

Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society

Affiliated to the RSGB

President: Harry Heap G5HF

Secretary: David Bradley M0BQC

Club Call Sign: G0MWT

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Next Month's Meeting - Packet by Clive Ward G1EUC.

We have said this before but we will say it again. As a Club we possess a great deal of knowledge and talent amongst our Members and once again one of them has agreed to talk to us about an aspect of amateur radio that is of particular interest to him. In fact it is one of a number of aspects. You will recall that he is actively concerned with repeaters and operates one at his QTH. Packet is the subject of this month's meeting. Clive was due to talk to us on this subject about six months ago but he had to postpone for various reasons. With a little persistence we have finally caught up with him. So if packet is a subject you don't know anything about this is a good opportunity to broaden your horizons!

By the way Clive lives in a very favourable reception position at Danbury and, with a bit of ingenuity, he has managed to install a house under his aerial array, but only just!

We meet at our usual venue, the MASC at Beehive Lane on Tuesday 1st May when our Chairman John G8DET will call us to order at 7-30 pm. Visitors are always welcome and we hope you will all support the raffle

Dates For Your Diary.

- 29 Apl Camb'shire RG Rally Bottisham A14 / A1303
- 1 May CARS Meeting MASC 7-30pm.
- 9 May CARS Comm. Mtg David M0BQC's QTH 7-30pm
- 13 May Dunstable Downs ARC Rally, Dunstable. 9am start!

Amateur of the Year Award.

Commencing last year the Committee decided that the Society Members should vote for the recipient of the Amateur of the Year Shield, which is presented at the AGM in October.

The criteria for awarding the Amateur of the Year Shield is that the recipient, in the voter's opinion, has given service/help to the Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society during the past year.

A change from last year, however, is that the nominations are to be placed on the ballot form and should be made before the close of the August meeting. This date will allow the ballot forms to be prepared in time for the vote in September. Therefore, if Member's wish to nominate a person to receive this award, would they please hand their written proposal i.e. name/callsign to a Committee Member by the close of the August meeting.

The Constructors Competition.

With the present weather it is difficult to believe that June is only just over a month away! By long tradition the June meeting is always the Constructors Competition. But, as they say, Tempus is Fugiting! Well organised constructors will be putting the finishing touches to their project but the rest of us will probably be just starting with the inevitable panic as June 5th. approaches!

So, get on with it! The more entries we get, the more interesting the evening will be and, by the way, don't forget the fab pecuniary prizes!

AMSAT-UK Annual Colloquium.

AMSAT-UK is holding its annual colloquium at the University of Surrey on the 27-29th July. The 'day rate' is approx. £20, which includes mid-morning tea/coffee, lunch, and afternoon tea/coffee, and attendance at all lectures. Alternatively there is the £10 'bring your own lunch' rate which just covers the lectures.

The lectures run from approx. 10am until 5pm. The topics to be covered in Saturday's lectures include presentations on the newly launched Amsat Oscar Satellite, AO-40, (see pages 45 & 93 of Feb. and March Radcoms), up-to-date details of amateur radio activity

from the International Space Station, (see overleaf). Also information on the new generation of amateur satellites proposed by AMSAT-USA. As in previous years it is hoped that guided tours of the Surrey Satellite Command Centre and satellite assembly area will be available.

If there is sufficient interest it is planned to run a minibus from Chelmsford to the University on Saturday 28th July. Those interested in attending should contact either Trevor M5AKA e-mail at m5aka@amsat.org or the Club Secretary, David M0BQC

Report by Trevor M5AKA

Last Month's Meeting Part 1.

Novice Training for Scouts by Chris G0IPU and Martyn G1EFL.

Chris & Martyn reported on their involvement with amateur radio & scouting. Martyn is one of three Leaders in charge of leadership training in the area, while Chris is a District Cub Scout Leader. Communications skills and the communications badge are an important part of scouting.

The organisation "ScARF" (Scouts Amateur Radio Fellowship) has been formed to pull together the amateur/scouting people and events in Chelmsford. Membership is around 27. ScARF exists to introduce amateur radio to scouting, promote the self-training aspects of the hobby, provide qualified access and facilities to members of the scout movement.

ScARF organises a scout presence at IMD (International Marconi Day). A marquee is erected and number of stations operate from the marquee throughout the day. A "hands-on" tent is also erected, with electrical experiments, telephones & radios to play with and demonstrations and videos to watch. This is popular with many young visitors, getting them interested in electronics & communications.

The Jamboree of the Air (JOTA) is an annual event lasting a full weekend and the biggest event of the scouting calendar; 50,000 scouts at 10,000 stations are involved across the world. JOTA started in 1958. The scouts operate HF, VHF, packet, UHF and, SSTV from the GB4CDS QTH at the 2nd Chelmsford Scout HQ. Scouts also get to try out other kinds of communication, including flags, sign language, wired morse telegraphy, the Internet ("JOTI"), the design of QSL cards, and a CCTV "TV station".

Cubs get to do JOTA on odd years and the scouts on the

even years, and these activities enable them to obtain their Communications Badge.

ScARF also organises a presence at the International Jamborees. These are held every four years, the events in 1996 and 2000 being held at Kirby-le-Soken. A number of stations were operated from a Portakabin using the callsign GB2EIJ. The "hands-on" tent is also deployed and an electronics construction project when thousands of scouts get to build their own electronics kit using soldering irons and components. ZN416 based radio kits have been used and 555 timer based flashing LED kits built. Scouts get one to one help to master soldering and build the projects accurately. Soldering irons and safety gear are supplied by ScARF although kits depend on funding from the Jamboree. Chris showed us the project built on stripboard, which flashed reliably throughout the evening!

Chris explained how communications came into it's own at the Millennium Camp last year. The site was flooded and an evacuation of the campsite ordered. ScARF rapidly turned into RAYNET to handle the emergency, and the radio shack turned into a control centre. Radios were used to organise the flow of traffic through the narrow lanes, and to find out what was happening in the groups around the site. There were no casualties and all visitors were returned home safely!

Chris also holds NRAE courses. Over the years he has tutored 18 students through the NRAE, with 10 passes, and 8 awaiting results. Some are now active on the air with borrowed equipment! Skills and equipment are also made available for helping with activities for the Electronics Badge.

Future events include JOTA in October 2001, the European International Jamboree in 2005 (20,000 scouts) and the World Jamboree in 2007 (53-58,000 scouts).

We all thank Chris and Martyn for their excellent work in making amateur radio accessible to young people and making them welcome to the hobby. We also thank them both for an interesting and informative illustrated talk. Incidentally Chris has built a new website :- <http://www.chelmsford-scarf.co.uk>

Report by Anthony SWL.

Last Month's Meeting Part 2.

Awards by Carl G3PEM.

When I was first licensed I worked top band for the first 15 years, and in about 1969 my 'Elmer', Bing G3LFB, introduced me to awards by showing me a certificate for working a number of the British Counties on a single band. Bing had lost the details but "knew a man who had" so a while later came a piece of paper with details from Arthur G3KPJ, who also sent a lot of information on the Certificate Hunters Club. I passed all of this early documentation around.

Some of my first awards, which were obtained after studying this documentation, were then circulated. These were the United Kingdom Maritime Counties Award, The English Cathedral Cities Award and the Flowers in Europe Award.

At the end of 1980 I obtained an RSGB publication on awards. In this were details of the IARU Region 1 award which I started chasing. I found that on this one the goal posts moved as more member countries were admitted to the region. It started with 20 countries but it took so long to obtain the cards for the award that I needed 30 confirmed countries and now it is 45 for the basic award.

The RSGB awards are divided into HF and VHF awards but in some countries they do not distinguish between the two, only on the number of stations to be contacted. The RSGB also administer the Island On The Air program which was started over 30 years ago by Geoff Watts who was a leading SWL and who

lived up Norfolk way.

Moving on to the mid 1990's my attendance at one of the HF conventions spurred me on to go for the ARRL DXCC award which is issued for 100 confirmed countries. I was awarded this in 1998 and am up to 190 countries worked and have QSL cards confirming 176. 100 countries is the entry level in to the programme which has several higher requirements. In my opinion the DXCC can be expensive to keep updating as the ARRL charge a hefty administration fee each time one updates.

At the HF Convention I came across the K1BV Awards book which was on sale. This has turned into a reference work as it contains all, (maybe) of the awards issued world wide. I am prepared to loan it to interested Members.

Award chasing is a measure of one's progress in amateur radio operating because it makes one think about the best propagation directions and conditions in looking for particular countries. I have decided to chase awards on themes, such as explorers etc., and charity type awards.

It was pleasing to see that several Members had brought their own awards for display in addition to my own.

Unfortunately Ela was unable to attend. She has recently achieved a 6m award confirming QSO's with 10 countries and 25 locator squares, QSL's were required for the QSO's which were all made on an indoor antenna from her new QTH.

Our thanks to Carl for an interesting and informative talk and also for providing his own report. Editorial apologies are offered for billing his talk incorrectly in the last month's Newsletter as 'Contesting'!

International Space Station Amateur Activity April 12th 2001.

During a recent overhead pass of the ISS some UK amateurs had hoped to make contact with members of the crew but the only place that voice operations occurred was in Russia. The crew had the times of the contacts on their daily timeline but must have been too busy to reach for the radio. The ARISS team (Amateur Radio on the International Space Station) will continue to ask the crew to do random voice contacts whenever possible.

The ARISS team is asking Amateur Radio satellite operators to be patient. The ARISS volunteers worked very hard to bring the initial hardware to fruition.

At other times Astronauts on board ISS Alpha completed three school contacts recently.

The Vicksburg High School in Vicksburg, Mississippi enjoyed a contact with astronaut Susan Helms, KC7NHZ. Susan answered questions during a horizon-to-horizon pass via the Sacred Hearts Academy station in Honolulu.

Youngsters at the Woodford County Middle School in Versailles, Kentucky, also talked with the International Space Station recently, this time with astronaut Jim Voss, using the station's NAISS callsign. The contact was via a Southern Hemisphere pass under the direction of Tony Hutchison, VK5ZAI, in Australia.

A successful contact was also completed between the Admira Moorer Middle School and the ISS crew. The contact originated from the NASA Goddard Ground Station, NN1SS, located in Greenbelt, Maryland. The contact took place on April 16th.

Our thanks to Trevor M5AKA for keeping us up to date.

Joint Editors.

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Deadline for the next N/L is Wednesday 9th. May.