

RADIO

Reading & District Amateur Radio Club
Electronic News

Autumn 2001

Editorial

So what's all this then? An electronic newsletter sent by email to all Club members, that's what.

It's been far too long since any news has come from the Club – and that's my fault. Mind you, articles haven't exactly flooded in either so I can't say you're entirely blameless either!!

The club web site (www.radarc.org) will hold an uncompressed version of this publication which will take longer to download, but does have better quality pictures. The choice is yours as to which one you want to read.

Don't forget to come along to the AGM in December – it's your chance to say what you think of what we, the Committee, have done during the last year. If you want to have a nominate someone for a post, please use the form you'll find at the back of this newsletter.

73, Des G8FIF
g8fif@radarc.org OR des@g8fif.com

Awards

The Reading Club has a number of cups and trophies which we try to award annually.



Above is Bob Panting, G4ELY, who is this year's recipient of the G5KV Award. This trophy is presented in memory of Bill Leonard, G5KV as a mark of appreciation for the work carried out by an individual in support of the Club. Bob has been an active Club member for quite a few years and a



keen participant in contesting. Bob said that it was “a huge surprise” to get the trophy... That’s what it is meant to be – well done and thank you!

The other picture on the previous page is of Andrew Gostomski, M5ACR (left), receiving the A1 award from Tom, G0VQR. The A1 awards were instigated by John Linford, G3WGV while he was Chairman to recognise the youngest members to pass their Morse tests in a year.

Club Talk Comoros D68C

Slightly unusually, we asked Don Field, G3XTT (below) to come and talk about a DX-pedition **before** it takes place. However, as Don said, there’s so much effort been put into the trip that he ended up with too much to say on the night.

Don and Tony Canning, G0OPB (top right,



in the suit) are two of twenty-six people who put on a monster station over the course of 3 weeks in February.

To justify the word “monster” you only have to look at the amount of kit that is going to the island:

- 6 Yaesu FT1000MP Mk V
- 6 Yaesu VL1000 linears
- 2 Yaesu FT920 (6m)
- 3 Yaesu FT900
- 1 Yaesu FT847 (satellite)
- 4km / 2½ miles coax
- 6km / 3¾ miles radial wire
- 1.6km / 1 mile control wire
- 11 laptop computers
- 64 heavy guy stakes
- “Powerful drill”
- 1 Table-football unit

Plus mono-band aerials for every band from 160m to 6m, a selection of beams, 4 full size 80m quarter-waves (!) and several 40’ masts.

In all, the kit weighs 3 tons and is going in a full-sized shipping container.

At the end of the talk, the Robin, G4IWS, was happy to present a sponsorship cheque for £100 to Don on behalf of the Club. “It will go towards the shipping costs”, said Don. You can guess that it will be costing a bit more than a 1st class stamp at the Post Office!

EI-EI-O

Operating on a CEPT licence in Ireland

We've all had a CEPT licence now for some time. It basically allows us to operate in other countries, but without having to fill in all the paperwork and apply for a reciprocal licence when we go abroad.

Part of the reason why I bought a small new hand-held was so that I could take it to America on my many trips. Unfortunately though, with the fact that I actually have to work when I get there (how unreasonable these companies can be!) I've never yet had one QSO. Last time I was in W7, there were about 20 of us assembled in one room and still we never managed to get the radio on!

Anyway, having found out that my Irish counterpart, James, is licensed (EI6EBB), he all but forced me to take my radio over for the September seminar series. If nothing else, it would reduce the mobile 'phone bills.

Now comes the fun bit, pack away radio and because you're going abroad, take your licence validation document, booklet and - most importantly if you don't want HM Customs to hang on to your radio - the VAT receipt. A quick bit of investigation on the web shows that you sign EI/callsign/M or /P and you're off.

When we landed in Dun Laoghaire I turned on the radio looking for the Dublin repeater. Being only a mere class B who can read 15WPM CW (as opposed to 5WPM for a class A...) if he knows what's coming, first problem is that it all happens too quickly. You don't realise how used you get to "dah-dah-dit dah-di-di-dit di-di-dit-dah-dah" as a preamble for the following 2 letters. Ireland

has one of the shortest CW prefixes in the world: "dit di-dit" and they're off. Not only that, but the repeaters have different numbers and a THREE letter suffix. Poor old EI/G8FIF/M resorts to guessing and looking on the Internet... (<http://www.irts.ie/>)

Next came the drive up to Belfast and my first ever chance to be GI8FIF. Of course it got quite confusing in the cars because one minute it was "EI6EBB/M from EI/G8FIF/M", the next it was "GI8FIF/M from MI/EI6EBB/M" (remember we 'G's are old-timers now everything's M-series). Anyway, needless to say I was beginning to lose track of how many Is there were in our respective callsigns!

It was all good fun and I am planning to take my radio away again. Mind you, given the fact that my factory colleagues want me to take an American test, I'll have to see if N8FIF is still available (it's only a dash different after all) - then I could operate from home as M/N8FIF/P - worth a pile-up I think.

One question somebody might like to have a go at answering: could I legally have signed myself as EI/GM8FIF (or GW, GI etc)? When you think about it, the G prefix becomes completely irrelevant in another country so what difference does it make. I'll leave that to someone more knowledgeable than me on that one!

73, Des G8FIF



Visit to Poldhu Amateur Radio club

RADARC members - Eat your hearts out! While on holiday in Cornwall I visited GB2GM, the Poldhu Amateur Radio Club (PARC). Slightly confused by another special event (see below) I turned up at the site at 1500 hours and found it deserted, but the sign on the door said "Enquiries – Carolyn Rule M0ADA at the kite shop in Mullion". It also showed that the club meeting was that evening at 1900. So, off to the kite shop, where the welcome was most effusive, with John G0JVR making the most fantastic kites just behind the counter and Carolyn 'Up front'. Their daughter Rowenna 2E1FDK is hon treas. I returned to the club house at 1900 and was greeted by a member opening up, who promptly gave me a guided tour.

On the cliff-top above Poldhu cove, busy with bathers (all in wet suits - are we ALL going soft?) is the Poldhu Hotel where not only did Marconi stay in 1901 but also the Prince of Wales when he visited the transmitter site in 1903. This is now an old people's home, about as wild and remote as you could want, (provided you didn't want any visitors), and behind it is a concrete block building. Ten years ago this was awarded to the PARC and they set about making it habitable. They have no less than three operating rooms, a store-room, a workshop AND a club meeting room big enough for a 50-person lecture, including an operating desk for demos etc. Alcoves contain an unofficial museum of obsolete and WW2 equipment. The workshop has a full range of modern gear (membership includes staff at Goonhilly Down as well....) Then there is a small kitchen....

I was introduced to every member as they



Above: The new design of Club QSL card by Tom, G0VQR

arrived and was made as welcome as anyone could want, and I could have chatted the whole night away. Naturally there were more retired amateurs there because it's an area people retire to, but it must appeal to amateurs especially, as there are far more than the statistical 1 per 1000 within five miles, and members drive from everywhere in West Cornwall - up to about 25 miles. At least two are from Berkshire and one knew all the broadcast companies in our area.

But if you like the sound of the club house you should see the aerial field! Marconi plc and the National Trust own the site including the field where Marconi himself built his ring of 200-foot poles. The circular bank (which I believe carried a rail track of some kind) is still there as well as some of the concrete anchorages for the aerials. PARC have a

selection of aerials on this site including a full 160m dipole, two lattice towers and everything else you might want, except for a tribander, possibly because its too windy. The original monument is just over the hedge on the coastal path.

As if that wasn't enough, the National Trust are building a replica of the original Marconi transmitting building in time for the anniversary of the actual first reception in Newfoundland of that famous s s s, with a replica of the original apparatus and room. PARC will move in, in time for the special event station for December 12th 2001. They will have comparable facilities without the current power limitation. The RA have backed the project in the interests of amateur radio as a way into engineering to the tune of purchasing the substantial part of the main station equipment and everything is on course for a really creditable public event.

For those with a real interest in the history of radio the club runs an associates membership with posted newsletter etc. I have a copy of the newsletter with membership list and other info if anyone is interested (G4IWS@radarc.org)



Above: Robin, G4IWS presenting a cheque to Don, G3XTT for the February 2001 Comoros DX-pedition.

Also on holiday we visited the Submarine Cable museum at Porthcurno. This is housed in the tunnels cut in the cliffs during WW2 to protect the cable station from air and sea raids. It's a fascinating collection of Morse equipment and detectors and readers which reminded me very strongly of the physics lab at school. There is an amateur station there as well and the room had a collection of old amateur gear (some said they were tagging on to the Poldhu events). The station is GB3PK, since PK was the cable ident for Porthcurno. I particularly noted an 'early VHF receiver' by National which has to be the same model as my physics teacher owned. Come to think of it, I was in school in Falmouth and Jim Marchment must have joined the physicists in the sky by now. What are the chances there were two of such a rare set in Cornwall anyway? Evens that it's the same one.....

Robin G4IWS

Programme for the Remainder of 2001

November 8th
DIGITAL TV

December 13th
AGM

The Club meets on the second Thursday of every month at the Woodley Pavilion, Haddon Drive, Woodley.

Annual General Meeting 2001

**Starting at 8pm on Thursday 13th December at:
The Woodley Pavillion
Haddon Drive
Woodley**

Agenda

*Chairman opens the Meeting
Adoption of the Minutes of the 2000 AGM
Treasurer's Report
Chairman's Report and presentation of Awards
Election of the 2002 Committee
Any Other Business
Close*

Committee 2002

Nominations are sought for all the posts on Committee as each person is only elected for one year at a time. The person must be willing to stand and the nomination must be seconded (all concerned must be fully paid-up members). Please print this form, if appropriate, and send it to The Secretary, Chris Catt M1CYE (QTHR) before 30th November. Items for inclusion in the Agenda should also be sent to Chris by this date.

	Nominee	Proposer	Secunder
Chairman:	_____	_____	_____
Secretary:	_____	_____	_____
Treasurer:	_____	_____	_____
Ordinary Members (x3):	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____