



SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB

JANUARY 2001 — No: 700

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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 SUTTON
 Surrey SM1 3LD
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 E-Mail: secretary@g3src.org.uk

MONTHLY MEETINGS 1ST AND 3RD MONDAYS 7.45 FOR 8pm

AT THE T.S. TERRA NOVA, 34 THE WALDRONS, SOUTH CROYDON

"A" MEETING 8th Jan 2001 AMATEUR RADIO SYMPOSIUM + IEE LECTURE VIDEO

"B" MEETING 22nd Jan 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



Hello and welcome to the first newsletter of the New Year. We wish all our members and friends a Happy New Year.

Hopefully you all put in your new diaries that the first meeting of the SRCC is actually next Monday 8th January 2001.

For this month's "A" meeting on Monday 8th January we are holding two meetings in one due

to the problems encountered last month. In other words we shall be showing an IEE lecture video followed by a symposium on the "Future of Amateur Radio".

Further to the VHF NFD results published last month (we came 8th in the Mix and Match section) we are planning to hold a 2000 Inquest and 2001 Planning meeting at the QTH of Peter's G3ZPB, probably during February.

NEXT "A" MEETING: Monday 8th Jan 01 IEE Lecture Video + Symposium on the "Future of Amateur Radio"

Firstly, apologies to all of you who turned up last month for the scheduled IEE Lecture Video evening. Unfortunately it was "egg on face" time and despite the pre-meeting planning we found the lead connecting the VCR to the Video projector to be unsuitable.

So, we have decided to start the January "A" meeting with the latest IEE Lecture Video *"Time and Place - In the Communications Age"* presented by University College, London and was supported by Marconi.

The ability to measure time with exact precision is taken for granted. However only a few generations ago clocks were set locally by the sun, but only when it shone! Modern electronic technology has given us the ability to not only measure time accurately, wherever we are, but to measure distance, position, speed and many other things.

Satellites moving at very high speed know precisely where they are to within centimetres and can electronically monitor crops, earth movements, or climate changes throughout the world. We can know exactly where we are on land or sea and communicate with others anywhere on the surface of the earth. At the other extreme, we can electronically 'see' inside the human body, monitor our own hearts working or examine babies before they are born. We can store huge amounts of information, such as maps, on CD-ROM or other electronic media.

Next generation mobile phones with high quality displays will be more like today's laptop computers and will work with the Internet to offer vast opportunities communicating pictures, text and data around the world at lightning speed, truly 'Global Networking' for real!

'Time and Place', through the use of multi-media and 'live' demonstrations, illustrates how these exciting technologies are being used to extend human capability.

Following this video we will be turning the meeting over to a discussion lead by Peter G3ZPB regarding the Future of Amateur Radio.

Further reading regarding the future structure of the Amateur Radio Licence and Examination can be found at the Internet sites of the RSGB and The Radio Agency as follows: <http://www.rsgb.org/lic/raefut1.htm>, and <http://www.radio.gov.uk/document/consult/amradio/amateur.htm>.

For those of you without the Internet I have extracted some information and reproduce it below:

Extract from RSGB Site:

The Future of Amateur Radio Examinations - the next step

Thank you for all the input you have made to the working group chaired by Richard Horton, G3XWH, on the future licence and examinations structure. The Society would now like your views on the latest proposals we are making to take things forward.

Our proposals :-

- need to be future proof and reflect a future of rapidly changing technology
- anticipate the removal of the Morse requirement for access to HF bands
- include a competency based assessment - 'the safe and competent amateur'
- make provision for supervised operation
- two licence levels - Foundation and Full
- allow for the candidate to select and study areas of especial interest

Your views are urgently sought by the RSGB and the RA - [Click here for the full text of Richard's proposals.](#)

Extract from Radio Agency site:

If amateur radio is to survive, we need to encourage more people, particularly youngsters, into the hobby. The Agency believes that there should be a relatively simple entry point into amateur radio to get people started (a Foundation Licence). This entry point would require minimal qualifications and allow newcomers a first taste of amateur radio. Our initial thoughts are that applicants will need to have completed a short competence based practical course which would cover the basics of amateur radio; safety, operating techniques (including on-air training under direct supervision), basic licence conditions and basic technical knowledge. At the end of the course, a simple multiple-choice examination would be conducted by the course tutor. Ideally these courses would be run through approved amateur radio clubs.

As qualifications are minimal, operation would be limited to the VHF amateur bands and only commercially produced equipment would be permitted. Power would be limited [25W ERP] with antennas restricted to omni-directional dipoles. The use of all current permitted facilities and operational modes would be allowed. Consideration was given to making this a short term licence, meaning that after three years the individual would be required to move on to the next level. However, this idea was rejected because

it was felt that it was better to keep people in the hobby rather than forcing them to give up if they did not wish to progress to a more advanced level. It should also be recognised that amateur radio should provide an element of choice and some people may be quite happy to stay at this basic level.

We feel that there should be a more incentive based licensing system to encourage radio amateurs to develop their skills by linking licence privileges with qualifications held. While we could introduce a Foundation Licence at any time, further restructuring of the amateur service will need to be postponed until a decision has been reached on the Morse issue. This is due to be discussed at the 2002 World Radio Conference where it is likely that the international requirement for users of frequencies below 30 MHz to prove that they can send and receive Morse code signals correctly, will be dropped. This will allow the UK to decide whether or not a Morse test is relevant as a qualification for HF operation.

If the mandatory knowledge of Morse was to be dropped in the UK, we could introduce three levels of licence; the Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced. All would require the basic competence course while the Intermediate and Advanced would require additional qualifications. Providing there are sufficient call signs we would prefer to retain different call signs for each licence class. It would be necessary to transfer existing licensees into the new classes and there is a natural progression path from the current Novice to the new Intermediate and from the current Full to the new Advanced Licences.

The table below summarises this progression:

CURRENT LICENCE CLASS	NEW LICENCE CLASS
Full Class A	Advanced
Full Class A/B	Advanced
Full Class B	Advanced
Novice Class A	Intermediate
Novice Class B	Intermediate - Foundation

These are very much initial thoughts and we are currently working with the RSGB to develop these ideas. We would be interested to hear from licensees on whether they agree with our initial thoughts or whether you have ideas of your own. Please let us know by e-mail to amcb@ra.qsi.gov.uk or by writing to the Amateur Radio Section, Radiocommunications Agency, Wyndham House, Marsh Wall, London E14 9SX.

NEXT "B" MEETING: Monday 22nd Jan 01 FIX-IT and "MOVE-IT-ON" Evening

The "B" meeting on Monday 22nd 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.

The Christmas meeting held 18th Dec was well attended; and may I extend special thanks to Mikiko who helped out in the Kitchen in the making of the welcomed tea, and also to Norman GOLSN for those delicious mince pies.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES and Local Club Activities:

2 nd Jan	Thames Valley ARTS – Open Forum & Propagation Update by G3ENI @ Library reading Room, Giggs Hill, Thames Ditton – 8pm. Sec: Trevor M0CDB 01372-457674
8 th Jan	“A” Mtg. IEE Lecture Video & Where is Amateur Radio Going? - Symposium
8 th Jan	CATS – Construction of an Automatic Weather Station by Dave Young G8VXB @ St. Swithun’s Church Hall, Grovelands Rd, Purley – 8pm. Contact:: Andy G0KZT 01737-552139
12 th Jan	W&DARS – Arcs & Sparks by Graham G4WNT @ St. Andrew’s Church Hall, Herbert Road, Wimbledon - 8pm. Details: Jim G4WYJ 01737-356745
16 th Jan	Bromley & District - AGM @ Victory Social Club, Kechill Gardens, Hayes – 7.30 for 8pm. Sec: Alan G0TLK 020-8777 0420
18 th Jan	Sutton & Cheam RS – "Antenna Modelling" by Paul G0TXL @ Vice Presidents Lounge, Sutton United Football Club, Gander Green Lane, Sutton – 7.30 for 8pm. Sec: John G0BWV 020-8644 9945
20 th Jan	Crystal Palace – Bee Keeping - Peter Springhall @ All Saints Parish Rooms, Beulah Hill – 7pm. Sec: Bob G30OU 01737 552170
22 nd Jan	“B” Mtg. Fix It & Advice + Move-it-on
24 th Jan	Crawley ARC – AGM @ Hut 18, Tilgate Forest Recreational Centre, Tilgate Forest, Crawley – 7.30pm. Sec: Jerry G0FPI 01293-512932
31 st Jan	South London College ARS (G3HFY) - ATC HQ, Commonsidge West, Mitcham - 7.30pm. Details: Derek M0BGX 020-8684 0963
5 th Feb	Ropes & Knots - Jim Gale G4WYJ
19 th Feb	“B” Mtg. Fix It & Advice + Move-it-on
5 th Mar	Spring Surplus Equipment Sale
2 nd Apr	AGM
14 th May	Construction Contest & Constructing Eve
4 th Jun	TBA

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

So the Internet will kill Amateur Radio? I think NOT! - Part #2 - Gareth G4XAT

This concludes last month's article from Gareth:

The Applied Power Technologies site (www.advancedpower.com/techsupp/app_notes/apt9701/) in particular has some interesting designs, like mosfet amplifiers powered by a 300-volt rail! You 'hardly' need a PSU, just rectify the mains!

During the course of my searching for data I tried the ARRL (<http://www.arrl.org/>) and its related sites. There I found an article 'Brick for 6M'. A single MRF294 provided 10dB of gain and the design is based on the Motorola published test circuit with bias and output filtering added. A email to the ARRL requesting the PCB track design produced the required patterns and the board was made one evening, using a combination of vinyl and Dalo pen. A heatsink was found in the junk box, a transistor from J Birkett, (SD1487, 100 watts and 13dB at 30 MHz which I reckon will still manage 10 or 11dB at 50MHz), PC board to make the box and the rest from 'stock'. I'll report on it's actual performance later. The internet a threat?? More an asset I suspect!

Contesting, what's in it for me?

The VHF NFD contest and subsequent results has promoted some debate, which I hope can be constructively progressed at the next VHF NFD Contest group meeting. In the meantime I have received the following from Gareth G4XAT which I am pleased to promulgate:

Well the results are out again. No first places but what I suppose you could call an acceptable placing for a 'bunch of enthusiastic amateurs'. Is it worth the effort??

I haven't been a keen contester since licensed, far from it. One year I entered the Practical Wireless 2 M QRP contest. I remember it well, I came LAST!!!

The appeal of amateur radio is an obscure thing. I am fascinated by the way a bit of wire can allow me to talk to a Kuwaiti amateur on New Years Eve, seconds later I am wishing an Argentinean all the best for 2000! Equally I really enjoy making things (you may have noticed!) - I built my first crystal set aged 10 and despite most of my circuits NOT working until I was 16 or so I stuck with it. I don't know why they didn't work or why I stuck with it! I am still on my first logbook (started 3/82) but there aren't many pages left. The fact remains that some aspect of the hobby 'does it for us' and that assembling and operating a contest station can be fun - really!

From my own perspective I enjoy the challenge of building a station in less than ideal conditions (a wet field) with less than ideal resources (not having a bottomless wallet for instance, or 365 days to prepare). There is the camaraderie too, us against them! Some things remain against us - the site, but at least it's close to home, and as I get older, the more I like my own bed! - Life is after all, a compromise. Contest placing versus own bed, NO contest!!

This year we tried the HF contest. I have always approached contests using the tune around and pick 'em off method, ok if things are quite (it was QUIET on 23 CMS this year) or if you are just wondering if your latest creation is actually 'getting out' - particularly if you are using QRP gear. HF was different (thanks Jim for showing me the way) and working India and Australia on 10 metres was a real buzz, I hope they were 'real' stations! Setting up a single station was easier, although all the dipoles were cut for inverted V operation and didn't like the 80 foot centre, 30 ft each end height. Next year we will know, but will we have done anything about it?

Sadly, despite two requests, I believe that there has been a 'nil' response to requests for feedback to the Editor. Could we all at least say if we want to do it again, or change which contest we enter? For example 6 metres is FUN, stations to work, possibility of DX and the unknown? Are we constructors who want to try out new gear, or operators after prefixes, or just 'old hands' supporting the club, or all three?

We all need back a little bit of what makes amateur radio what it is. Putting together a station (or stations) in the 'middle of nowhere' and having the foresight, contingency and enthusiasm to ensure they are reliable enough to operate for 24 hours is what makes it for me. I'd love to see the G5BY trophy back in the SRCC, but at least we didn't (a) get stuck in the mud (twice) or have a (new) generator fail after 4 hours. What? No backup? No comment! but please send yours to the Editor. Writing a newsletter can be a lonely job!

Thanks Gareth - I will be very interested in receiving thoughts and comments from members. I mentioned earlier that there had been some discussion re VHF NFD and those on E-Mail will have seen the following comments from John G8IYS:

Just a few observations on VHF NFD: What happened to the SRCC B station results on 50 MHz? It is interesting that those clubs who opted for 50 MHz as one of their 4 band entries did rather well in the overall results. The introduction of 50MHz almost killed 23 cm stone dead. I like 6m but am very disappointed about the consequential effect on 23cm.

I accept that a 6m antenna is somewhat more difficult to get in the sky than one for 23 cm, but I think that 6m was popular because (with the appropriate QRK) you can readily buy a 6m transceiver. 23 cm is much more testing in terms of greater needs for construction of an effective station and frankly more rewarding to do well with.

If there are to be 5 bands again, then perhaps a weighting in favour of the upper bands should be considered by the Contests Committee e.g. 6m and 4m are times 1, 2m is times 1.5, 70cm is times 3, 23 cm is times 10. That would surely cause a rethink and encourage more activity on 23cm. What do others think? I hope that the Club Committee will be feeding back comments to RSGB Contests Committee.

Just in passing. I have replaced the blown up components in my 70cm Transverter and it runs happily with 30 watts o/p and the receiver is sensitive. I accept that I have a good take off at 450 ft ASL in Sanderstead but using only a rubber duck as an antenna lying on my shack bench, the High Wycombe and the Ealing repeaters are s5, the Banstead repeater is s9. I can also hear, at about s1 but with very little noise, the repeater at Farnham. There is also an enormous carrier on 433.175 - does anyone know what it is?

I am now rebuilding the transceiver interface which cranks down the RF o/p from the 28MHz driver to about 3mW level using the ALC line. The earlier model suffered noise sidebands from the -ve volts generator being coupled onto the 28MHz if by induction via closely located changeover relay coil !!! Splitting into functional modules and enclosing each in tinplate screening boxes within the main die cast box, I hope will be the answer. Work in progress.

It will probably be after Xmas when i get a 70cm antenna in the sky. Has anyone got a 10ft length of thick wall 1-3/4 in dia. Ali tube they would like to dispose of (I don't want it for free - but I cannot transport it without buying a roof rack for my Rover 75 at an eeeeeenormous price).

73 de John G8IYS. P.S. I am learning Morse!!!!!!!

Thanks John for the comments and update. John G8IYS can be contacted on 020-8657 0454

MEMBER NEWS

The club is pleased to welcome John Mathews G3ENG to our membership and hope that your association with us John will be a long one. John has already proved invaluable at the "Fix-it" evenings - thank you. John lives in Epsom and can be contacted on 01372 742611.

May I also pass on our congratulations to Ivor Morgan-Jones G6CZL who passed the Morse Test on 5th Oct last (if my sources are correct?) and is now the proud holder of the call M5IMJ - well done Ivor. Ivor can often be heard operating from HMS Belfast.

I've also had the following E-Mail from Don M0CVZ:

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your family, and all members of the SRCC, a Merry Christmas and a bright and Prosperous New Year.

I picked up the Cct boards for the Picatune ATU just before Christmas, as it seemed an "interesting" project to undertake. The boards are of a very professional standard and so is the know-how needed to do the project. A Picatune get-together for all Picatune enthusiasts at a B meeting maybe?

Had a talk with Paul Berkeley - M0CJX/G8CBH who makes/supplies the board for the Project. Paul is happy to come along to the club to discuss design techniques, pitfalls and other matters associated with construction of the project. He was quick to point out that building of the board was due more to a personal need rather than an in depth knowledge of the project itself.

73's Don M0CVZ

Thanks Don and I look forward to further debate, etc.

On a sad note I have been informed that Barry G0WBF is seriously ill and that the prognosis is not very good. Has anyone been in contact with him recently?

CLUB DINNER 2001

The Committee has agreed to hold our Annual Dinner once again at the Windmill Pub in Wallington on a Saturday during February. Prior to Christmas we weren't able to tie the Landlady down to a date but the Committee have pencilled in 10th, 17th, or 24th Feb.

Menus and cost are also still to be worked out but I will be pleased to receive your deposits to reserve your place. I would appreciate £5.00 a head (cheques payable to Ray Howells) to my address at the top of this Newsletter - thanks.

FOR SALE:

Arthur G3YRB has a 2-metre Tempo S1 Transceiver Synthesised Handheld FOR SALE. It covers 144-148MHz in 5kHz steps (800 steps) and also has a 600kHz Repeater offset facility. New 9.6v battery pack and has 1.5W O/P. £30 ono.

Arthur can be contacted on 020-8684 3974

WANTED: "TOKEN RING" N/Wk I/F Cards

David How is regrettably spending time on his computer network rather than concentrating on his Amateur Radio Operating! I have been advised that he is trying to locate some cheap (preferably free) 'Token Ring' Network Interface Cards (NIC) that are working preferably at 16Mbit/s with RG45 sockets. These may look similar to 'Ethernet' NICs but are different.

I do not wish to encourage David too much in his activity, but should someone have some of these cards, David says that he would appreciate an e-mail at G0PAR@lanky.demon.co.uk with details of the cards. He is looking for some 4 - 8 cards. Talking to him at club meetings may also be a good alternative to sending him an e-mail.

SIGNING OFF:

That's it for this month - but a final reminder for your support for this month's "A" meeting - Amateur Radio Symposium and IEE Lecture Video Evening.

Also please keep sending me contributions for the Newsletter - they are always welcomed. I look forward to your comments simulated by the Contesting contributions above, and also your LF experiences. Have a photo for next month of the Evans junior ops 'warming themselves around a healthy pair of triodes', the radio amateurs equivalent of a roaring log fire!!

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.

Ray G4FFY

73 and 88

Posted: 2nd Jan 2001