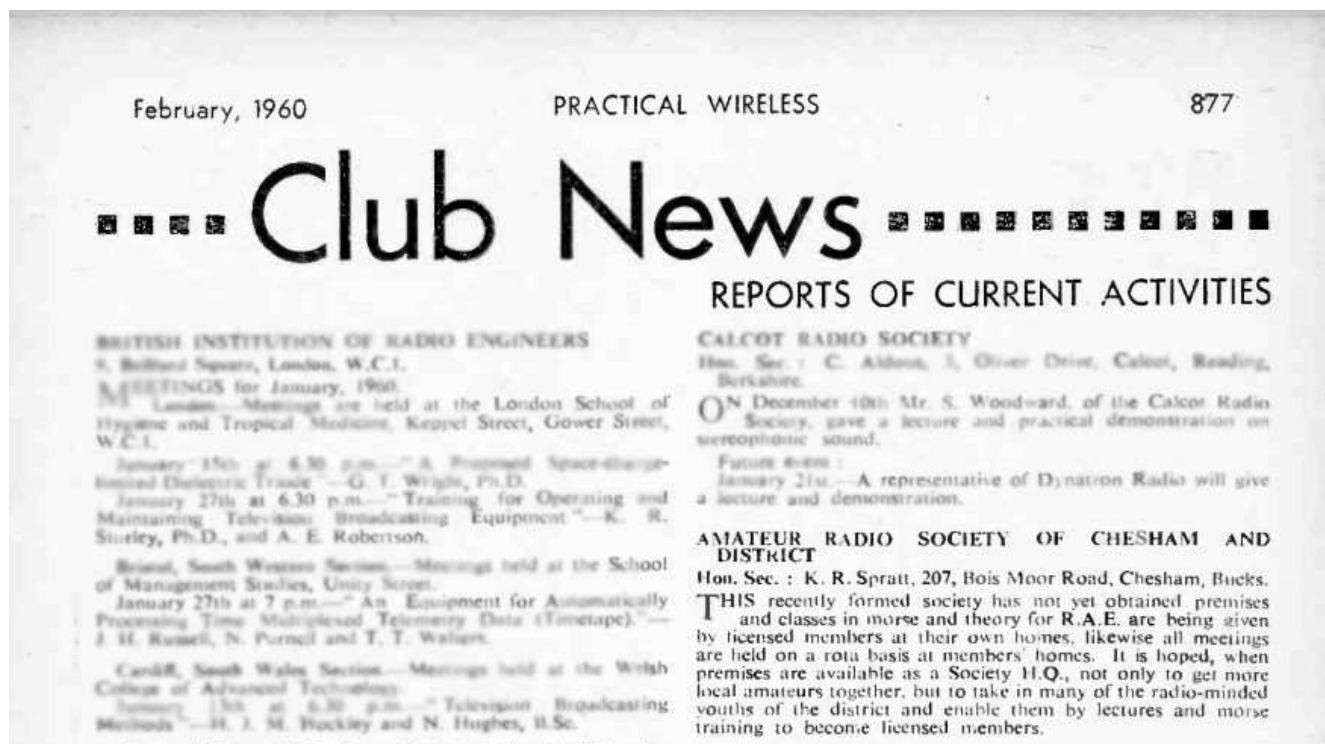
Ed: A possible topic for a 4th Wednesday at the hall. Watch for updates !

Photos copyright R. Fellows/CDARS and Chris Ridley/IKB3D.co.uk

From The Archives

After seeing the newspaper article submitted by Malcolm in the January edition of our club's newsletter I decided to go through the Practical Wireless archives looking for references to our club. It was a slow process in part due to me getting distracted by the adverts and construction articles.

The first reference I found was February 1960:



By April 1962 membership had increased, three members had passed their RAE exam and there was a new honorary secretary:





The club has now found premises which need redecorating:



The local newspaper reporter must have visited the radio demonstration mentioned in the above cutting as the cutting below references the newspaper article that Malcom found. I'm intrigued by the last paragraph which mentions a 2m local link and 2nd transmitter site:



By February 1963 there are 3 meetings per week and membership is increasing:



This is the last reference I could find for our club. There is a new honorary secretary and I guess the new committee were less publicity orientated as there are no more entries for our club.



While searching the archive I came across an entry for Northampton Short-Wave Radio Club which is now the Northampton Radio Club; the cutting is from the February 1958 edition of PW. Note the annual membership fee is 7/6d which is 37.5p in decimal currency. In today's prices that is somewhere between £7 and £11 depending on which inflation index you use, either way a bargain for an annual membership fee.

NORTHAMPTON SHORT-WAVE RADIO CLUB (G3GWB)
 Hon. Sec.: S. F. Berridge (G3ITW), 20, Ethel Street, Northampton.

AT the A.G.M. the following officers were elected: President: B. Sykes (G2HCG); Chairman: I. C. Millar; Vice-chairman: V. R. Hartopp; Treasurer: B. Cadd; Hon. Secretary: S. F. Berridge (G3ITW); Committee Member: A. T. Shrewsbury (G3KAN). Certain of the club rules have been amended and copies of the revised rules are being distributed to all members. Although the club is in a healthy financial position, the annual subscription has been increased to 7s. 6d. (half rate for those under 18) in view of extra expenditure foreseen. Meetings will continue to be held each Friday at the club rooms, Allen's Pram Works, 8, Duke Street, Northampton, from 7 p.m. onwards until the first Friday in April, 1958, inclusive.

Acknowledgement:

1. David Gleason and his team for scanning historical magazines – the source of these news cuttings.
2. Don Field, editor of Practical Wireless, for giving permission to reproduce the cuttings in our newsletter.

Peter 2E0PTH

Amateur Radio License Changes Go Live!

As of 21st February 2024, following the consultation in 2023 Ofcom, after carefully considering representations made in response to the December proposals, have decided to proceed with amending the amateur radio licence, with some modifications in light of the submissions they received. The current changes, as of their publication of December 2023, are given below.

Roger M7RMF

Phase 1 changes – new call sign rules and greater flexibility.

We plan for the new terms and conditions and following changes to come into effect when we have completed the licence variation process. This is planned for February 2024. Under our new policies, and subject to the licence variation consultation and decision process, we plan to introduce the following changes:

Call signs and suffixes

- The use of Regional Secondary Locators (RSLs) will become optional, removing the mandatory requirements for RSLs from the licence. If you wish to continue using one, you are able to do so, and they remain a valid call sign format. For licensees using a '2' format call sign, it will remain mandatory to insert an RSL.
- If you are a Foundation or Full licensee, you will be able to use the RSL 'E' in your call sign if operating in England, if you wish.
- You will no longer be required to apply for an NoV to your licence if you wish to use a 'special' RSL, when designated by Ofcom.
- We will amend the licence so licensees can use any suffix, so long as the station remains identifiable. It's important to note that suffixes fall under the Wireless Telegraphy (Content of Transmissions) Regulations.
- New applicants will only be allowed to hold one personal licence (excluding any Club licence).

Power levels and airborne use

- Foundation licensees will be able to transmit at 25 Watts PEP and Intermediate licensees at 100 Watts PEP, in bands where the Full licence currently permits operation at 400 Watts PEP. Full licensees will be able to transmit at 1000 Watts PEP in bands where amateur radio has a primary allocation.
- All licensees will be able to transmit airborne in primary amateur radio bands. There is a maximum power limit of 500mW EIRP.

Enabling more flexibility within the licence.

- Many Notices of Variation (NoV) will be embedded into the licence terms and conditions, so a NoV will not be needed for some activities which currently require an NoV. This includes the deployment of some beacons, repeaters, and gateways as detailed below.
- As a licensee you will be able to allow unlicensed individuals to use your radio equipment under direct supervision. You will remain responsible for ensuring they comply with your licence conditions.
- The rules on remote and unattended operation will be updated. As well as this, Foundation and Intermediate licensees will be able to use the internet for remote control operation...
- For most repeaters, beacons and gateways you will no longer require an NoV. Licensees will have to carry out an interference assessment to prove that they have minimised the risk of interference to other users. For powers above 5W, a call sign must be obtained from the RSGB.
- A new Data Station mode of operation will be introduced. This is to allow the authorisation of a wide variety

of other data systems, mainly machine-to-machine operations. This provision will permit the following types of operation under the licence; APRS, UIView/Packet, data/trunk links, and RF mesh networks.

- As a Foundation licensee, you will be able to build your own equipment and access the 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz band. There is a maximum transmit power of 2 Watts in these bands.
- We will align various terms and conditions with other licences that Ofcom issues, simplifying many of the conditions, removing unnecessary complexity and making them clearer. We will also remove several provisions from the licence that are not required for spectrum management purposes.

Phase 2: Changes to new intermediate call signs, SES rules and restrictions on the number of call signs an individual may hold will be implemented later in 2024.

We plan for these changes, which require modification to our licensing platform (or some other Ofcom action) to be implemented in 2024. Should the timings change, we will provide an update.

- We will cease issuing the '2' series of call signs for Intermediate licensees and will instead issue 'M8' and 'M9' call signs. Existing holders of '2' series call signs will be able to transfer their call sign to the new M8 and M9 format at the same time. Although we will encourage this, this will be voluntary. For those who continue using a '2' format call sign, you will have to continue to input an RSL into your call sign.
- Simplified the rules around Special Event Stations will be introduced, enabling a more flexible authorisation. We plan to fully automate the process, resulting in a quicker response for licensees.
- We will place restrictions upon the number of call signs an individual can hold. For personal licences, this will be limited to one in line with our decision to only allow radio amateurs to hold only one personal licence.
- For Full (Club) licences, you will be able to start applying for additional call signs (up to 5).

Note: Powers over 25 Watts will still require an NoV.

Phase 3: New licensing platform required.

We plan for these changes to be implemented later in the 2024/2025 financial year, unless otherwise stated. We will provide updates should this change.

- For existing licensees, once we have implemented the new licensing platform, we will look to revoke any lower-class, or duplicate, licences in phase 3. When you progress to the next licence class, your previous licence will be revoked. If you already hold multiple licences, you can either surrender them now or Ofcom will contact you at a later date to do so.
- We will be updating our mechanisms for online revalidation as part of our Licensing Platform Evolution.
- As a licensee, in the future you will be able to change your call sign periodically. This will be limited to once every 5 years to maintain identification of a station.
- From the time the new licensing platform is launched, new applicants will be able to choose from any available call sign when applying for a licence on the online portal. We will also allow the re-issue of old call signs after a 5 year 'cooling-off' period at this time.

Contest Corner

March - HF

Day	Date (2024)	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Mon	04 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC DATA
Sat-Sun	09-10 Mar	1000-1000	Commonwealth Contest
Wed	13 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC CW
Mon	18 Mar	2000-2130	RSGB FT4 Contest
Thu	28 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC SSB

March - VHF

Day	Date (2024)	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Sat-Sun	02-03 Mar	1400-1400	March 144 432MHz
Tue	05 Mar	1900-1955	144MHz FMAC
Tue	05 Mar	2000-2230	144MHz UKAC
Wed	06 Mar	1700-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	06 Mar	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Tue	12 Mar	1900-1955	432MHz FMAC
Tue	12 Mar	2000-2230	432MHz UKAC
Wed	13 Mar	1700-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	13 Mar	1900-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	14 Mar	2000-2230	50MHz UKAC
Tue	19 Mar	2000-2230	1.3GHz UKAC
Thu	21 Mar	2000-2230	70MHz UKAC
Tue	26 Mar	1930-2230	SHF UKAC

April - HF

Day	Date (2024)	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Sat-Sun	06-07 Apr	1200-1200	FT4 International Activity Day
Mon	08 Apr	1900-2030	80m CC CW
Wed	17 Apr	1900-2030	80m CC SSB
Thu	25 Apr	1900-2030	80m CC DATA
Sat-Sun	27-28 Apr	1200-1200	UKEI DX CW Contest
Mon	29 Apr	1900-2030	RSGB FT4 Contest

April - VHF

Day	Date (2024)	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Tue	02 Apr	1800-1855	144MHz FMAC
Tue	02 Apr	1900-2130	144MHz UKAC
Wed	03 Apr	1700-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	03 Apr	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Tue	09 Apr	1800-1855	432MHz FMAC
Tue	09 Apr	1900-2130	432MHz UKAC
Wed	10 Apr	1700-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	10 Apr	1900-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	11 Apr	1900-2130	50MHz UKAC
Tue	16 Apr	1900-2130	1.3GHz UKAC
Thu	18 Apr	1900-2130	70MHz UKAC
Tue	23 Apr	1830-2130	SHF UKAC
Sat-Sun	27-28 Apr	1400-1400	MGM Contest

2024 Club (Team) Contests

Note: Contests in Bold are Sat or Sat-Sun Contests

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time UTC</u>	<u>Contest Name</u>	<u>Sections</u>	<u>Ch'ship</u>
2-3 Mar	1400-1400	Mar 144/432MHz	O, 6O, SF, SO & 6S (6hr option)	CDARS
4 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC Data	100W-A, 10W-A, 100W-U, 10W-U	NRC
13 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC CW	100W-A, 10W-A, 100W-U, 10W-U	NRC
28 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC SSB	100W, 10W	NRC
8 Apr	2000-2130	80m CC CW	100W-A, 10W-A, 100W-U, 10W-U	NRC
17 Apr	2000-2130	80m CC SSB	100W, 10W	NRC
25 Apr	2000-2130	80m CC Data	100W-A, 10W-A, 100W-U, 10W-U	NRC
4 May	1400-2200	432MHz Trophy	O, SF	CDARS
4-5 May	1400-1400	432MHz ,, 245GHz	O, SF	
5 May	800-1400	10GHz Trophy	O, SF	CDARS
12 May	900-1200	70MHz CW	AO, AR & AL	
13 May	1900-2030	80m CC SSB	100W, 10W	NRC
18-19 May	1400-1400	144MHz May	O, 6O, SF, SO & 6S (6hr option)	CDARS
19 May	1100-1500	1st 144MHz B-packers	5B, 25H	Solo
22 May	1900-2030	80m CC Data	100W-A, 10W-A, 100W-U, 10W-U	NRC
30 May	1900-2030	80m CC CW	100W-A, 10W-A, 100W-U, 10W-U	NRC
9 June	900-1300	2nd 144MHz B-packers	5B, 25H	Solo
10 Jun	1900-2030	80m CC Data	100W-A, 10W-A, 100W-U, 10W-U	NRC
15-16 Jun	1400-1400	50MHz Trophy	O, 6O, SF, SO & 6S (6hr option)	CDARS
19 Jun	1900-2030	80m CC CW	100W-A, 10W-A, 100W-U, 10W-U	NRC
23 Jun	900-1200	50MHz CW	AO, AR & AL	
27 Jun	1900-2030	80m CC SSB	100W, 10W	NRC
1 Jul	1900-2030	80m CC CW	100W-A, 10W-A, 100W-U, 10W-U	NRC
6-7 Jul	1400-1400	VHF NFD	O, R, L, M, MS, FSO & FSR	
7 Jul	1100-1500	3rd 144MHz B-packers	5B, 25H	Solo

For sale and wanted

If anyone has anything for sale, or looking for that elusive item, then this is the place, photo's and descriptions will help, email me at cdarsnews@gmail.com



3 x 2 way Antenna Switches. Available individually or multiple. Sold as seen. Offers. Contact Bryan M01HY. bryanpage1@btinternet.com



1 x 3 way Antenna Switch. Sold as seen. Offers.. Contact Bryan M01HY. bryanpage1@btinternet.com

Kanga QRP ATU. Sold as seen. Offers Contact Bryan M01HY. bryanpage1@btinternet.com



Loop A

Loop B

Loop C

Antenna Loop - The loop antenna is supposed to cover 40m-10m, I've replaced the motor and added another switch box, either can be used. Angie made a waterproof cover to enable it to be used outside. Pictures marked Loop-A, B and C are sold as one unit. Sold as seen. Offers. Contact Bryan M01HY. bryanpage1@btinternet.com

Dates For Your Diary



Below are a number of dates for special event weekends that take place through the year. A chance to get some ‘special’ callsigns in the log.

Airfields on the Air - Organised by RAFARS - 6th/7th April 2024.

International Marconi Day (GB4IMD)- Organised by Cornish RAC - April 27th 2024

Mills on the Air - Organised by Denby Dale RS - 11th/12th May 2024.
(CDARS at Brill Windmill tbc)

Islands on the Air - Organised by IOTA Management & RSGB - 27th/28th July 2024.

Railways on the Air - Organised by Bishop Auckland RAC - 28th/29th September 2024.

Listed below are dates of RSGB, UK and International contests for 2024.

ARRL Phone DX Contest - 2nd/3rd March 2024

ARRL Digital DX Contest - 1st/2nd June 2024

Practical Wireless QRP Contest - 8th/9th June 2024

UK Six Metre Group Summer Contest - 1st/2nd June 2024.

VHF NFD - 6th/7th July 2024. *(CDARS at Wiggington tbc)*

SSB NFD - 7th/8th September *(CDARS at Wiggington tbc).*

CQWW RTTY Contest - 26th/29th September 2024

CQWW DX SSB Contest - 26th/27th October 2024.

CQWW DX CW Contest - 23th/24th November 2024.

ARRL 10m DX Contest - 14th/15th December 2024

Please double check dates, start/end times etc in good time prior to the event.

Radio Rally Dates.

Full details of the events are available at: g4gra.org.uk/All.html

March 2024

2nd - Lagan Valley ARS Annual Rally

3rd - Exeter Radio and Electronics Rally

17th - Pencoed & District ARC Radio Rally

17th - Callington Radio & Electronics Rally

17th - Grantham ARC Radio & Electronics Rally

24th - Ripon & District ARS Spring Rally

24th - Dover ARC Rally



April 2024

20th - Yeovil ARC 38th QRP Convention

21st - NARSA Exhibition (Blackpool)

21st - Cambridge Repeater Group Rally

May 2024

5th - Lough Erne ARC 40th Annual Radio Rally

19th - Dartmoor Spring Radio Rally

26th - Durham & District ARC Radio Rally

(All information courtesy of g4gra.org.uk)