

CHELMSFORD AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER No. 238

December 1985

NEXT MEETING - SATELLITE TELEVISION

Sorry about the last-minute change of programme last month. John Donnithorne BSc., AMIEE., GBMKX, was called away on business just before the Newsletter was due to go out. Luckily we were able to obtain the alternative programme at very short notice even though it was being planned for a later date. Anyway, enough of the abject apologies...

This month, on 3 December, we have arranged for John to present his live demonstration of satellite TV (not just reception, as I mistakenly said last month). As part of this, he plans to have a working earth-station set up, with which it is possible to receive signals from the satellite TV networks. If we could afford the link fees, we could even inject our own signals into the network... But I suspect that our subscription proceeds don't stretch that far!

John says, "Electronic technology has progressed rapidly within the last few years to bring satellite television within reach of the masses. The illustrated lecture will describe the evolution of 'domestic' satellite television from its conception in the early nineteen-eighties to the multi-million pound industry it is today. Whilst the generation of programmes is outside the scope of this lecture, their route to the transmitter station and subsequent processing into an R.F. signal suitable for transmission to the satellite will be covered. The significant attenuation to which the signals are subjected and the consequences this has in terms of transmission and reception equipment will be shown. The equipment necessary for processing the received signals will be on display and its operation will be described. Finally, what does the future hold? Come along and hear my views of what progress is likely in the next few years."

As usual, the meeting is on the first Tuesday of the month, starting at 7:30pm in the Marconi College, Arbour Lane, Chelmsford.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 3 Dec. - Satellite Television, GBMKX.
- 7 Jan. - Film Evening.
- 18 Jan. - R.S.G.B. Presidential Inauguration.
- 19 Jan. - 'Snowman' DF Event.
- 4 Feb. - B.N.O.S.
- 5 Mar. - Mobile Radio, G3YTE.

LAST MEETING - "MARCONI: HIS LIFE AND WORK" - Pt. I

Last month Mr J. S. Wood, of Marconi Communication Systems Limited, gave the first of a series of lectures he has prepared on the life of Marconi and the early history of radio.

More fully, the lecture was entitled *The Young Man with the Tin Box - An Essay in Knowing the Right People*. It traced the early progress of Marconi as a young man for about ten years, from the time he arrived in Britain with his mother in 1896, aged 22, up to the beginnings of the commercial success of "Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company".

The major factors contributing to Marconi's success in the radio business were his wide range of personal contacts and his luck in meeting the right people at the right time at a number of critical points in his career.

The first of these came through his family. His mother, Annie Jamieson, was Irish and well connected in London (her family being well known in the whiskey trade). She provided him with introductions to people such as William Preece, Chief Electrician in the British Post Office, who allowed him to use BPO workshops for his experiments, encouraged him, collaborated with him in giving lecture tours and demonstrations, and even lent him an assistant, George Kemp, who he was to keep for some 35 years!

Mr Wood went on to describe, with plenty of rather tongue-in-cheek humour, Marconi's continued development and refinement of his techniques, gradually extending his range from a mile or two in early 1897, to 34 miles across the Channel to France in March 1899, to across the Atlantic in December 1901. By February 1902, while returning to Britain across the Atlantic regular and reliable communication over 1500 miles was possible.

This was a period of intense commercial and scientific competition, in which Marconi gained a virtually unchallengable position after the registration of his Master Patent no. 7777 applied for in April 1900.

This was not just a history lecture, either. Mr Wood showed us numerous slides, despite his main collection being in use elsewhere, and even had examples of components and circuit diagrams of the period for us to inspect.

It was clear from the round of applause at the end that we had all enjoyed the talk very much. My only regret is that we are going to have to wait until next year to hear the next instalment! I am sure you will all join me in thanking Mr Wood for his efficient, informative, and entertaining presentation.

R.S.G.B. PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

On Saturday, 18 January 1986, Willy McClintock is to be installed as RSGB President. His inauguration is to be held at Furze Hill, Margaretting.

Advance information:- Tickets £4 each - 3 course menu.

Tickets available from RSGB or through the Club.

Full details should be in the December RadCom.

Furze Hill is a rather smart restaurant, so to have a meal there for only £4 must be good value. There will be over 100 people present, including most of the RSGB Council. We have been planning a Club Social Event for some time, and this seems an ideal opportunity.

If you are interested, please give your names to the Committee at the December meeting.

FILM EVENING

The January meeting is the traditional Film Night. This time (I mean, next year...) it will be on 7 January 1986. Already, the Committee have got a number of items arranged for the programme, and there are more in the pipeline.

The star billing for the main feature has to be reserved for Dick Brocks' film of this year's CARS National HF Field Day. Now you can see how it ought to be done! (or not... depending on which bits you watch!)

In addition we have several other films and videos lined up, including one from RSGB, hopefully the one about the W5LFL operation from space, another from British Aerospace about their new aircraft navigation system, called TERPROM, and one from Ferranti about high power laser cutting (just the thing for making up chassis parts?).

Do any of you have photos or slides of ham radio activities over the last year? If so, bring them along to be shown or to go on the noticeboard for everyone to see what has been happening.

WELCOME AND CONGRATULATIONS

It is my great pleasure to welcome five new members this month:

G1EXU	Bob Cloke
G1IPU	George Coote
G3GNQ	George Cutting
G3YRZ	John Fellows
G8WSC	Ron Burg

Our hearty congratulations to Peter Bell on passing both the RAE and Morse test to obtain the call G0DIT. Well done, Peter!

DF NEWS - MID ESSEX TROPHY - Dick G3WHR.

This joint Chelmsford/Colchester event, run according to National Qualifying rules, was held on Sunday, 20 October. The two stations were provided by Ian Butson and Mike Hawkins.

For me, the event started with a chore - cleaning the trophy - followed by a journey to Halstead for the start at Stonebridge Hill.

The first transmissions were audible but not completely interference free. Once the slow morse was over it was difficult to identify Ian G4HKC/P and unfortunately Frank Pearson DF'd the QRM.

For the 2pm transmission all teams but one were in the Tiptree area hoping for a cross in Pods Wood. We were not disappointed. There was a mass descent on the wood from all sides.

Paul Clark and Peter Larbalestier were quickly on-site and located the aerial. During the next transmission, I heard Ian's voice and found him hidden alongside a footpath. My attempt to sneak away was quickly rumbled and all pushed towards my exit point. Fortunately, I had made a detour on my way out.

However, while I was still puffing back to my car, Ian was found by Arthur Butcher and Paul. Others soon followed but Peter was having trouble. George Smith, who had missed the start but found Peter in Tiptree before 2pm, was more successful.

Meanwhile, I followed my bearings to a wood near the A12, north of Colchester. There was an obvious aerial strung between two sections of wood, which turned out to be a dummy.

Whilst awaiting another transmission I was joined by Paul and it all became a question of who would find the real aerial first. It wasn't easy to see, being only just above head height, but it led me to investigate a large clump of fern which concealed Mike.

The other teams soon arrived, after which everyone proceeded to 60 Churnwood Road, where the two Pats had been busy preparing tea. It wasn't long before you could have hidden a station amongst the food on the table. Afterwards there were the usual tales of glee and woe to be heard.

Results:

1	R Brocks	3:22	2:20	7	A Butcher	4:18	2:24
2	P Clark	3:29	2:33	8	R Emeny	4:20	3:26.5
3	A Williams	3:44	2:44	9	D Birt	4:39	3:45
4	P Cranmer	4:09	2:43.5	10	G Smith	--	3:16
5	P Larbalestier	4:12	3:18	11	F Pearson	--	--
6	R DeLaRue	4:13	2:43				

The 1985 season is over but there is 1986 to come. Next year is off to an early start with a 'Snowman' event on Sunday, 19 January. More details next month.

COMMITTEE MEETING

The next Committee Meeting will be held in the bar of the Marconi College at 7:30pm on Wednesday, 11 December 1985.

73 from Ian, G4BYR.

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