

Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society.

NEWSLETTER No. 303

Callsign G0MWT

April 1991

NEXT MEETING - Radiocommunication Agency.

This month we are pleased to welcome a representative of the Radiocommunication Agency to explain the functions of the Radio Investigation Service.

Mr. J.C. Taylor will introduce a Video film and answer questions relating to the comprehensive work in planning and maintaining the orderly use of the radio spectrum.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday 2nd April at the Marconi College, Arbour Lane Chelmsford, starting at 7.30pm.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

- 2 April CLUB MEETING - Radiocommunications Agency - Radio Investigation Service.
- 9 April N.F.D. PLANNING MEETING - see details below.
- 27 April RSGB NATIONAL CONVENTION - NEC Birmingham - by C.A.R.S coach.
- 7 May CLUB MEETING - Archaeology by Mr. Patrick Allen
- 4 June CONSTRUCTORS' COMPETITION - How's your project coming on?

LAST MONTHS MEETING - Brian G0BDS.

Our usual venue at Marconi College was abandoned this month and exchanged for the partial Subterranean lecture and communications room at County Hall, Chelmsford, known as the Emergency Planning Centre.

When the Committee had asked the County Emergency Planning Officer (CEPO) if he could come and talk to us about the organisation and reasons for this role of Local Government, we were readily invited to hold the meeting at County Hall, where we could also see the equipment and Emergency Planning Centre itself.

We were cordially welcomed to the Centre by George Cracknell and Roger Arnsbey (Assistant CEPO's) who started the evening by showing us a Home Office video entitled "Should Disaster Strike" which emphasised some of the reasons behind the real and proper need to establish a co-ordinated, documented and practised approach to dealing with both natural and man made disasters. Introduced by Julian Pettifer, the video was, I'm sure, made to allay any "anti-nuclear lobby" fears that the only reason Emergency Planning Centres are needed is in time of nuclear war.

George then explained that the whole cost of their work was funded direct from Central Government and not out of the Community Charge, which is appropriate, really, because the whole set-up is run nationwide by the professionals with the amateurs and voluntary groups being used at local level.

As proof of this need, it was explained, that in all the years plans and training had been ready for a major disaster at Coryton refinery on the Thames, no real large emergency had ever arisen, that is until February of this year when the good planning showed its worth during a major fire.

"Civil Protection" is an insurance policy and politics play only a minor role in the funding rather than what is planned.

During the recent years most of the natural disasters that could befall this county are being ticked off the list at a rate not previously considered possible, i.e. hurricane winds, severe cold and drought. All these conditions are allowed for in the various plans drawn up.

Other problems like nuclear leaks from, say, Bradwell (Visited by the club previously) and major chemical spills on the Motorways are also included.

Prior to a guided tour around the "COMMS" side of The Centre, Roger Arnsbey explained the various telephone and radio networks available should the need arise. A new Trunk Highway radio system operating in the frequency bands between 1500MHz - 2000MHz from the usual hilltop sites using Shrouded Yagis which are less likely to be damaged by bomb blast or severe winds. The radio system is linked into the new CMX switchboard currently being installed. Reasonably secure rented lines link County Hall with each of the 14 District Councils own planning centres throughout the County and also to Fire and Rescue HQ and Police HQ. There are also TEXT transmissions available to the same places. In addition to this a national private telephone network exists on which the regional government centres and neighbouring county councils can be dialed up, (must cost a fortune in line rental, but then the discounts are more if you rent more lines).

Roger also explained how the newly installed Group Hunting telephone lines (one number covering 10 incoming lines) have been used twice already this year, once during the recent snowy weather when the telephone number was given out by BBC Essex and Essex Radio for people to ring in on if they required real help, and previously by Chelmer Institute during their information and enrolment week.

The tour of the "Comms" room showed us the equipment available, which included :- 2 metre and 4 metre sets for Raynet, Fire and Rescue, Ambulance and ECC Highways radios, plus a Scanner and a Low Band Simplex AM Marconi set which can be used to contact the District Councils throughout Essex.

I'm sure that those who attended came away a lot wiser and happy in the knowledge that a good attempt has been made to plan for the future Emergencies and Disasters that may befall the Nation overall and the County in particular.

COACH OUTING TO RSGB/NEC.

The coach is booked for our club outing to the R.S.G.B. Exhibition at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, on Saturday 27th April.

We still have 20 seats available to anyone within easy reach of our starting point by the Writtle duck pond at 8.00am.

The cost of the round trip on the luxury coach is at present £10, but this will fall dramatically if we can fill more seats, so please spread the word around.

Enquiries and seat reservations to Ela G6HKM, also will all those who have already made reservations please confirm with a £5 deposit.

FIELD DAY 1991.

The first meeting to plan winning strategy will take place on Tuesday 9th April at the QTH of Dick G3WHR; please phone Dick either on (0245)353221 Ex.3954 (Day) or (0621)891868 (Evening) to let him know you are coming and to confirm travel directions.

THE EQUIPMENT FUND.

Through enterprise and generosity we have now reached the stage of placing an order with our local emporium for the first purchase, an HF Transceiver.

We hope to have this unit, complete with Power Supply, in time for members to familiarize themselves with its attributes for this years Field Day.

The fund has not reached the required amount for this purchase but we are fortunate to have committee members who are willing to loan (interest free) the necessary difference in cost to offset the obvious inflationary increase in price if we wait another year.

To continue our enterprise, Andrew G4KQE has obtained some Pye Europa and Westminster UHF Transceivers which he is checking out for sale at very reasonable prices, the Europa at £25 and Westminster at £15, both units complete with microphone, etc. So now is the time to get in the queue!

DF NEWS - some dates for your diary.

5th April, Colchester event. 12th April, Chelmsford event.

21st April, National Qualifying event (Oxford).

Details of the forthcoming calendar will be published next month.

NOT THE TRUE HAM SPIRIT - Brian G3CVI.

(This item was held over from last month due to lack of column space, Ed.)

Listening quietly to a 20M QSO between two W stations I was astounded to realise they were a pair of highly skilled and experienced technicians discussing the very latest missile recently sent to the Gulf scene from the U.S. By name they spoke of the Patriot and its capabilities, how it is guided, how it could be fooled, the system of guidance, the frequencies involved, its range, its very latest mods etc, etc...

By this time you can guess I was 'boiling' and broke in to say "walls have ears" and another station did likewise with the result that one of the offenders said "Say Elmer, some guy says we should not be talking POLITICS over the air... we better go to the other frequency"... they did and I could not find them or hear any callsigns.

If it was a deliberate plant of disinformation it was so blatant as to be suspect but otherwise it was treason to my way of thinking... or was it again an example of the naïveté of our friends 'over there' ? Moral:- Politics and religion are not for discussion on the ham bands... both these topics are the cause of more international strife than any others, right down through history, so let us avoid them at all costs, but the topic outlined above must be considered to be of great importance from the security angle and should never even be hinted at.

COMMITTEE MEETING.

The April Committee Meeting will be held in the Telford Lodge (Marconi College Residence) at 7:30pm on Wednesday, 10th April. You are most welcome to join us.

COMING NEXT MONTH.

Peter, DK7SP has sent us the design and construction details of an HF Portable Antenna for restricted space locations and has agreed to publication in our Newsletter. For those members who enjoy experimenting with antennas, this information will reach you in time for the warmer weather.....?

73 from Roy & Ela Martyr, G3PMX & G6HKM

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