

CDARS.

February 2025

CHESHAM & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Raynet at Tring Christmas Festival

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



Memories of 2024

News

CDARS AGM Full Report

Regulars

- *Dates For Your Diary
- *Radio Rally Dates
- *Contest Results

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/>

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Cover: Courtesy CDARS and members.

Chairman - Dave Keston (G8FMC)
- Guy Plunkett (M0GUY)
- Roger Fellows (2E0TGU)

Secretary - Malcolm Appleby (G3ZNU)
- John Hall (G0ODQ)

Treasurer - Matt Whitchurch (M1DTG)
- Peter Holliday (2E0PTH)

All the above are members of the committee and can be contacted on cdars-committee@googlegroups.com

Newsletter Editor - Roger Fellows (2E0TGU) newsletter submissions to: cdarsnews@gmail.com

Welcome

Welcome to the February 2025 edition of the CDARS Newsletter. This edition is my twelfth, a full years worth, since taking over the mantle from Bryan M0IHY. When Bryan launched the new look some 18 months ago it became more of a digital magazine rather than a newsletter. Maybe not quite to RadCom or Practical Wireless standard though.

In that time we have covered many different items from VHF Field day and Mills on the Air at Brill to smaller items such as small electronics projects. Sometimes it has been a bit last minute to fill the pages but as always our club members seem to pull something out of the hat.



Roger 2E0TGU

This year it would be great to see more of 'your' articles in the newsletter. It's not always easy to explain or even show other members your projects or idea's at our meetings, either at The Golden Eagle or at Ashley Green Hall. So why not drop an email over and have it in the next issue. It doesn't need to be a proffessional submission. Some words and some pictures would be all thats needed. As an example see Paul 2E0VPS's article this month for inspiration.

After all, this is your newsletter, I just put it all together.

Just a gentle reminder before I finish, you will see there is the AGM report on page 11, this means that annual club memberships are now due. Payment is best by bank transfer if possible. For details contact either Matt M1DTG or Malcolm G3ZNU.

Thats all from me. Have a great month on the 'waves'.

Roger 2E0TGU.

DID YOU KNOW?....

.....Vatican Radio broadcast it's message to the world using a 150ft long, 90ft tall, 18 element log-periodic antenna operating from 3.85 Mhz to 16 Mhz. The antenna is located 11 miles North of Vatican City at the Santa Maria di Galeria transmitter site.

The antenna is the largest log - periodic in the world.

Chairmans Ramble

February is almost here, there are dire weather warnings and Christmas seems an age ago. I think time goes by very much faster when you get fairly ancient like me?

The AGM happened on Wed 22nd Jan, actually in person at the hall. After 2 years as Chairman it is the first time I have chaired an AGM or committee meeting for real, other than on Zoom, so it did seem a bit strange. We had 2 potential new members attend the meeting at the hall. I hope they did not find the AGM too boring? There was some chat time after though, to get acquainted and explain what we do. I think Malcolm has a summary report elsewhere in this issue. The full minutes will be circulated to all members via email.



Dave G8FMC

May I reiterate 2 points in particular that I mentioned at the AGM. Roger would dearly like to see some more 'copy' from members for inclusion into the News Letter. Professional articles not required, just some notes and pictures of any projects and/or experiences that may be of interest to others. And secondly, we (the Committee), are looking for ideas for meetings at the Hall this year. Please pass any ideas/thoughts onto Malcolm our Secretary for consideration.(malcolm@luthien.co.uk)

My 'Remote 70cm PA' project seems to be working quite well and will be given another outing for the club AFS 70cm Contest on Sunday 2nd Feb. Also later in the month for the regular UKAC. Changing the mains light to an LED one is way down on my priorities!

The EV charger 'Install' was all lined up for Fri 17th Jan; but there is a supply issue on the specific electrical bits needed! Phil popped into his supplier to pick up the necessary bits on the Thursday, only to find that there is a national shortage. It seems that after the government pressing the car manufacturers for some time to sell EV's, that is now actually picking up. So EV sales are increasing and this also means sales of EV Chargers, which do seem to be available. The supply of electrical ancillaries needed to install said EV chargers seems to be lagging behind somewhat! Oh dear, 'twas ever thus!

I wonder if Mr Trump will put swinging taxes on Ham Radio gear from Japan? Our USA cousins might suddenly find that their new Yeasu, Kenwood or Icom box of delight might cost a lot more? Watch this space. We always thought that the guys over the pond earned more than us, had bigger gardens than us (with MUCH bigger antennas in them) & got radio's cheaper than us? Maybe that is about to change?

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

Contests/Operating

The UKAC result for 2024 (under the CDARS banner)

As predicted we kept Hereford at bay and got the Runner-up position for the final results. In fact it rather seemed that Hereford saw 'the writing on the wall' and practically threw in the towel for the last couple of months. We ended up 2732 pts with Hereford 2540 pts. Thanks to all those that contributed (a total of 21) and take a pat on the back.

We got a nice write-up from the adjudicator Pete G4CLA:

"The battle for second place was very close run. Previous winners, Hereford ARS, held the position for most of the year with Chesham & DARS close behind. However, in a thrilling finish, Chesham & DARS surged ahead in the final months to claim second place."

Also Roger M7RMF got a Certificate for 'Third placed Foundation licensee.'

The UKAC's for 2025 (under the Northampton banner)

Under our reciprocal agreement with Northampton, first established in 2019, we have moved the 'Banner' under which we contribute our scores, back and forth a few times. For 2025 Northampton are taking the lead; so all contributions please tag to Northampton Radio Club. Our ranks of 'Associate Members' has expanded to include 3 from AVR5 plus a few others. For 2025 we have the 3 lead contributors from the Hinckley Club who asked John G4CZB if they could join our group. They are within the 80km limit from the Northampton VMP so we are still a 'Local' club. Welcome aboard to; Mark 2E0SBM, Ady G6AD and Dave G1VNB. (If they wish to stay with us when it next comes back to CDARS, we can cope. If we move our VMP to my QTH, it appears that Mark, who is the farthest away, will be 76km from the CDARS VMP, i.e. G8FMC QTHR!)

We made a flying start to the year with no less than 16 on for the first 2m event and 15 on for the first 70cm event. We won both of those comfortably! A couple of reasons for this: Input from our new friends from Hinckley, the Parallel Lines group have migrated to the 'General' clubs, where they will now no doubt cause grief to Northern Fells and Harwell? (They are also on 2,000 pts) So, maybe we can keep this up and win this year? Hereford will no doubt be frantically 'recruiting' extra members?

2024/25 AFS Superleague series:

The three 40m/80m events are over, with interesting results.

The CW event was on Sat 4th Jan: We managed a full team with John G4CZB = 287, M0K (my station operated by new member Marc G0AZS) = 193, Malcolm G3ZNU = 150 and Roger G3MEH = 94.

Roger's logging program cannot cope with the 2 band situation, where one can work a station twice, once on each band. We drafted in Paul G3PSK at short notice to log for Roger. Paul has no previous contest experience & had a 'crash-course' on the N1MM+ logger program just 2 days earlier! Rather less than ideal & we are grateful for the effort from the Roger and Paul team. Marc G0AZS, used to be a keen CW contester, but is about 5 years out of practice. To me I would not have guessed and was quite impressed with how Marc performed, in front of a strange rig etc. See the picture of Marc deep in concentration, copying some fast CW!

Unfortunately there are some amazing CW ops out there, so our team result of 16th out of 49 was very respectable. We do miss you Jeremy!

The Data event was on Sunday 12th January: This is made more complicated by having RTTY and PSK63 as well as the two bands of 40m and 80m. Thus one can work the same station 4 times; once on each mode and each band.

continued

Unfortunately we only managed a team of 3. Results just out:

John G4CZB = 229, Malcolm G3ZNU = 154 and yours truly M0K = 87. This gave a team position of 10/40 and the 2nd placed three man team; good result all things considered.

The final 40m/80m event was SSB on Saturday 18th January:

Our thanks to the adjudicator (John G4CZB) for turning round the results for this so quickly. (I am able to report on it now rather than next month!)

Our team of 4 scored: John G4CZB = 318, Dave M0K (G8FMC) = 248, both on high power, Roger 2E0TGU = 93 (on 40m only) and Dave G1MZD = 57 (with a very compromised antenna and limited time) both on 100W. CDARS came 12/52 which is a very reasonable result. Amazingly we are still hanging onto 3rd place overall, although with a smaller margin; quite gratifying situation.

The final event in the AFS series is the 70cm multi-mode event on Sunday 2nd February. We are hoping to field a full team for this one and hopefully do quite well? We hope to hang on to our 3rd place, but catching Spalding & DARS is unlikely?

Other Contest results:

No other contests to report on this month.

73, Dave K, G8FMC (M0K)



Marc G0AZS operating CW during the CW AFS 40/80m contest.
Marc operated Dave G8FMC's station using Daves contest call M0K.

Marc managed 193 contacts across the two bands.



All About Antenna's - The Monopole

A monopole antenna is a class of radio antenna consisting of a straight rod-shaped conductor, often mounted perpendicularly over some type of conductive surface, called a ground plane. The driving signal from the transmitter is applied, or for receiving antennas the output signal to the receiver is taken, between the lower end of the monopole and the ground plane. One side of the antenna feedline is attached to the lower end of the monopole, and the other side is attached to the ground plane, which is often the Earth. This contrasts with a dipole antenna which consists of two identical rod conductors, with the signal from the transmitter applied between the two halves of the antenna.

The monopole is often used as a resonant antenna. The rod functions as an open resonator for radio waves and oscillates with standing waves of voltage and current along its length. The length of the antenna, therefore, is determined based on the wavelength of the desired radio waves. The most common form is the quarter-wave monopole, in which the antenna length is approximately one quarter of the wavelength of the radio waves. In broadcasting monopole antennas, however, lengths equal to 5/8th wavelength are also popular because in a monopole this length maximizes the power radiated perpendicular to the axis of the radiator, which with a vertical radiator optimizes efficiency for terrestrial broadcast. The monopole antenna was invented in 1895 by radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi; for this reason it is sometimes called the Marconi antenna.

The load impedance of the quarter wave monopole is half that of the dipole antenna or 37.5 ohms.

Common types of monopole antenna are

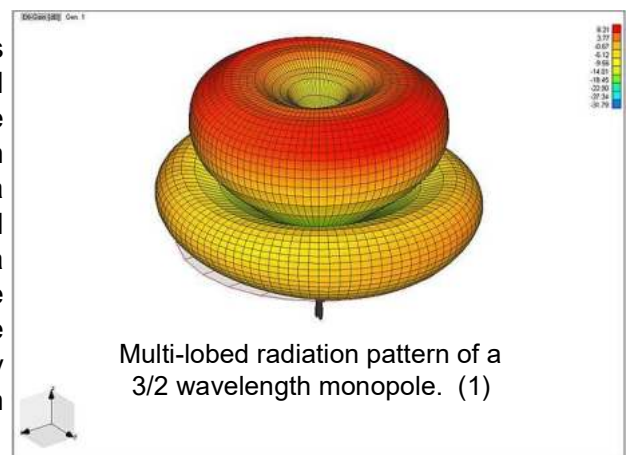
whip - rubber ducky - helical - random wire - umbrella - inverted-L and T-antenna - folded unipole and inverted-F - mast radiator - ground plane antennas

History

The monopole antenna was invented in 1895 and patented in 1896 by radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi during his historic first experiments in radio communication. He began by using dipole antennas invented by Heinrich Hertz consisting of two identical horizontal wires ending in metal plates. He found by experiment that if instead of the dipole, one side of the transmitter and receiver was connected to a wire suspended overhead, and the other side was connected to the Earth, he could transmit for longer distances. For this reason the monopole is also called a Marconi antenna, although Alexander Popov independently invented it at about the same time

Radiation pattern

Like a vertically suspended dipole antenna, a monopole has an omnidirectional radiation pattern: It radiates with equal power in all azimuthal directions perpendicular to the antenna. The radiated power varies with elevation angle, with the radiation dropping off to zero at the zenith on the antenna axis. It radiates vertically polarized radio waves. Since vertical halfwave dipoles must have their center raised at least a quarter wave above the ground, whereas monopoles must be mounted directly on the ground, the monopoles radiation patterns are more greatly affected by resistance in the earth, and the radiation pattern with elevation inherently differs



A monopole can be visualized (right) as being formed by replacing the bottom half of a vertical dipole antenna with a conducting plane (ground plane) at right-angles to the remaining half. If the ground plane is large enough, the radio waves from the remaining upper half of the dipole (a) reflected from the ground plane will seem to come from an image antenna

Gain and input impedance

Because it radiates only into the space above the ground plane, or half the space of a dipole antenna, a monopole antenna over a perfectly conducting infinite ground plane will have a gain of twice (3 dB greater than) the gain of a similar dipole antenna, and a radiation resistance half that of a dipole. Since a half-wave dipole has a gain of 2.19 dBi and a radiation resistance of 73 Ohms, a quarter-wave ($1/4$) monopole will have a gain of $2.19 + 3.0 = 5.2$ dBi and a radiation resistance of about 36.5 Ohms. The antenna is resonant at this length, so its input impedance is purely resistive. The input impedance has capacitive reactance below ($1/4$) and inductive reactance from $1/4$ to $1/2$.

The gains given in this section are only achieved if the antenna is mounted over a perfectly conducting infinite ground plane. With typical artificial ground planes smaller than several wavelengths, the gain will be 1 to 3 dBi lower, because some of the horizontal radiated power will diffract around the plane edge into the lower half space, where it dissipates in the soil. Similarly over a resistive earth ground, the gain will be lower due to power absorbed in the earth.

As the length is increased to approach a half-wavelength – the next resonant length – the gain increases some, to 6.0 dBi. Since at this length the antenna has a current node at its feedpoint, the input impedance is very high. A hypothetical infinitesimally thin antenna would have infinite impedance, but for finite thickness of typical monopoles it is around 800–2,000 Ohms; high, but manageable by feeding through a substantial step-up transformer.

The horizontal gain continues to increase up to a maximum of about 6.6dBi at a length of five-eighths wavelength so this is a popular length for ground wave antennas and terrestrial communication antennas, for frequencies where a larger antenna size is feasible. The input impedance drops to about 40 Ohms at that length. The antenna's reactance is capacitive from $1/2$ to $3/4$ wave.. However, above $5/8$ wave the horizontal gain drops rapidly because progressively more power is radiated at high elevation angles in the second lobe.

Types

For monopole antennas operating at lower frequencies, below 20 MHz, the ground plane is usually the Earth; in this case the antenna is a vertical mast mounted on the ground on an insulator to isolate it electrically from the ground. One side of the feedline is connected to the mast and the other to an Earth ground at the base of the antenna. In transmitting antennas to reduce ground resistance this is often a radial network of buried wires stretching outward from a terminal near the base of the antenna. This design is used for the mast radiator transmitting antennas employed for radio broadcasting in the MF and LF bands. At lower frequencies the antenna mast is electrically short giving it a very small radiation resistance, so to increase efficiency and radiated power capacitively toploaded monopoles such as the T-antenna and umbrella antenna are used.

At VHF and UHF frequencies the size of the ground plane needed is smaller, so artificial ground planes are used to allow the antenna to be mounted above the ground. A common type of monopole antenna at these frequencies for mounting on masts or structures consists of a quarter-wave whip antenna with a ground plane consisting of 3 or 4 wires or rods a quarter-wave long radiating horizontally or diagonally from its base connected to the ground side of the feedline; this is called a ground-plane antenna. At gigahertz frequencies the metal surface of a car roof or airplane body makes a good ground plane, so car cell phone antennas consist of short whips mounted on the roof, and aircraft communication antennas frequently consist of a short conductor in an aerodynamic fairing projecting from the fuselage; this is called a blade antenna.



VHF ground plane antenna (2)

The quarter-wave whip and rubber ducky antennas used with handheld radios such as walkie-talkies and portable FM radios are also monopole antennas. In these portable devices the antenna does not have an effective ground plane, the ground side of the transmitter is just connected to the ground connection on its circuit board. Since the circuit board ground is often smaller than the antenna, the antenna and ground combination may function more as an asymmetrical dipole antenna than a monopole. The hand and body of the person holding them may function as a rudimentary ground plane.

Wireless devices and cell phones use a monopole variant called the inverted-F antenna. The monopole element is bent over parallel to the ground area on the circuit board, so it can be enclosed in the device case; usually the antenna is fabricated of copper foil on the printed circuit board itself. This geometry would give the antenna a very low impedance if it was driven at the base. To improve the impedance match with the feed circuit (typically 50 Ohms impedance) the antenna is shunt fed, the feedline is instead connected to an intermediate point along the element, and the element end is grounded.

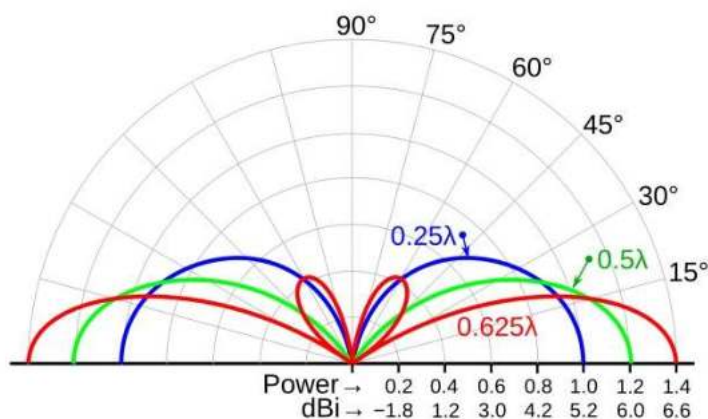
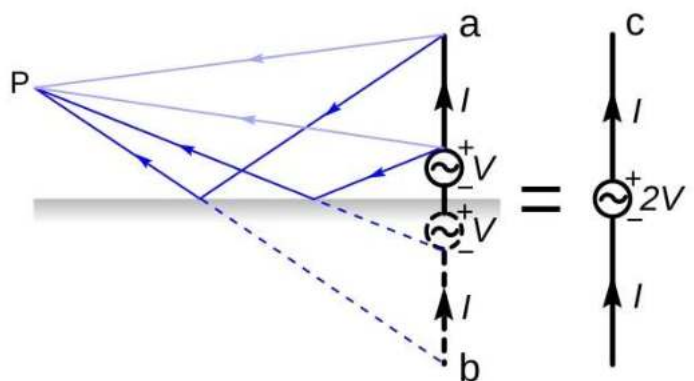


Diagram left showing vertical radiation patterns of ideal monopole antennas over a perfect infinite ground. The distance of the line from the origin at a given elevation angle is proportional to the power density radiated at that angle.(3)

Diagram right showing the monopole antenna has the same radiation pattern over perfect ground as a dipole in free space with twice the voltage (4)



Source: Wikipedia

Photo attributes to:

- 1 CWRU - Own work.
2. F1jmm - Own work
- 3 and 4 - Chetvorno - Own work

CDARS AGM 2025

CDARS AGM – 22nd January 2025

We held our AGM at Ashley Green Memorial Hall on 22nd January, the first time we've held the AGM in-person since before COVID times. 10 members were in attendance, plus 2 potential new members who attended as observers. The meeting was chaired by Dave G8FMC.

Dave gave a report of the club's activities during the past year, which is summarised here:

Membership

- CDARS has had a reasonably successful year with a small increase in membership of both new and experienced (but previously inactive) members.
- Sadly, we lost Bryan M0IHY after a relatively short illness last March. We have been trying to support Angie M6WTL as much as possible during a very difficult time and have managed to sell some of Bryan's higher value items. Malcolm & Dave will be listing a number of the remaining items on eBay and Ham-Radio-Deals soon, as well as listing in the News Letter.

Club Meetings

- Informal meetings at the Golden Eagle each month have proved very popular.
- Formal meetings at Ashley Green Memorial Hall have covered topics including:
 - Coax cable loss measurements
 - Emergency communications (Raynet)
 - Mesh-tastic
 - PZTLog workshop (the club will use this logging program at its events)
- The annual inter-club quiz with AVRS took place in November at The Dog House pub, the usual meeting place for AVRS, and was won by Malcolm G3ZNU. The quiz master was Matt M1DTG with questions set by Gerry G7VFX of AVRS.
- The Bar-B-Q and 'Antenna play' at John G0ODQ's was planned, re-scheduled, then finally cancelled, as we had many members on holiday or otherwise not available. We hope to organise something during the early part of 2025. Keep an eye on the Web site.
- CDARS held its now-annual Christmas Dinner at the Crow's Nest, Tring. 18 members, including guests from AVRS, were in attendance.

Brill Windmill weekend

- We again put on a station at the Brill Windmill in May. The weekend coincided with an almost total blanking of most of the HF bands due to exceptional solar activity just before! Roger M7RMF (now 2E0TGU) hosted a net station on the '145 Alive' activity on the Saturday, which proved very popular. Well done, Roger!

Contests

- VHF Field Day – Wigginton field (first full weekend in July). This year we again entered the MS (multiband, single transmitter) section, but shifted from our previous bands of 6m, 4m & 2m to 2m, 70cm and 23cm. This cunning tactical decision by Malcolm & Dave paid off as we won all 3 bands and were thus overall MS category winners. Thanks to Phil G4FVZ (borrowed from MKARS) & Matt G0XDI for helping the usual suspects to clinch this award. Sadly there is no trophy for this section of VHF Field Day, just a Certificate.

continued

Contests continued

- We did not participate in SSB Field Day this year (first full weekend in September), but a number of members had a good bash on the 2m Trophy contest (which annoyingly is the same weekend)
- As a result of good participation throughout the year, we successfully managed to bag the top spot for the VHF Championship! There IS a Trophy for this which will be presented at the RSGB Convention in October 2025. Well done all.

News Letter

- Roger 2E0TGU continues to produce this every month on time, which we all appreciate very much. Additional articles of any size are always welcome; no need to be a professional writer.

Accounts

After a review of the club's accounts, which show a small surplus for the year, we elected officers and committee members as follows:

Chairman: Dave G8FMC, proposed by Malcolm G3ZNU, seconded by Mark M7EFR

Treasurer: Matt M1DTG, proposed by Dave G8FMC, seconded by Rik G6WIW

Secretary: Malcolm G3ZNU, proposed by Dave G8FMC, seconded by Roger 2E0TGU

Committee members:

Guy M0GUY, proposed by Malcolm G3ZNU, seconded by Dave G8FMC

Peter 2E0PTH, proposed by John G0ODQ, seconded by Rik G6WIW

Roger 2E0TGU, proposed by Malcolm G3ZNU, seconded by Mark M7EFR

John G0ODQ, proposed by Rik G6WIW, seconded by Peter 2E0PTH

We then had a discussion about the idea of registering CDARS as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) – a process that consists of establishing charitable principles for the club and a governing document, essentially based on our existing constitution. We would then apply to the Charities Commission to register our status and wait to see if it can be accepted.

An advantage of going down this path is that we would be a fully-constituted and registered organisation, a status that banks are increasingly looking for when offering bank accounts – in particular banking that is free of charge. Our current bank is about to start charging us, and all other banks we have looked at are taking a similar line. Although these costs are not high, this might change at any time if the banks consider that non-constituted organisations are at a high risk of default.

CIO status also offers liability protection for its Trustees (the committee members) and we might be in a position to apply for grants if we needed funding for charitable projects. The members agreed that the committee should continue to explore this direction, with the final decision to be taken by members at a future meeting.

We then presented trophies to members – look for another article about this in the Newsletter.

Malcolm Appleby G3ZNU
Secretary, CDARS

CDARS AGM Trophy Presentation 2025

AGM 2025 – award of CDARS trophies

At the CDARS AGM held on 22nd January at Ashley Green Memorial Hall the club's trophies were awarded to the following:

Dennis Kind Shield (for services to the club)

This was awarded to Roger G3MEH who, although a member of AVRS, has assisted and supported the club in contest and other matters. He is anticipating moving from the area in the next year and it is a fitting tribute to make this award to him.

G3CLJ CW Cup (for progress and activity on CW)

This was awarded to Marc G0AZS. Mark has recently returned to the hobby after a break but has not lost his Morse skills! We look forward to his future participation in club events and contests.

M0JCQ Rookies' trophy (new member making most progress in the year)

This was awarded to Paul 2E0VPS / G3PSK. During the past year Paul has studied for and passed all three levels of Amateur Radio Examination, and has also taken up the role of invigilator for exams run by the RSGB.

G3XZG Memorial Tankard (at committee's discretion)

The committee awarded this trophy to Dave G8FMC, who was initially reluctant to take over the Chair role. He has risen to the challenge and maintained the club's progress as an active amateur radio force in the area. He has also been key to the club's success in contests during the year, culminating in our winning the AFS section of the VHF Championship



Dave G8FMC with the G3XZG Tankard



Marc G0AZS with the G3CLJ CW Cup

Raynet - A Baptism of Fire!

Having missed the local talks on Raynet recently I was grateful to receive the E mail appealing for help with the Tring Christmas Festival at the end of November. The Festival is quite a big deal. Organised by Tring Together, they close the High Street and cram in 3 stages, a funfair and I don't how many stalls. Thousands crowd in to enjoy the festivities, it can be hard to move.

My interest in amateur radio started about 12 months ago and I'd never taken the 8w Baofeng UV9R Plus out of the house so I felt pretty green. I tested the ear piece on my local repeater the night before as instructed and off I went. About 10 of us met in the car park, many proudly sporting their weathered luminous jackets complete with Raynet writ large. Everyone was similarly equipped with HTs tuned to the repeater in the Raynet event organiser's QTH on the hillside. Members were dispatched to the 4 road closure points, one to the location of the two private ambulances, one to accompany the chap responsible for health and safety and one keeping the log in his nice warm car, the net controller. The Raynet event organiser took me under his wing and I spent most of the event alongside him.

The instruction was given to close the road and the High Street was rapidly transformed. We wandered between the Raynet positions handing out the free meal vouchers for our volunteers, offering comfort breaks and checking all was well. When a child went missing all the exits were informed instantaneously bringing some assurance to the panic whilst they were found. At the far end of the High Street the funfair had set up. It was as noisy and chaotic as you might imagine. There was a huge ride at the road closure, passengers sat in chairs on long chains, the ride extended telescopically, high in the air and span the suspended chairs outward.

Toward the end of the night we offered some respite to our volunteer at the funfair. The Raynet event organiser was called away and I found myself alone with the Marshalls. I could hear some chatter on the HT, an ambulance has been called for, someone was injured some distance from my position. It was hard to make out the details because of the fairground noise. Then from the crowd a young woman emerged, she had $\frac{3}{4}$ shorts on and was pointing to a nasty gash in her shin. I asked her what happened and she said she had collided with a lamp post whilst on the big ride. She was in two minds about whether to go home or wait for medical help. I said she was probably in shock and her decision making may not be reliable, she agreed to have someone look at it and I took to my radio. I contacted the net controller but I could not make myself understood. I think with the fairground noise and my heightened state I was overdriving the cheap hands free. Unfortunately it required a screwdriver to remove it, which I had in my bag, somewhere. This caused further delay whilst the ride loaded up paying passengers again. Fortunately, the Marshall I was with was the brother in law of the chap overseeing health and safety and he had a mobile phone and soon appeared. As did the Raynet event organiser who had deduced I needed help despite my poor communication.



The ambulance arrived, the ride was shut down and it turned out the first ambulance callout was for the passenger sat on the ride in front of my wounded friend and struck the same lamp post! I understand those involved are recovering well.

Reflections? Well I have a lot to learn and I've applied for Raynet membership. Radio is a very powerful tool, communicating instantaneously with a team in a way mobile phones do not. And although a mobile phone saved the day, if the truth had been closer to my attention grabbing headline, with thousands rammed into a small town cellular network I suspect the mobile phone would have been about as much use as at midnight on New Year's Eve.

My thanks to Raynet and all those involved.

Paul 2E0VPS

Contest Calendar for January and February 2025

February - HF

Day	Date (2024)	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Mon	03 Feb	2000-2130	80m CC SSB
Sat	08 Feb	1900-2300	1st 1.8MHz Contest
Wed	12 Feb	2000-2130	80m CC DATA
Thu	20 Feb	2000-2130	80m CC CW
Mon	24 Feb	2000-2130	RSGB 2nd FT4 Contest

February - VHF

Day	Date (2024)	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Sun	02 Feb	900-1300	432MHz AFS
Tue	04 Feb	1900-1955	144MHz FMAC
Tue	04 Feb	2000-2230	144MHz UKAC
Wed	05 Feb	1700-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	05 Feb	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Tue	11 Feb	1900-1955	432MHz FMAC
Tue	11 Feb	1900-1955	432MHz UKAC
Wed	12 Feb	1700-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	12 Feb	1700-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	13 Feb	2000-2230	50MHz UKAC
Tue	18 Feb	2000-2230	1.3GHz UKAC
Thu	20 Feb	1930-2230	70 MHz UKAC
Tue	25 Feb	1930-2230	SHF UKAC

March - HF

Day	Date (2024)	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Mon	03 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC DATA
Sat-Sun	08-09 Mar	1000-1000	Commonwealth Contest
Wed	12 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC CW
Mon	17 Mar	2000-2130	RSGB FT4 Contest
Thu	27 Mar	2000-2130	80m CC SSB

March - VHF

Day	Date (2024)	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Sat-Sun	01-02 Mar	1400-1400	March 144 432MHz
Tue	04 Mar	1900-1955	144MHz FMAC
Tue	04 Mar	2000-2230	144MHz UKAC
Wed	05 Mar	1700-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	05 Mar	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Tue	11 Mar	1900-1955	432MHz FMAC
Tue	11 Mar	2000-2230	432MHz UKAC
Wed	12 Mar	1700-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	12 Mar	1900-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	13 Mar	2000-2230	50MHz UKAC
Tue	18 Mar	2000-2230	1.3GHz UKAC
Thu	20 Mar	2000-2230	70MHz UKAC
Tue	25 Mar	1930-2230	SHF UKAC

Dates For Your Diary



Listed below are dates of RSGB, UK and International contests for 2025.

European Union DX Contest - 1200Z, Feb 1 2025 to 1200Z, Feb 2 2025

CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest - 0000Z, Feb 8 2025 to 2400Z, Feb 9 2025

Dutch PACC Contest - 1200Z, Feb 8th 2025 to 1200Z, Feb 9th 2025

ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW - 0000Z, Feb 15th to 2400Z, Feb 16th 2025

FISTS Sunday Sprint - 0000Z-2359Z, Feb 16th 2025

CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB - 2200Z, Feb 21st 2025 to 2159Z, Feb 23rd 2025

RSGB Commonwealth (BERU) Contest - 1000Z, Mar 8th 2025 to 1000Z, Mar 9th 2025

YOTA Contest - 1000Z-2159Z, Mar 9th 2025

Russian DX Contest - 1200Z, Mar 15th 2025 to 1200Z, Mar 16th 2025

BARTG HF RTTY Contest 0200Z, Mar 15th 2025 to 0200Z, Mar 17th 2025

CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB - 0000Z, Mar 29th 2025 to 2400Z, Mar 30th 2025

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

Full details and more contests at: <https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html>

Radio Rally Dates.

Full details of the events are available in Radcom & the RSGB website.

February 2025

9th - Mid Cheshire Amateur Radio Society RadioActive Rally, Nantwich Civic Hall, Market Street, Nantwich

23rd - Red Rose Winter Rally Mather Hall, Mather Lane, Leigh

March 2025

2nd - Exeter Radio Rally, The Kenn Centre, EX6 7UE.

23rd - Dover Amateur Radio Club Rally, St. Radigunds Community Centre, Poulton Close, Dover CT17 0HL

23rd - Calloington Radio & Electronica Rally, Town Hall, New Road, Callington, Cornwall. PL17 7BD

April 2025

13th - NARSA Blackpool Rally Norbreck Castle Exhibition Centre, Blackpool FY2 9AA

27th - Cambridge Repeater Group Rally, Foxton Village Hall, Hardman Road, Foxton, Cambs CB22 6RN.

August 2025

10th - Flight Refuelling Hamfest. *(Further Details to Follow)*



(All information courtesy of Radcom & the RSGB website)