

Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society.

NEWSLETTER No. 254

March 1987

NEXT MEETING - Kite Antennas.

This month we are pleased to welcome for a return visit Tony Gilbey, G4YTG for a description of his use of kites to support H.F. Antennas.

Tony has successfully combined his hobbies of kite flying and amateur radio to produce most effective vertical radiators by hauling aloft various wire antennas with some of the spectacular kites often seen on display at local events.

Examples of these useful 'skyhooks' will be on display and we look forward to an interesting evening.

The meeting will commence at 7.30pm on Tuesday 3rd March at the Marconi College, Arbour Lane, Chelmsford.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 3 March - Kite Antennas - Tony Gilbey, G4YTG.
- 27 March - D.F. Event - CHELMSFORD.
- 3 April - D.F. Event - COLCHESTER.
- 7 April - Short Waves and Beams - Mr J.S. Woods.
- 5 May - How to work VHF-DX by Meteor Scatter - Ken Willis G8VR.
- 2 June - Constructors' Competition.

LAST MEETING - Rig Testing Session - Andrew G4KQE.

Our Chairman, Brian opened the meeting and introduced Steve Dakman, G8MRD of Marconi Instruments Limited, who described briefly the equipment he had brought along. He said that modern transceivers had become so complicated that specialised equipment had recently been developed to test and calibrate them. Steve had brought along one Spectrum Analyzer 2380/2382 and two Mobile Radio Test Sets 2955, one he used on the dais, while Roy, G3PMX assisted with the other at the back of the room.

The Spectrum Analyzer, once shown on "Tomorrows World", is overload protected, which Steve demonstrated by connecting the output of his 2 metre rig direct to the low level input without adverse affects. There is no problem of standardisation as the instrument is self-calibrating to within 1dB total level accuracy.

The 2955 test set has wide capability as it combines a signal generator, modulation meter, power meter, frequency counter and audio analyzer. This instrument is very popular with R/T users, such as the AA and RAC, since the engineer can service equipment in-situ using the vehicles DC supply.

At about 8.0'clock, members equipment was started to be tested, the raffle ticket draw for the order of testing was fair and everyone had an equal chance.

The testing continued throughout the tea break, and on until 10.0'clock, at which time about 22 members had seen how their equipment performed under laboratory conditions, and came away with a list of parameters for analysis and study. Most members seemed pleased with their results, although there were a few surprises.

An added bonus was that members not actually having equipment tested were free to watch and chat with fellow members. Quite a few "QSOs" were noted during the evening and I think the meeting proved very popular both from a testing and a "Rag Chew" point of view.

CLUB NETS

Due to the popularity of the 2 Metre Net the committee have proposed an earlier start time to enable stations to have at least two rounds and avoid over-running the start of the 10 Metre Net.

From Tuesday 10th March we will begin at 7.45pm. If you cannot find the Net on 145.225MHz, tune around, sometimes this channel is already occupied. The 10 Metre SSB Net remains on 28.325MHz starting at 8.30pm.

DF NEWS - Dick G3WHR.

The Snowman Event took place on Sunday 8 February. Eight teams set out from Tiptree Heath in search of two transmitters.

I was hidden in a wood close by the A12 at Braiswick. Despite putting up a fairly long dummy aerial, I suffered the indignity of being found before the second transmission. I had found a dry ditch and was covered with leaves and sacking, but Richard DeLaRue was on top form and guided Jeff to the correct aerial.

Paul Clark had chosen a site near The Hythe in Colchester. From past experience, all teams expected to find an aerial erected between two earth stakes with Paul somewhere in the middle. They soon found the earth stakes and the aerial, but had difficulty in finding the transmitter - it was all a dummy. Paul had taken advantage of the local terrain and had loaded up the top strand of two security fences which bordered the footpath. Once again, it was Richard and Jeff who found the transmitter first.

Afterwards we were invited to Churnwood Road, where Ian and Pat Butson made tea for us.

RESULTS

	G3WHR/P	G0BTH/P	G3WHR/P	G0BTH/P
1 Jeff Herbert	1.59	3.05	5 Peter Larbalestier	3.05 3.56
2 Richard Whitney	2.38	3.37	6 Frank Pearson	3.30 4.07
3 Ian Butson	3.48	3.13	7 Colin Baisden	4.09 ----
4 Alan Williams	3.02	3.55	8 Mike Farmer	---- ----

D.F. NEWS - continued

Programme of Events for 1987. (* for RSGB Qualifying Event.)

27 March	Chelmsford	12 July	* South Manchester
3 April	Colchester	17 July	Chelmsford
12 April	Mid Thames - Peck Trophy	2 August	* Salisbury
26 April	* Oxford	7 August	Colchester
1 May	Colchester	16 August	* Chelmsford/Colchester
8 May	Chelmsford	6 September	* Slade
17 May	* Coventry	11 September	Chelmsford
29 May	Colchester	20 September	* National Final - Mid Thames
14 June	* Northampton	2 October	Colchester
19 June	Chelmsford	18 October	Mid Essex Trophy
28 June	* Dartford Heath	6 November	Colchester
3 July	Colchester		

JACKPOT RAFFLE

At the March meeting the accumulated tickets for the Jackpot Raffle will be drawn, the prize will be a choice bottle of wine.

CLUB OUTINGS!

Unfortunately the level of interest in club outings to the RSGB National Amateur Radio Convention, Birmingham, 27/28 March and the RSGB VHF Convention, Sandown Park, 26 April was not sufficient to warrant the committee organising a coach party to either event.

CONSTRUCTORS' COMPETITION

How are you getting on with your entry for this year?, what not started yet!, you could win one of the valuable cash prizes at the June meeting to go towards that summer holiday!

MORSE TUTORS

A reminder that Les, G4CUT has the clubs two DATONG Morse Tutors. These are available for loan to members. When not in use, they can be collected at the meetings, or contact Les, QTHR.

CLUB LIBRARY

A list of the books available from Brian, G3CVI, together with additions and amendments, is on the notice board at the meetings.

If any member would like to contribute a book to the collection, Brian will be glad to add it to the list.

COMMITTEE MEETING

The March Committee Meeting will be held in the Marconi College Residence at 7:30pm on Wednesday, 11th March. You are most welcome to join us.

IMPROVING YOUR STATION - Roy G3PMX.

As there is 'room to spare' this month I am including a short technical article to set you thinking.... Have you ever wished you could hear what the weak stations are saying or resolve CW in the QRM?, the answer could be in the type of loudspeaker you are using.

The loudspeakers supplied with most black boxes vary from the unaffordable 'matching' external unit to a 3 inch internal unit fitted on the underside of the rig, whereby all the sound has to be reflected, usually from an absorbing surface.

Although most receivers now provide good I.F. shaping by the use of filters, limiters and notches, the audio circuits after the detector are usually wide band. Some improvement in the readability of signals can be made by filtering the audio and commercial units are available for this purpose but can be rather expensive for the benefit they provide. It is possible to construct audio filters from published circuits but these are often too large to fit inside the rig so an external power supply and loudspeaker amplifier are required!

From the experiments I have carried out the cheapest solution to easy listening is in the purchase of a good quality loudspeaker, of the correct impedance, fitted in a wooden cabinet, it is amazing what a difference there is in the sound (also it looks nice into the bargain).

This is not a 'Commercial' but now that items are generally available from the RS-Components catalogue, I can recommend their 7x4 inch Elliptical Loudspeaker unit, Stock No.(4 ohm = 249-716) or (8 ohm = 249-722) and cabinet Stock No.249-744.

'Our' shack is now adorned with three of these!!!

73 from Roy & Ela, G3PMX & G6HKM

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