



# SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB

FEBRUARY 2001 — No: 701

|          |                      |                 |
|----------|----------------------|-----------------|
| CLUB NET | 29.111 MHz           | Sunday 9:30am   |
| CLUB NET | 144.325 MHz          | Friday 8:30pm   |
| CLUB NET | 145.500 MHz and Down | Thursday 7.00pm |

CLUB Internet WEB Site:  
<http://www.g3src.org.uk>

Hon. Sec. Ray Howells G4FFY  
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E-Mail: [secretary@g3src.org.uk](mailto:secretary@g3src.org.uk)

MONTHLY MEETINGS 1<sup>ST</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> MONDAYS 7.45 FOR 8pm  
AT THE T.S. TERRA NOVA, 34 THE WALDRONS, SOUTH CROYDON

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**"A" MEETING 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 2001 ROPES & KNOTS - Jim Gale G4WYJ**  
**"B" MEETING 19<sup>th</sup> Feb 2001 FIX-IT, ADVICE, CHIN-WAG, CLUB STATION + "MOVE-IT-ON"**

|  |                       |               |
|--|-----------------------|---------------|
| Chairman                               | G3RJW Graham Marshall | 020-8669 8722 |
| Vice-Chairman                          | GOPAR David How       | 020-8761 2954 |
| Treasurer, Liaison & Equipment         | G4DDY Maurice Fagg    | 020-8669 1480 |
| Secretary, Membership & Communications | G4FFY Ray Howells     | 020-8644 7589 |
| VHF Co-ordinator                       | G8TB Bernard Wynn     | 020-8660 7517 |
| Publicity & HF Co-ordinator            | G4WAY Roger Holyoake  | 020-8689 7089 |
| Members                                | G3ZPB Peter Burton    | 01737-551413  |
|  | G4XAT Gareth Evans    | 020-8462 2837 |

## Dear Members

**H**ello and welcome to the February newsletter which I apologise for this being small one (and late!!) this month but I have been extremely busy and also need to upgrade my printer to restore volume printing!

For this month's "A" meeting on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February we are please to welcome Jim G4WYJ who will be presenting a talk on Ropes and Knots.

The SRCC VHF NFD 2000 Inquest and 2001 Planning meeting has now been set for Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February at the QTH of Peter's G3ZPB.

The "B" meeting on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February will be the successful format of Fix-It and Move-it-On evening.

We have now fixed the date for the annual Club Dinner for Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February at the Windmill, Wallington.

More about these below:

### NEXT "A" MEETING: Monday 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 01 Ropes & Knots - Jim G4WYJ

**W**e are fortunate to have amongst our membership a wide range of knowledge and expertise, and this month will be no exception with a talk by John G4WYJ regarding "Ropes and Knots".

Jim will take as through the various type of ropes and their appropriate uses, and then describe some knots that Amateurs will find useful for aerial erection, etc.

This should be very appropriate for all you budding "Field-Day" people, and we look forward to your full support on Monday night.

### VHF NFD Group Meeting Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Feb @ QTH of Peter G3ZPB's

**T**he first meeting of the group for this ear has been fixed for Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February and will be held at the QTH of Peter G3ZPB up at Old Coulsdon. Being the first of the season it will be firstly an Inquest on last year's entry, and then an initial planning session for this year's entry (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> July).

If you have an interest in this activity please make your name known to Bernie G8TB (8660 7517) and it would also be good to see you at the meeting - please call Peter G3ZPB (01737 551413) in order that sufficient cups of tea are available - thanks.

### NEXT "B" MEETING: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> Feb 01 FIX-IT and "MOVE-IT-ON" Evening

**T**he "B" meeting on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January will be the now regular "Fix-It" and advice evening but with the extra twist. If you have a radio item that you just wish to clear out then bring it along - you never know it may be just what another member is looking for!

The Fix-It section has proved very interesting and successful so please bring along that item that has been giving you grief - the collective heads at the meeting usually come up with something.

## LAST "A" MEETING: Monday 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 01 IEE Lecture Video & Amateur Radio Future

Firstly, we finally got to see the latest IEE Lecture Video "Time and Place - In the Communications Age" presented by University College, London and supported by Marconi. It was well worth the wait and was fully described in last month's Newsletter.

The meeting was then turned over to a discussion chaired by Peter G3ZPB concerning the "Future of Amateur Radio". I have written this up for circulation to the Radiocommunications Agency, the RSGB and members as below:

### SRCC Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2001 - Discussion on the Future of Amateur Radio

#### Introduction:

The opportunity was taken during the January 2001 SRCC "A" Meeting to hold a discussion amongst members present concerning the proposals of the future direction of Amateur Radio Licensing. The initial proposals from both the Radio Agency and the RSGB had been circulated to members in the immediately preceding newsletter, along with the relevant Internet URL addresses i.e.

<http://www.rsgb.org/lic/raefut1.htm>, and

<http://www.radio.gov.uk/document/consult/amradio/amateur.htm>.

It was explained that Amateur Radio is suffering a decline and there is a strong need to simplify the entry criteria to encourage more people to take up the hobby and secure its survival i.e. increase the number of Amateur Radio operators.

#### Objective:

To review future licensing proposals and send a collated response to the appropriate authorities.

#### Discussion:

The discussion commenced with a brief review of the Radio Agency's proposals. It was agreed that the need to pass the RAE is perceived as a "bar" to people entering the hobby, particularly youngsters. This has led to the proposals of an even lower entry level than that of the Novice i.e. Foundation.

It was noted that any changes are unlikely to be implemented until after the 2002 WARC, due to the issue of the Morse requirement to be dropped for frequencies below 30MHz.

One possibility of licence structure was:

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Foundation   | VHF, commercial equipment limited to 25w |
| Intermediate | Novice A                                 |
| Advance      | Current A & B licences                   |

It was raised that one bar in entering the hobby was the high prices for commercial equipment and was seen as a further bar if this was the only way for a basic entry into the hobby. It was pointed out that commercial equipment operates in an understood way and adjusted to minimise interference to other spectrum users.

It was noted that a significant number of governments see Amateur radio operation as useful. Also a large number of amateurs occupy senior positions.

Further discussion highlighted a view that unlike other hobbies, one couldn't in Amateur Radio just pick up a microphone and operate - and this is not met by the 2-way greeting message concession. Why couldn't Clubs be able to allow anyone to operate as they wanted but under the Club supervision? It's a case of "don't want to hear about it" BUT "do it".

In response to a question as to why foundation level operation is proposed to be limited to VHF, it was suggested that the scope to cause interference is less at VHF than HF.

Discussion continued regarding possible callsign series, one such proposal would change callsigns held by existing holders e.g.

G series would be for advance holders

M series for foundation

? series for Intermediate level.

The general feeling was that this proposal would have serious problems, existing licensees expressed a very strong desire to keep their existing callsigns.

Concerning getting people into the hobby, simplifying the route was seen as good, though the approach used by the Novice licence seems to have failed, and has many hurdles. It was further noted that for those from a non-technical background, the full RAE is very daunting. People now have lots of distractions on their leisure time so a simpler entry route into the hobby was seen as an advantage.

Previous routes into the hobby was the 70's boon of CB, since long died out, and more recently a trend for marine operators once licensed to also take up the Amateur Radio hobby. Noted that the majority of the 19 members present had reached their "A" licence by first holding a "B" licence, so a progressive route with several tiers was not seen as a disadvantage. Another route into the hobby was that of SWL, though the virtual disappearance of AM operation has removed a simple route to initially listening to amateurs using AM domestic radios.

It was hoped that the next WARC in 2002 would maintain CW exclusive segments even if it agrees to remove the Morse requirement for HF operation.

The meeting also agreed that the mystique of Amateur Radio had long since gone due to the advent of easy world-wide communications, along with the increasing penetration of mobile telephony.

Another suggestion the setting-up of Radio clubs in schools but it was recognised that time and resources were a scare resource.

#### Summary:

- 1 Current RAE seen as a barrier to entering the hobby, especially those with no technology background;
- 2 Entry solely dependant upon using commercial equipment could fail due to high prices;
- 3 Need ability for new people to be able to operate straight away, not just a greeting message, under say Club supervision. It's a case of "don't want to hear about it" BUT "do it";
- 4 Why limit Foundation entry to VHF;
- 5 Need sensitive consideration to Callsign series, major problems would be had in attempting to re-issue existing licences;
- 6 A progressive licence structure not seen as a disadvantage;
- 7 Setting up of Radio clubs in schools would have benefits;
- 8 Mystique of Amateur radio needs to be revived!

#### CLUB DIRECTION:

The meeting concluded with a discussion on whether or not the Club should take the bold step of changing the Club Name and/or direction to bring in computing and the youngsters.

Broadening the scope would seem to make sense since computing is now invading the hobby in many forms - it is anyway another form of communication. Digital modes like PSK31 are becoming popular.

It would also keep the Club moving forward NOT backwards. Shouldn't be seen as closing the door on the future. Noted that Crystal Palace has a computing section in their Newsletter, along with computing sessions held by the Wimbledon Club.

No conclusion was reached however, and it was left for the Committee to consider further.

*Sec's Note: The following committee meeting decided to leave our title as it is - the hobby is naturally embracing the computing - it's just another way of communicating. Primarily recognising our size we are a Radio Club and still viable, so no name change currently necessary. Do the members agree?*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES and Local Club Activities:

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Feb  | <b>Ropes &amp; Knots - Jim Gale G4WYJ</b>   |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb  | Thames Valley ARTS – Technical & Topical Discussion @ QTH of David G3KQR – <b>NOT</b> Library reading Room, Giggs Hill, Thames Ditton – 8pm. Sec: Trevor M0CDB 01372-457674 |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> Feb  | Crawley ARC – Junk Sale @ Hut 18, Tilgate Forest Recreational Centre, Tilgate Forest, Crawley – 7.30pm. Sec: Jerry G0FPI 01293-512932                                       |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb  | W&DARS – Domestic Radio Through the Decades (20's-50's) - Len Stuart @ St. Andrew's Church Hall, Herbert Road, Wimbledon - 8pm. Details: Jim G4WYJ 01737-356745             |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> Feb | <b>SRCC VHF NFD Group Meeting @ Peter's G3ZPB QTH - 01737 551413</b>  |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> Feb | CATS – Video Evening, EGM and Discussion @ St. Swithun's Church Hall, Grovelands Rd, Purley – 8pm. Contact:: Andy G0KZT 01737-552139  |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Crawley ARC – Phase 3D "Oscar 40" David G0MRP @ Hut 18, Tilgate Forest Recreational Centre, Tilgate Forest, Crawley – 7.30pm. Sec: Jerry G0FPI 01293-512932                 |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Sutton & Cheam RS – TBA @ Vice Presidents Lounge, Sutton United Football Club, Gander Green Lane, Sutton – 7.30 for 8pm. Sec: John G0BWW 020-8644 9945                      |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Crystal Palace – AGM & Construction Contest @ All Saints Parish Rooms, Beulah Hill – 7pm. Sec: Bob G3OOU 01737 552170   |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb | <b>“B” Mtg. Fix It &amp; Advice + Move-it-on</b>  |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Bromley & District - Chilean Operations Video @ Victory Social Club, Kechill Gardens, Hayes – 7.30 for 8pm. Sec: Alan G0TLK 020-8777 0420                                   |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb | <b>SRCC Annual Dinner 7.30 for 8pm @ The Windmill, Wallington</b>   |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb | South London College ARS (G3HFY) - Operating Procedures (Pass RAE papers) @ ATC HQ, Commonsides West, Mitcham - 7.30pm. Details: Derek M0BGX 020-8684 0963                  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Mar  | <b>Spring Surplus Equipment Sale</b>  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr  | <b>AGM</b>  |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> May | <b>Construction Contest &amp; Constructing Eve</b>  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Jun  | <b>TBA</b>  |

SRCC Meetings indicated in **BOLD** with venue of Terra Nova unless otherwise stated.

### NEXT MEETING: SRCC Annual Dinner @ The Windmill, Wallington - 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 01

I am pleased to announce that we have now made firm arrangements with Stephanie of The Windmill for us to hold our Annual Club Dinner in their rear room on Saturday evening 24<sup>th</sup> February, 7.30 for 8pm.

She now needs urgent confirmation of numbers and any special Dietary requirements. For Dietary needs she can be contacted on 020-8773 9141.

Member's price is £16 per head and I would appreciate your £5 per head deposits ASAP, in the meantime please catch me at meetings or call me on 020-8644 7589 to reserve your place. My address is at the top of this Newsletter - thanks to those of you who have already sent me deposits.

### MEMBER NEWS

Firstly, I have been informed that Harry G3SBV had a short spell in hospital recently for a small procedure. I understand all is going well.

Secondly, Bernie thanks those of you who continue to send him used stamps for funds for the Diamond Riding Centre. The centre is currently closed for the winter and so we personally thank via John G3BFP for the efforts of the Old Coulsdon Rest Home, in particular Elsie who is large contributor - thank you.

I have heard of two of our members who operated during the recent AFS contest (Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> Jan), namely John G3BFP and Charlie M0BIN. If we had thought about it better we could have had one other operator on for this CW contest and achieve a Club entry for the first time in a long while - maybe next year?

### Bernie's G8TB 136kHz Experience:

After the excellent talk by Derek G3GRO on the 136 band 1 decided to "have a go"! I knocked up two crystal oscs. about 8 Mhz, one of which was pullable, and mixed to cover the 136 band. A driver and a PA gave me about 25 watts in and 0.2 amps to the antenna. John G3BFP heard me but the other day I worked G8RW in Hayes Kent at 569. I have heard stations from all the UK and several continentals. Next step.. .more power?? G8TB

### FREE LICENCES FOR OVER 75's:

You will have read in the February RadCom that a recent press release from the Radiocommunications Agency says that from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2001, Amateur and Citizen's Band Radio Licences will be issued free to those aged 75 years and over.

New Licence applications received on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April will be issued free of charge to any person aged 75 or over at the time of issue. Existing licence-holders whose licence renewal is due on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> April, and who are 75 years of age or over at that time, will have their licence renewed at no charge. Licences will still need to be renewed each year, but no licence fee will be required.

### ARE YOU A RADIO AMATEUR FAMILY?

Robert and Mikiko have made aware of the following that was carried in the January RadCom:

The RSGB is looking for a family to work with on a TV project about amateur radio. If you would be interested in participating, write and tell us about yourselves and your activities. Reply to:

TV Project, RSGB, Lambda House, Cranborne Road, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 3JE

### CONSTRUCTING EVENING 14<sup>th</sup> May 01

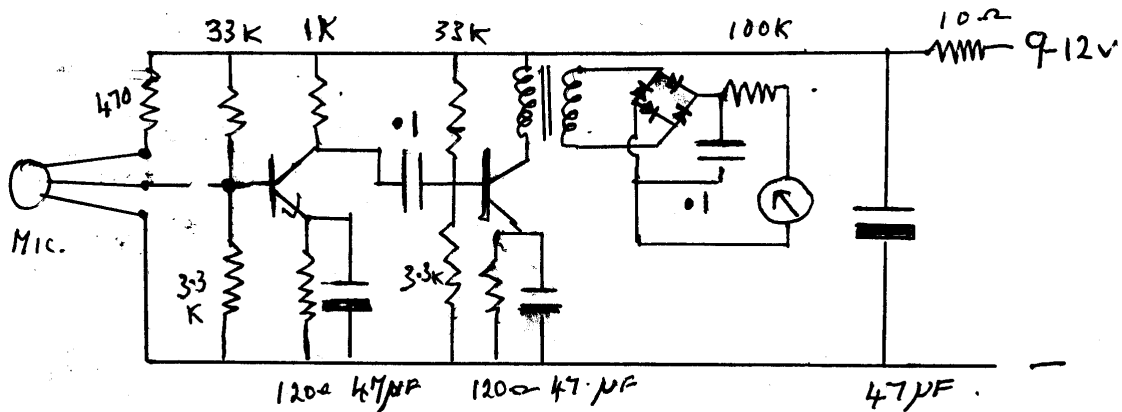
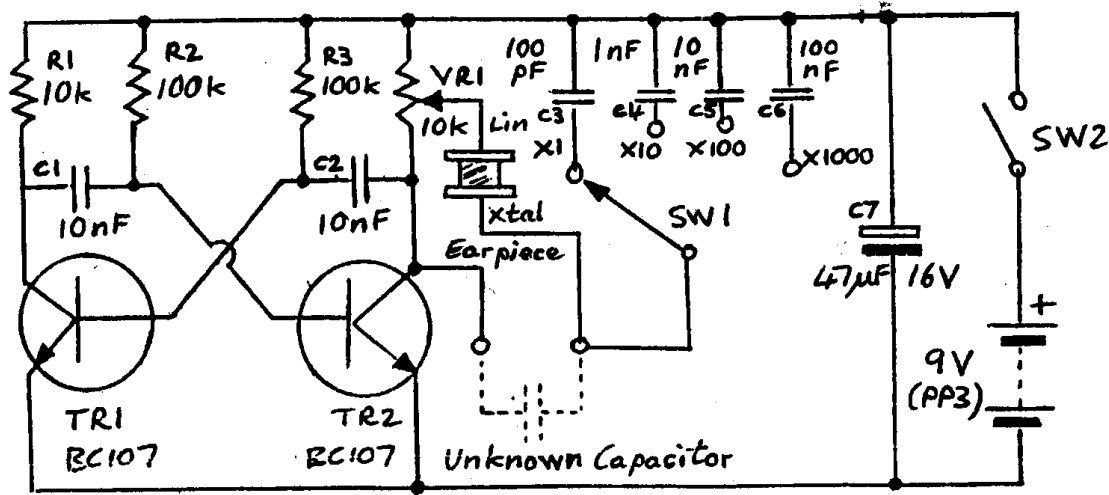
At the last Committee Meeting it was decided to go ahead again this year with a Constructing Evening (as well as the Construction Contest). However we need your ideas for a simple project e.g. Capacity Measurement, CTSSS, Lead Acid battery tester, 12v Expanded Scale Meter or W.H.Y. Suggestions to the Committee please - thanks.

**CAPACITY Measurement - Article from Bernie G8TB:**

I have described before my device which is very good for measuring capacities of 0 to about 800 pfs. Having seen the circuit of a bridge to measure larger capacities, in the newsletter of Sutton and Cheam, described by COAXA and G8DI U, I decided to build it.

gain audio types e.g. BC109C.

- The paper scale, drawn around the pointer on the 10K pot is calibrated 0 -1000 using the closest tolerance capacitors to hand e.g. 1% at low pF values, if possible and 10% worst case for capacitors above 1000pF.
- The capacitors attached to the switch should



I found it worked very well but the crystal earpiece I used 'did not give much volume, perhaps I am going deaf!! So I experimented and, it may sound silly, but by placing an Electret microphone close to the earpiece and with a small amplifier it worked fine. I then decided to use a meter to indicate null and bingo that also worked fine. Due to the poor low voltage linearity of diodes I used a small LS transformer to increase the sensitivity. It is possible to see the variations between condensers of the supposedly same value! I use it from my bench supply so the current of about 30 to 60 Has is no problem. I extend my thanks to S&CRS and to GOAXA for the original design.

The circuit is a simple bridge fed with around 650Hz from a 2-transistor multi-vibrator with the 10K linear pot, the known cap via the range switch and the unknown cap forming the bridge. A cheap Crystal earpiece indicates bridge balance in the form of a null in the 600Hz tone.

**Notes:**

- E is a cheap high-impedance earpiece at a cost of 99p.
- The transistors can be any NPN silicon high

be as close to 1% as possible.

- Due to the high impedance of low value capacitors, the audio is lower on the x1 range but still useable down to 5pF.
- Battery consumption is around 1 mA.

**SIGNING OFF:**

That's it for this month, I have left over for next month some articles and pictures from Gareth G4XAT.

Don't forget the AGM on April 2<sup>nd</sup> - I'll put a further notice in next month's Newsletter along with a Nomination slip. This will be Graham's G3RJW last year and so we will need to elect a new Chairman.

I hope I haven't missed anything this month but I suspect that the usual Ray *ism's* are to be found! By the way don't forget to keep checking the Club WEB site as I am now keeping it up to date - comments welcomed.

I look forward to seeing you all at Jim's G4WYJ talk next Monday. (Turned out the usual 4 pages after all!)

Ray G4FFY

73 and 88

Posted: 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2001