

Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society.

NEWSLETTER No. 268

May 1988

NEXT MEETING - Visit to Chelmsford Police Headquarters.

This months meeting is exceptional because it is not held at the Marconi College. When planning extra activities the committee usually arrange for a date other than our regular get-together evening but on this occasion the clash of dates was unavoidable since P.H.Q. is only open for conducted tours on the first Tuesday of the month!

For those members who have their names on the visitors list, the arrangements are:-

- 1, Please arrive promptly by 7.30pm.
- 2, Car parking space is available nearby.
- 3, Assemble at the main door of the Octagonal Building - Do not go to Reception.
- 4, A map is included on the back page of this newsletter for your guidance.

Finally, if you are unable to attend please let Andrew G4KQE know in good time so that he can offer the vacancy to other members on the backup list.

Although there is no general meeting, the 2 metre CARS net will run as usual with Brian G3CVI in the chair.

COMMITTEE MEETING

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

LAST MONTHS MEETING - 2MT WRITTLE - THE BIRTH OF BRITISH BROADCASTING - Albert G0AEH.

A very interesting lecture, well researched and illustrated and ably presented by Tim Wander, G6GUX.

We learned that the first speech was transmitted in America in 1892 by Natham Stubblefield, 20 years before Marconi came to this country. He died in 1928 and his gravestone holds the statement "The Father of Broadcasting". In 1900, Canadian Professor Reginald Fessenden modulated a spark TX, and speech was heard from Massachusetts. 1906 saw the reception of speech across the Atlantic from his Brant Rock station, in Scotland at the Machrihanish station. In 1911 speech was broadcast from an aeroplane, and 1914 saw Englishman Grindell Matthews transmitting speech and music, being heard by many Amateurs.

By now the Marconi Company was producing C.W. TXs, both fixed and portable at their New Street, Chelmsford works, the first electronics factory in the world, opening in 1912.

After World War One, many people were versed in wireless due to their activities in that theatre, and Marconi was employing many of them. From two 750' high masts at New Street, telephony TX tests were being made in 1920. Under the call sign MZX the station (power 1KW) made experimental broadcasts in speech and music, and in June 1920, Dame Nellie Melba broadcast half hour programmes.

The Chelmsford station - very popular with the public, was closed down by the G.P.O. on the 23rd November 1920, because of interference with other services, particularly the Croydon Air field. The public clamour for re-instatement was large, and due to pressure from the Wireless Society of London (to become the R.S.G.B) The House and Post Offices relented by issuing 2MT, (preceded temporarily by 2V0) to become Britains first official broadcasting station.

Marconi chose one of their experimental sites, consisting of an ex-army large hut in the middle of a field in the village of Writtle for 2MT operations. The staff complement were 8 in number, Noel Ashbridge and Peter Eckersley to name but two. The power was 1KW and the station identified in C.W. Aerial masts were 450' high with 7' base.

The first official broadcast was on St.Valentines Day 1922 when Marconi opened with a few words. The programmes were at 7p.m. for half an hour with close down every 3 minutes to allow cooling. Peter Eckersley became the star with off the cuff entertainment, with a lonely hearts club, competitions and songs from a West End singer named Nora Scott. Dame Nellie never broadcast from 2MT, the fee being too large - Nora did it for £1!

Sixty three Commercial Companies lined up to get into broadcasting, and the G.P.O. decided it must be controlled - unlike America which, more entrepreneurial, had 500 stations - all on the same frequency.

2LO was created in November 1922 broadcasting from Marconi House in the Strand in London, power 150W and not licensed for music. They received 200 letters asking them not to broadcast since the station was interfering with Writtle!

2MT was closed down on the 17th January 1923. The licence was never withdrawn, the remaining member of staff Ed Trump continued occasionally to broadcast for some time. Many of the 8 joined the BBC which made its first broadcast in February 1923.

In 1968, the famous hut was resited in the sports ground of a Chelmsford School as a sports pavillion.

Question time showed that many members not only enjoyed the recounting of history, but had lived it again during the evening.

I commend Tims book which is now on sale and is an excellent extension and illustration of the lecture with 200 pages and 50 pictures. Our thanks to Tim Wander.

Editorial comment, Note that this months report was compiled by G0AEH who is not a committee member. Well done Albert, we hope that others will follow in your footsteps!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 3 May CLUB MEETING - Visit to Chelmsford Police Headquarters.
- 6 May DF EVENT - Chelmsford.
- 4/5 June NATIONAL FIELD DAY.
- 7 June CLUB MEETING - Constructors' Competition.
- 21 June VISIT TO MARCONI MUSEUM.
- 5 July CLUB MEETING - Auroral Propagation, Charlie Newton G2FKZ.

DF NEWS - Dick G3WHR.

The first Chelmsford DF event took place on the 25th March, when I was the hidden station. Seven teams assembled on Tiptree Heath for the start. It was still dark at the time, so everyone needed a torch.

I had chosen the old railway station at Maldon West as being a good site - lots of thorns etc. I also took advantage of the dark and hid the transmitter high up near the road so as to get a good view.

After putting up the aerial, I returned to find the transmitter site well illuminated by the street lights; however, I managed to find a shaded spot behind a bush.

When the competitors arrived on site, I was able to watch them walk past the Tx and down into the station. From then on I could follow their progress by the light of their torches. I had placed a dummy tee-in on the aerial which led some teams into the most ferocious thornbushes.

DF in the dark is very difficult - so the contest was extended slightly to enable everyone to find the station.

RESULTS

1	Roy Emeny	8.42	5	Ian Butson	8.58
2	Andrew Mead	8.45	6	Paul Clark	9.02
3	Alan Williams	8.52	7	Mike Farmer	9.05
4	Philip Cunningham	8.56			

Future Events

- 29 April Colchester
- 6 May Chelmsford
- 15 May RSGB Salisbury

MEMBERS NEWS

The Society extends a welcome to Richard Witney, G4ICP.

At last months meeting our Guest Speaker drew the Jackpot Raffle for the bottle of wine and Brian our Chairman G0BDS was the lucky winner.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Dot Dashes into History

In the February issue of our newsletter an article appeared concerned with the above topic; I would like to put the case forward from an Amateur point of view.

The content of the article was of course taken from a National Newspaper and therefore is editorial sensationalism. I would not suggest for a minute that the findings of the article are incorrect, after all technology will march forward relentlessly with or without the enthusiasm of dedicated morse users. However I believe there is, and will be for some considerable time, a place within communications for morse.

A very good example of the professional need for morse came from the Falklands recovery. Apparently when our troops arrived on the island, satellite links could not be established for a number of days. Voice was not working out successfully, so good old morse was thought of; thought of being the operational word here because there were no qualified operators available and communications were largely put into non-professional hands. Very embarrassing for the authorities concerned. I believe that morse is now taught again as a skill in the R.A.F.

Morse is still extensively used on the Amateur radio bands. Several times of late I have tuned the 3.5MHz and the 7MHz bands unable to find a slot in which to call CQ. Notwithstanding that, the mode utilizes less spectrum than other modes. Morse also allows us to communicate with other Amateurs when conditions are marginal. e.g. Some weeks ago I tuned up for the normal 28MHz net and G3EDM called me using SSB. Whilst I heard something in the background I could not distinguish what or who it was. He was using QRP and recalled me on the key, I immediately answered because I could hear the more efficient mode. Another big advantage to Amateurs using morse is that country boundaries are more easily crossed because of the Q-code usage doing away with the need for almost perfect English. The last point I wish to make in the same vein is that simpler equipment may be made for the mode, allowing everyone to enjoy our wonderful hobby.

There will continue to be a natural decline in the use of morse especially in professional circles due to the transmission speed. No person can hope to match data speeds of 14,400 W.P.M. with morse. However for the reasons that I cite above and probably some that I have missed out, there will be for a long time yet extensive use of morse. I believe that my services as an R.S.G.B. morse examiner will be required for a goodly time yet. GOOD C.W. DXing, Gwyn, G4FKH.

NATIONAL FIELD DAY - 4/5 JUNE 1988.

All those interested in participating in NFD are invited to a meeting on Tuesday 10th May at Dick Brocks QTH, 12 Blacksmiths Lane, Wickham Bishops, Witham. If you would like to take part but can't get to the meeting, please contact Dick on Maldon 891868.

Some maps giving details of how to find Dick's QTH will be available at the PHQ visit.

R.S.G.B. EXHIBITION - N.E.C. Birmingham.

Quotations are being obtained for the coach trip to the NEC on Saturday 16th July. Andrew G4KQE is now collecting the £1 deposits necessary to reserve your seat. Please let it be known as WIDELY as possible that 'Chelmsford' are running a coach and to contact Andrew on (0376)83094 to join in.

CONSTRUCTORS' COMPETITION

Now is the time to put the finishing touches to your entry - only 4 weeks to go!

VISIT TO MARCONI MUSEUM

We have arranged to have our summer evening visit to the museum at Baddow on Tuesday 21st June. In order that the committee can plan this event we need names of members who would like to attend? The list will close at the June meeting.

NOSTALGIA NIGHT

Our version of the Antiques Roadshow at one of our club meetings is coming together, however, to ensure variety - we don't want you all turning up with an AR88 - Dick Brocks has been volunteered to act as exhibits co-ordinator.

If you have an Amateur Antique, and don't mind sharing your pleasure, then please contact Dick at the next meeting or by phone on 0621-891868.

MAXIMUM PLEASURE! - Roy, G3PMX.

Having recovered somewhat from last October's hurricane it is nice to be back on the H.F. bands, if only for the surprises it can bring.

Tuning around 15 metres one evening last week I heard a States side station calling "CQ-15...WA3AUN/M...OPERATING A REMOTE BASE STATION". Curious to know why the signal was so strong I made a reply call.

After the exchange of names, locations and reports of 5 - 9 both ways, the remainder of the contact was a revelation. Mark said he was on his way home from work in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in the car he was using a 2 metre F.M. mobile on 145.515MHz for the simplex voice channel and a 900MHz Digital keypad link to control his base station at home. The base station comprised a 2 metre transceiver backed up to a Kenwood TS940 H.F. transceiver driving a 1KW linear and a 5 element tri-band beam antenna. The 900MHz digital receiver was connected to a Commodore computer which controlled all aspects of the base station, including a speech synthesizer back over 2 Metres to confirm that tuning instructions had been carried out.

Mark continued "I am always busy travelling in this area, leaving little time to visit the ham shack so I decided to do it this way, now the only time I go into the shack is to switch on and off"

Another surprise was that he was able to let his friend use the base station and I had the pleasure of working N3BD. Bill said "I am sitting in my dining room using a handheld and you are a fine copy 5 - 9 signal Roy"

73 from Roy & Ela Martyr, G3PMX & G6HKM

Telephone, Home (0245) 360545
or Office (0245) 353221 Ex.3815

1, High Houses,
Mashbury Road,
Great Waltham,
CM3 1EL.

MEMBERS ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE

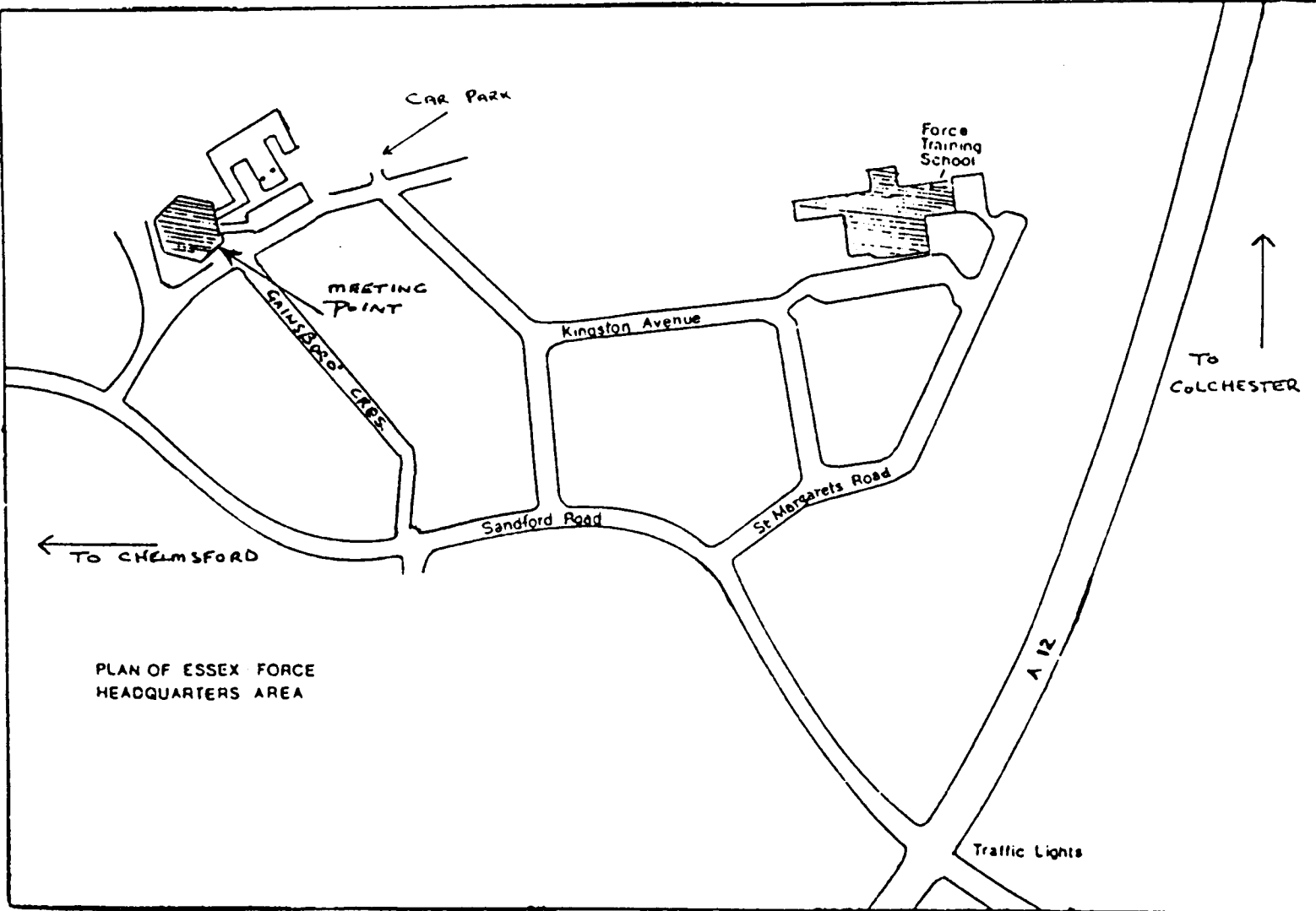
U.H.F. Tuner for TV-Sound Channels, Mains powered, Audio output suitable for amplifier or recorder, £15 o.n.o. William Mosley, Tel No. (0245)380934.

STILL WANTED

STORAGE SPACE - Dry, frost free, storage area required for amateur radio equipment and related items, e.g. books.

- When - July 1988 or earlier.
- Duration - approximately three years.
- Volume - approximately 144 cubic feet.
- Access - rarely if ever and only by appointment.
- Terms - negotiable by informal agreement but envisage one months notice either way with no necessity for insurance.
- Finance - negotiable but consistent with market rates.

Has anyone got a 'box room', etc, spare and who wishes to create an income from it? If so, please contact John Greenwood, G3KRZ - work 01 356 4406, home 01 588 2009.



PLAN OF ESSEX FORCE HEADQUARTERS AREA