



Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society

Established 1936

Affiliated to the RSGB
President: Harry Heap G5HF
Secretary: George Farr G3UTC

Club Call Sign: G0MWT
Chairman: John Bowen G8DET
Treasurer: Brian Thwaites G3CVI

Newsletter No 456

Web Address: www.g0mwt.org.uk

January 2004

This Month's Meeting. Propagation Predictions by Carl G3PEM Tuesday 6th January, 7-30pm at the MASC Beehive Lane.

This talk by Carl is offered as an introduction to propagation prediction. With a little knowledge it is possible to predict whether you can make that DX contact or not. This talk has been compiled with the idea of passing on some of Carl's extensive experience, acquired over thirty years, in such matters and is aimed at the many newly licensed amateurs. Even if you're an old hand, there's sure to be something new to learn. It is not intended to be an in depth study of propagation, but to explain some of the factors affecting propagation on the HF bands. For all his accumulated knowledge, Carl is a great believer in the 'KISS' principle - Keep It Simple Stupid!

The raffle will be run this month by Geoff G7KLV and Colin G0TRM, that's when he's not twiddling the sound system!

We trust that you all had a very enjoyable Christmas and we wish you all Health, Wealth and Happiness in 2004.

Dates for Your Diary.

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| January 6 | CARS Meeting. HF Propagation by Carl G3PEM. MASC 7-30pm. |
| January 14 | CARS Committee Mtg. Danbury Village Hall 7-30pm. |
| February 1 | The Canvey Rally. The Paddocks, Long Rd. Canvey. |
| February 3 | Power Measurement Theory with demo. Dave G3PEN. 7-30pm. MASC. |

The Canvey Rally.

The Canvey Rally is one of the main events in our calendar, and a very important event, because it is our single main money raising event. Last year was the most successful yet and swelled our coffers by no less than £360! So you can see just what we mean! Although it is hard work for those of us involved, it is really your support and generosity that contributes more than anything to its success.

We are appealing for all your unwanted items of electronic and electrical equipment. Even if the items don't work we may be able to sell them to someone who is prepared to repair them with a little TLC! So will you please have a good look round and let us have anything you no longer require. You may possibly regret it later but believe me, you will get a load of 'Brownie Points' from 'her indoors'!

Colin TRM and me, Geoff KLV will be only too pleased to receive your unwanted junk. We are willing to collect, so all we ask is for you to contact us. Our address details are below.

If you wish to sell your surplus gear rather than donate it to the Club, you can share our table, for 10% to funds, but we must make it clear that you are responsible for it and we cannot be held responsible for it, should it go walkies!

CARS meets at 7-30 pm on the first Tuesday of the month at the MASC, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford.

For details contact our Secretary: George G3UTC on 01277-622707.

Club Nets: Tuesdays 8-30pm: (2nd) 145.375 : (3rd) 1.947 : (4th) 1.947 : (5th) 145.375. All +/- QRM.

Newsletter Editor: Geoff G7KLV 01245-473822 or email: geoff@g7klv.free-online.co.uk

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Please advise changes of address to Geoff G7KLV.

Last Month's Meeting. RAYNET by Nigel G6ZVV and Stewart G7RSQ.

Stewart opened the talk by sketching the background to the early history, starting with the formation of RAEN. (Radio Amateurs Emergency Network). Radio amateurs provided assistance to the emergency services and local authorities during the east coast floods of 1953.

The first RAEN Committee was formed by the RSGB which started with eight groups of controllers covering all districts. Nigel is controller for the County of Essex and Stewart is deputy controller of the Chelmsford group.

At the time of the 1953 emergency third party traffic was illegal but amateurs reorganised the situation and rose to the emergency and sorted out the legal side later.

Members are drawn from a wide range of amateurs, some professional engineers, but many not necessarily involved directly in communications such as, police officers, paramedics, ambulance control staff etc. There are also a lot of young members in particular from the Scout movement together with older members with a wealth of experience.

During the 1960's and 70's cover was provided during the Cold War period but it was doubtful that systems would have survived nuclear radiation.

At the end of the Cold War the County Emergency Planning Dept. responsible for civil emergencies, decided to use Raynet (as it was re-named) for snow and flood watch which resulted in many callouts but very few actual emergency situations.

Other user Services are the Red Cross, and St. John's Ambulance. During special events this gives valuable experience and training for teams, and is also very useful for checking kit.

The RA via RSGB has issued a Cross Band Repeater permit to enable operation from within a building or area to, say, a vehicle outside providing aerial and power for the crossband unit via portable or handheld equipment, this is usually operated 2m/70cms. County wide communications have been set up using this method.

Raynet is starting to run training events for new members, with most new members being recruited from club courses.

Commitment is still maintained by County Emergency Planning together with Essex Search and Rescue who can concentrate on their own function with Raynet providing communications.

A question and discussion period followed the talk, the question of funding was mentioned and as no official money is available costs must be covered by donations and members themselves, involving lots of time and effort.

It was suggested that Global Warming and the consequences could involve the group in

future. The question of Mobile Phones negating the use of Radio was mentioned. A mobile phone could be useful in the event of all else failing, but in the general case, radio is required for an "all informed" net. In the event of an incident it is possible for the Media to get logged onto a cell which effectively blocks the system for mobile phones.

Thanks to Nigel and Stewart for a very interesting and informative talk.

Report by Denis 2EOBIA assisted by Ron M3CAM.

World Contest 2003 with my new Buddipole Aerial by Martyn M3VAM



Firstly, I will explain what a Buddipole Aerial is. It is an HF portable dipole aerial system which is designed to be modular, versatile, and effective. It is manufactured by Budd Drummond W3FF in America. The frequency range is from 40m through to 2 m.

The aerial is light weight and when fully extended it is just less than 16 ft. in length. But packs down to approx. 22 ins. The weight is less than 2 lbs. It is rotatable when using either the optional mast or a decorator's pole. Two coils are used to shorten the dipole and the adjustable stainless steel whips are designed to make the aerial resonate on any frequency in the above bands.

You can change the shape of the aerial. By this I mean that you can use it as a horizontal dipole, a sloper, a vee, an inverted vee a vertical dipole or an L aerial just by a quick adjustment of the arms.

You can assemble the Buddipole and take it apart in a few minutes. Tuning is easy but it is a lot quicker if you have an aerial analyser. I use my MFJ 269. (The Club does have one that you can borrow). Typical SWR readings are under 1.7 to 1. With the aerial you do get a manual with tips on setting up the dipole and tuning it.

The basic Buddipole comes with a polypropylene T, this is to make it rotatable, two 22 ins. inner dipole arms, two coils (10m through to 40m) two custom stainless steel whips, a soft flannel bag as well as a black thermoplastic "impact resistant" case, an operating manual and a matching section that contains 12 ft. of coax with a BNC connector which easily converts to a PL 259 connection. The quality of the aerial is first class and it looks very professional.

I ordered mine from Budd direct from USA, but beware I had to pay Import Tax. However, I did order all the extras, Buddipole Tripod, 2 Stainless Steel Telescopic Whips, Centre Tee Adaptor, 3 Extra Coil Clips, Antenna System Carrying Bag, Standard Mast, Rotating Arm Kit and the 16 ft. Mast. All the above fit into the very smart 22 ins. bag except the 16 ft. mast.

For further details please check out Budds web site on www.buddipole.com. You can email Budd direct W3FF@aol.com.

How well does this aerial work? During the Contest, all I can say is that it was amazing! I made 150 contacts in 39 Countries using my M3 callsign running 10watts. Countries worked include 4L Georgia, CN Morocco, IH Pantelleria Islands, KC USA, VE Canada, VP5 Turk & Caicos Islands and all around Europe.

I was very pleased with the results and I would certainly recommend this aerial.

The True Spirit of Amateur Radio.

Geoff Blake G8GNZ recently responded to a request from Australia. It was on the Internet and he had answered a plea for help from a group called

amateur-repairs@yahoo.com.

He was able to help the person concerned and eventually received the following reply:

"Gentlemen take a bow. I think I may have found the most friendly and helpful group on the net.

I asked for information on some parts for the Marconi 2955 Service Monitor out of desperation. The company fixing it couldn't find parts. In fact they'd even considering selling their own for the same reason. The words "boat" and "anchor" did not inspire me. Within a short time, not only had members of this group determined the actual mystery (to me, anyway) components, but I had the circuit of the beast and a member very kindly supplied one of the required devices. I'm still waiting on a commercial company to reply re my query on the other.

Having been an amateur for almost 40 years I've seen a few changes. Some of the more

recent ones have not been to my liking. Technical and licensing changes I can live with...just:) But the the biggest change in AR seems to have been a shift from "we" to "I". AR was always the home of the individual, but the sum of the individuals was always greater than one. Sadly this appeared to me to be no longer the case. The spirit of AR appeared to be lacking. Flame wars, rudeness and aggression towards those who hold different opinions abound. I'm sure you know the story.

I started to question just what was the essential spirit of amateur radio. If that had been lost then perhaps my fond memories belonged in a nursing home. Now, I haven't done a lot of operating or been involved in clubs etc for years but I was very involved before that.

Perhaps I was living in some sort of time warp, espousing dead concepts of friendship, consideration, help and, oh dear, the term gentlemen. Perhaps Amateur Radio had become like driving a car, "Bugger you, get outta my way, no rulz but mine dude".

This group's members have shown me that this is not the case. The spirit of Amateur Radio is alive and well here. May it live long and prosper.

So thank you to all the members of this group. You have given me much more than help and information. You have given me hope that my machine will be restored. But far more importantly you have given me hope that the spirit of AR is alive and well.

Cheers, Jim VK4BBG."

It gives you a nice warm feeling, doesn't it! Time for New Year's Resolution? Say no more!

Thank you Geoff for this timely snippet!

Congratulations!

Big Jim has been at it again! Jim 2E1GUA has just heard that the results of the 144/432 MHz Contest March 2003 to find that he achieved an impressive overall 3rd place in the Single Operator Section, his individual band scores gave him 5th place on 144 MHz and 2nd place on 432 MHz. He didn't attend our last meeting because it clashed with the VHF Cumulatives. Let's hope he does well in that one too!

Newsletter Material.

Editing and publishing this Newsletter is not all that easy! The problem is that we've adopted a two sheet format. Sometimes we don't have enough for four sides but more than enough for two sides! So what do we do? We tend to fill it with waffle to avoid blank sheets, which is what I'm having to do this time.

I would like to accumulate a little bank of material to tide us over the lean months. Please help us out. I'm sure that some of you can find something to write, or waffle, about.

CARS Christmas Dinner.

For the second year running the Club dinner was held at the Anchor at Runsell Green and also for the second year running it was superbly organised by Ken Whittle G7RFT. Our Chairman, John G8DET called the guests to order promptly at eight o'clock and called upon Tony Gilbey G4YTG to say grace. Some 36 members and their wives enjoyed an excellent meal served in congenial surroundings.

The main courses catered for a whole range of tastes, with turkey and trimmings being the choice of most diners. During the proceedings Harry G5HF regaled us with a fine nautical story detailing a succession of comical events.

Ken organised not only the meal, but also an excellent raffle, with some outstanding prizes.

Our thanks to Chairman John who, throughout the evening, kept the proceedings moving along with his usual panache and story telling abilities. He had also devised two quizzes; the first being to identify London place names from clues and the second to identify objects in feely bags, neatly sewn together by Pauline.

The evening ended on a musical note with Tony YTG taking the lead with some popular Christmas songs.

Lastly, our most grateful thanks to Ken and Jean for a most enjoyable and faultless event.

Report by Colin G0TRM

Finding your QTH and WAB Locators.

The article in the December newsletter on calculating your QTH Locator and Worked All Britain Square contained a typing error. The section on WAB squares should have read:

"The WAB locator is the first 2 characters of the NGR followed by the 1st and 4th numbers. For example if the NGR reads TL678063 then the WAB square is TL60." Sorry about that!

The CARS Library.

Ron Ingate M3CAM and Denis Lewis 2E0BIA have jointly accepted the position of Club Librarian and they will be organising a lending library for Member's use. We have a collection of books and information relating to many aspects of our hobby and they will be displaying a selection at each Club meeting.

If you have any unwanted books which you think might be of general interest and wish to donate to the Library, will you please contact them.

CARS Test Equipment.

The Club has a number of items of test equipment and rigs for the use of Members. The majority of the equipment is held under the supervision of John G8DET.

The test equipment ranges from a Bird Thruline, MFJ aerial analysers to a VHF Test Set.

If you are interested in any of the items or want more details, please contact John.

Microsoft Windows.

Like it or lump it, most of us use MS Windows. A survey of the 1270 registered users of the Ham Radio De Luxe website:

<http://www.kns.ch/sysgem/hb9drv/>

gives an interesting breakdown of the MS software in use.

The percentages are:

Windows 95	0.24%,	Windows 98	21.85%,
Windows ME	7.01%,	Windows NT	0.16%,
Windows 2K	13.6%,	Windows XP	57.17%.

It would be interesting to know what the figures are for all users. Thanks to Trevor M5AKA for bringing this to our notice.

The BBC Comes to Sandford Mill

The production team of the BBC TV programme called Flog-It came to Sandford Mill recently. Flog-It is a spin off and poor relation to that flagship programme Antiques Roadshow.

The program will be shown next spring and features Chelmsford. Being the 'Birthplace of Radio' it was only right and proper that they pay a visit to the Writtle Hut.

To add a touch of authenticity a sked had been arranged, aided and abetted by Geoff EDM, with an amateur at Poldhu, GB2GM. With Brian G3CVI at the controls our end, this was successfully made and duly placed on video record!

Chris Holten also demonstrated some of his collection of beautifully restored radios of various vintages. Geoff Bowles was recorded giving some background information about the Writtle Hut and the Museum's collection of Marconi memorabilia.

As appears to be usual on such occasions the whole morning was spent gathering material for about two minutes worth of programme!

The BBC team consisted of Paul Martin the Presenter, the Producer, the Vision Man, the Sound Man and the Girl Friday. ITV would probably have managed with one man and a dog!

There were endless repeats of the same sequence until everyone got it right. One could have been forgiven for thinking it was the production team for 'Aunty's Bloomers' or 'It will be Alright on the Night'. However, there are some good pictures on our website.

Report by Geoff G7KLV

Please, please let us have some articles for the Newsletter.