



SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB

JULY 2004 — No: 742

CLUB NET 1.905 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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 Surrey SM1 3LD
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MONTHLY MEETINGS 1ST AND 3RD MONDAYS 7.45 FOR 8pm

Normally AT THE T.S. TERRA NOVA, 34 THE WALDRONS, SOUTH CROYDON, CR0 4AZ

"A" MEETING 5th July 2004 BBQ at Gareth's G4XAT

"B" MEETING 19th July 2004 FIX-IT, ADVICE, CHIN-WAG, CLUB STATION + "MOVE-IT-ON"

Chairman	G4XAT Gareth Evans	020-8462 2837
Vice-Chairman	G4WAY Roger Holyoake	020-8689 7089
Treasurer, Liaison & Equipment	G4DDY Maurice Fagg	020-8669 1480
Secretary, Membership & Communications	G4FFY Ray Howells	020-8644 7589
VHF Co-ordinator (Co-Opted)	G8IYS John Simkins	020-8657 0454
Publicity & HF Co-ordinator	M1MRS Robert Shepperley	020-8687 0811
Club Meetings	G4FDN Pat McGuinness	020-8643 0491
Members	G3RJW Graham Marshall	020-8669 8722
	G8TB Bernie Wynn	020-8660 7517

Dear Members & Friends

Hello and welcome to a shorten July 2004 Newsletter which is being hurriedly typed on Thursday night prior to the big weekend of VHF NFD and then the BBQ at Gareth's G4XAT on Monday night. For some reason this month it has gone mad with lots of people having problems with Worms and Trojans, all for not having simple but effective Firewall and Anti-Virus products installed, not forgetting Spy Ware scanning programs. Still keeps me busy and employed but less time for the Newsletter production!

NEXT "A" MEETING: Monday 5th July 2004 Summer BBQ at Gareth's G4XAT

This year we are indebted to Gareth G4XAT & Jayne Evans who will be hosting the SRCC Barbecue at their home of 7 Westland Drive, Hayes, Bromley, Kent BR2 7HE. The date is next Monday 5th July, time 7.30 for 8pm.

To find their home when travelling along the A232 between Hayes Common and West Wickham, at the intersection of Glebe Way/Croydon Road turn north into Coney Hill Road, then 2nd right into Westland Drive. PLEASE NOTE this meeting is not held at our usual venue of Terra Nova.

Members should bring their own meat (sausages, chops, hamburgers, fish etc) to be cooked, and something to sit on. It would be appreciated if those of you planning to come to contact Gareth and Jayne in advance (Tel: 020-8462 2837 or E-Mail: G4XAT@ntlworld.com) so that there are sufficient quantities of salad and bread – thanks.

Bring along your BAT receivers – it could be interesting. There's no ping-pong but can watch the pond!

VHF NFD WEEKEND: Sat 3rd/Sun 4th July @ Field-Day Site of Nore Hill, Warlingham

It is here, the weekend of the year when SRCC takes part in the VHF NFD contest. We will be located in the normal field, as the farmer has made it available to us. It is located along the Limpsfield Road, about half a mile south from the junction with Slines Oaks Road.

Once again John G8MNY will be joining us to put up a 23cm station, with Jim G4WYJ leading the 2m station, Peter G3ZPB the 70cm station, John G3BFP the 6m station; along with other friends and local club members, the more the better. So, this activity will be an ideal opportunity for any of you to take part.

Personnel are wanted to help put the stations up, and do some operating - so please come along. The weekend itinerary is as follows:

- Up on site from 8:30am Saturday for aerial erection and station assembly;
 - Contest runs from 15:00BST Saturday till 15:00BST Sunday, and we will be operating:
 - 6m G3SRC/P (Saturday only)
 - 2m G3WIM/P
 - 70cm G3ZPB/P
 - 23cm G8MNY/P
 - Sunday afternoon for aerial and station dismantling
- More details can be obtained from John G8IYS (020-8657 0454).

NEXT "B" MEETING: Monday 19th July 2004 FIX-IT, Advice, Chin-Wag & "MOVE-IT-ON"

The "B" meeting on Monday 19th July is back to the regular "Fix-It" and advice evening with the extra twist. If you have a radio item or anything else 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 7th June 2004 ENIGMA PROJECT with Claire Greer

We were very pleased to welcome Claire Greer on Monday 7th June, Director of the Enigma Project at Sussex University, to give us a presentation on the Enigma Machine.



This was an excellent evening and we have had lots of feedback and thanks, especially from all the visitors. The attendance swelled to over 30 making it worthwhile to arrange such a calibre of talk, something we will consider for the future on an occasional basis.

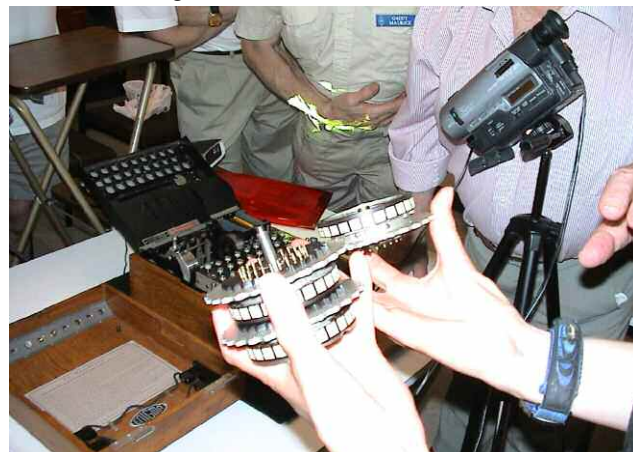
I will try and supply a more detailed write-up of the talk next month (time allowing!) but in the meantime here is a picture of the Enigma Machine that Claire brought along (a 3-rotor version):



The rotors can be removed and repositioned with a set of 5 supplied per machine, all wired differently. Each has 26 letters A to Z with a click over point that can be changed. Further combinations of coding are achieved by a front plug panel. As a letter is entered the first rotor is moved by one position and a lamp lights, representing the code when sending or the decoded letter when receiving. So it was important to know the starting position using dispatched key sheets, and the settings were changed every day, usually at midnight was mentioned.



Claire's talk commenced with a brief history on this series of presentations given mainly to schools to promulgate Code and Code breaking – Maths is fun! Talks have also been given to adult audiences, including Amateur Radio groups. The project was setup by Simon Singh and Claire is the only one allowed/insure to carry around his Enigma Machine. It has to be taken as hand luggage and on planes has had an extra seat booked in the name of Mr Enigma Machine.



A history of cryptography was then given, starting with the difference between Code (whole words replaced) and Cipher (individual letters replaced).

Apparently the Enigma Machine was patented in 1918 by Arthur Scherbius (1878-1929) when he filed the rotor principle. Found this URL: http://www.deutsches-museum.de/ausstell/meister/e_enigma.htm which gives a lot more detail than I have room for.

So more next month, but in the meantime thank you all for making the time to come to the meeting, especially the visitors. Thanks also to Claire for the excellent evening and for bringing along the Enigma Machine.

LAST "B" MEETING: Monday 21st June 2004 GENERATORS with John Stockley G8MNY

The last "B" meeting on Monday 21st June was different to the normal "B" meeting fare, in that we welcomed John Stockley G8MNY for a presentation on "Generators", rather timely recognising VHF NFD is over the next weekend of 3rd/4th July. I wasn't able to make it due to an appointment in Catford that over-ran (a case of a moving block on the inside of a sub-wall for a conservatory!!) but I under the talk topics included Petrol 2-stroke and 4-stroke, mods for /P SSB use. Demo of them e.g. the 25Hz flicker on 4-strokes. What voltage, needs, fuel magnetos, economy, engine RPM. The Alternator, Regulation, Safety, Security. Thank you John for making the time to give us the talk and for the interesting evening

CHAIRMAN THOUGHT of the MONTH - July 2004



The last meeting was a great success if the attendance was anything to go by. Our meeting room at Terra Nova was full - standing room only - for the talk about the Enigma machine and coding in general. Let the committee know what you thought about it.

It's that time of year again when we (Trinity School Racing as we are now known) start our various vehicle races. 20th June sees our first outing in the Greenpower 6 hour races, when we contest the Sussex round. This will give us another shot at beating last years winner as they are Sussex based. Between the 29th June and 1st July we are competing again in the annual Shell Eco-marathon, held at Rockingham Raceway, near Corby. Pressure of work has precluded completion of our new car, leaving just the schools diesel powered 'mouse' and my own petrol/lpg powered 'mouse' to deal with. I was hoping to have fuel injection on mine this year - although the management system is built and tested, there is a lot of hardware to be made or adapted, plus the tuning. However, we have a smaller engine to try this year - it will be interesting to see how the two compare, 90 cc vs. 49 cc, both Honda 3 speed semi-automatics.

Field day weekend also coincides with a Greenpower race, so I won't be around at all on the Sunday. This time it's the Surrey heat, held at Goodwood this year as Brooklands has I believe been sold to Mercedes - we used to use the runway, up and down giving a good length track. Hopefully experience gained at the Sussex heat two weeks previous will allow us put up a good show. It's not all over then either, with the Essex practice and heat taking place on Thursday 15th July with the race actually on the 18th. This promises to be different, as we will be using part of Fords Dunton test track, including a banked bit and nice downhill stretch, unfortunately with a sharp hairpin at one end. It's going to be hard on the brakes, but exciting for the drivers. This year we have proper 2-way communications (5 watt UHF), hopefully by keeping things under careful control everything will go according to plan.

Don't forget the club barbeque, held this year at QTHR G4XAT - me!! The usual arrangement will apply regarding food, (bring some to cook!), seating (bring some just in case). There will be free access to my selection of homebrew, so if you wish to partake, please car-share so that you do not drink and drive! A burgeoning crop of elderflowers has allowed me to brew two batches of my favourite summer beer, a nice light bitter (around 2.5%) with the unmistakable smell and taste of elderflowers - very refreshing. There is also a 'SpeciALE', a very flavoursome brew with huge character and not least, a well-aged Czechoslovakian Pilsner clone. Fingers crossed for the weather - see you there!

Gareth G4XAT

TRINITY SCHOOL - G3TSC - New FT857 from Walters & Stanton

Many of you will recall that I have 're-activated' the old call sign originally granted to Trinity School in the 1960's (G3TSC) and that a number of 'radiating elements' have appeared around the property. What was missing though was a dedicated transceiver - I've been making do with various bit of my own kit.

This worked reasonably well until my old faithful FT757 developed a strange thermal fault on transmit. Easy to trace you may think, with a can of freezer spray. After several hours experimenting, reading the circuit diagram, changing components etc. it was the

same - and then FM receive decided to fail too. What was needed was a new transceiver for exclusive use at work. This time last year (how time flies) I asked for a budget to do just that, and recently I was told that funds were available. Needing to get the best value possible, I emailed all the amateur retailers, explaining that it was a school club station and asking for their best deal on a FT857 and 25 amps PSU. Eventually, all but one replied with a quote, or in many cases, the same price as was shown in their RadCom advert!

However, Walters & Stanton (Hockley, Essex) came back with a very special price, including a very versatile power supply that will do good service in the Electronics Lab too. It was even delivered for free, making a small but significant contribution to the overall cost.

Quickly installed, the radio is clearly a lovely piece of kit. The DSP option (included in the already bargain price) makes a huge difference. Like most large organisations, the school has hundreds of computers, all radiating hash and birdies. Switching it in makes a huge difference on LF and 20 metres, where the massive horizontal loop (132 ft each side, at 50 foot AGL) is a good match directly through a 1:4 balun.

Pupils at the school will be able to study for the Foundation Licence from September.

Gareth G4XAT

MEMBERS NEWS

Alan G7ELG - You get what you pay for ?

"Some time ago I sent pictures of my new 4 band vertical by Sandpiper and sang its praises. However after a few months use I had all sorts of instability.

One day it would tune fine, later the same day the VSWR would not settle and would creep up, even during setting up. Other times the DX77 would only operate on low power. Local boffins up here came up with the following, water in the co-ax, the connection to the antenna has moisture in it. Your P.A. has had it! Having tried everything, including sending the Transmitter away for a full check, the report being perfect on all modes all bands at full power, I took the antenna down.

The first coil I checked was on the 15mtr radial, it was o/c, the 20mtr was high resistance. The reasons why, the coils are wound on Paxolin formers, the ends are partially scraped pushed under the head of what looks like an aluminium rivet which is then flattened, that is the electrical connection. It is finished with a piece of heat-shrink sleeving over the top and job done. 3 months out in the weather and corrosion set in.



Having no space, and the roof occupied now by a WiFi dish feeding a local village for Sat. broad band (incidentally operated by 3 amateurs) I felt my choices were few. So I settled for an MFJ Magnetic loop 10 to 30 MHz. It is about 3m above the ground with the ends of the loop pointing East/West. The bandwidth is narrow and re-tuning is necessary as you move up or down the band, but very easy with the auto tune system.

Now have a perfect match on all bands, and reports of 5/9 to N Italy on 10 Watts SSB. With 15 countries worked in the first 2 days, it has been a worthwhile investment.



G7ELG's MFJ Magnetic Loop 10-30MHz

My concern is that the manufacturers of the problem antenna supply to H.M Gov etc
It does not bear thinking about Alan G7ELG"

Roger G8HDP - tracing G3HVV

"Hello Ray,

Is there any possibility you could put a note in the news letter to try to help a friend of a friend of mine. They are trying to find details of a friend of her husband who was a local radio ham with the call sign G3HVV, his name was, I believe Ron Newman and he lived in Norwood. I have managed to get this much information from the RSGB. We also know that he ran a chemists shop...

We have the feeling that he has probably now passed away...

Hope you are all well... all the best Roger G8HDP

PS You missed a good day at our village fair... a great time was had by all. I would send photo of me with Susan Hampshire but something happened to the film and that frame come out with a very strange green tint... I think I broke the camera."

Oh Roger - my excuse on such occasions is that the camera had no film! In the meantime any details you have on G3HVV please pass them on to Roger G8HDP on 01883 622159 or E-Mail: roggail@globalnet.co.uk - thank you.

Phil G1LKJ & XYL Jackie - Cruise news

"Hi Ray, Jackie and I just got back from a cruise to St Petersburg and the Baltic Cities for eleven days on the MV Van Gogh out of Tilbury.

I took the Yaesu FT817 with me and was able to operate on HF, 2m and 70cms after asking the Captain if it was okay to do so. Conditions were not good due to very low power and a limited antenna on HF. Receive signals due to the noisy environment were not good either.

APRS via a Kenwood TH-7D handie were undertaken though. I met three other amateur's aboard, none QRV.

A very enjoyable time was had. Food, accommodation and entertainment was excellent. Best sailing experience was the Kiel Canal.

Shore excursions were Copenhagen, Stockholm, Tallinn (Estonia), St Petersburg and Helsinki.

Phil G1LKJ and XYL Jackie"

Charlie MOBIN - Soldering Station URL Link

Some time ago (well Feb 2004 !!) Charlie ask me "Do you think it's worth putting the following URL in the SRCC newsletter - in case someone wants to build a K2 now that we have a favourable exchange rate :

http://www.electronics-shopping.co.uk/digital/digital_soldering_station/823969.htm

Well here it is . . . I get there in the end

Stamps for the Diamond Riding Centre

"Hi Ray would you please include in the news letter A thank from Prim for all the used stamps members have sent her in aid of riding for the disabled keep up the good work it is a great help Regards Maurice G4DDY"

THE CALENDAR SECTION

SRCC and Local Club Meeting Dates:

2 nd Jul	Crystal Palace – Variometers and Supporting Test Gear @ All Saints Church Parish Rooms, Beulah Hill. 7.30 for 8pm. Bob G3OOU 01737 552170 (Meetings 1 st and 3 rd Fridays) http://members.aol.com/rfcburns
5 th Jul	SRCC Summer BBQ @ Gareth's G4XAT
9 th Jul	W&DARS – German Radio with Brian G8DIU @ St. Andrew's Church Hall, Herbert Road, Wimbledon – 7.30 for 8pm 2 nd & last Friday's Details: Jim M0CON on 020-8874 7456 http://www.wadars.thersgb.net
12 th Jul	CATS – Inter-Club Quiz with Andy Jackson G8JAC Meetings held @ St. Swithun's Church Hall, Grovelands Rd, Purley 8pm 2 nd Monday's. Andy G0KZT 01737-552139 cats@briersa.fsbusiness.co.uk
14 th Jul	Crawley ARC – The ATU with G3GRO and G3VLH. Meetings normally held @ Hut 18, Tilgate Forest Recreational Centre, Tilgate Forest, Crawley – 7.30pm. Jerry G0FPI 01293-512932 www.carc.org.uk
15 th Jul	Sutton & Cheam RS – 'Summer Junk Sale' Meetings @ Vice Presidents Lounge, Sutton United Football Club, Gander Green Lane, Sutton – 7.30 for 8pm. Sec: John G0BWV 020-8644 9945 www.scrs.org.uk
19 th Jul	SRCC "B" Meeting
20 th Jul	Bromley & District – 'Bell Ringing' at Hayes Parish Church – Megan G0MEG. Meetings on 3 rd Tuesday's @ Victory Social Club, Kechill Gardens, Hayes – 7.30 for 8. Alan G0TLK 020-8777 0420 www.bdars.org.uk
27 th Jul	Dorking & District Radio Society – Activity Evening – from 1800hrs HF – 70cms. Meetings normally 4 th Tuesdays @ Friends Meeting House, Butterhill South Street, Dorking – opp. Spotted Dog. Details: Jon G0GNA 01306-883718
28 th Jul	Mitcham & District ARS (Meetings normally last Wednesday of each month) @ ATC Headquarters, Commonside West, Mitcham. Sec: Mike Knott G0WCR 020-8764 4716
30 th Jul – 1 st Aug	AMSAT-UK Space Colloquium and Symposium at the University of Surrey in Guildford. Further details from Jim Heck G3WGM Tel: 01258 453959 E-Mail: g3wgm@amsat.org or www.uk.amsat.org
30 th Jul – 8 th Aug	W&DARS Summer Camp – Crossways Farm, Upper Gattton, Reigate RH2 0TX – details from Andrew Maish G4ADM 07973 184040
2 nd Aug	SRCC Construction Contest – New Date **
6 th Sep	SRCC - TBA

CATS Inter Club Quiz: Monday 12th July @ 8pm St Swithun's Church Hall, Grovelands Rd Purley

The meeting will commence at 8pm and takes the form of a "Pub Style" quiz format covering general knowledge and amateur radio related questions. Teams consist of 4 members and we are welcome to enter as many teams as we wish. Over the past years this has been an enjoyable night with a chance for members of different clubs to get together for a fun evening. Please go along and have some fun.

MULE MOBILE QRP THROUGH BURMA By Reg Prosser G4BUS

FOREWORD By Derek Willson M0BGX

My old ex-Merchant Service Radio Officer friend of more than 62 years, Roger G0TEL, now living in Peacehaven, East Sussex, sends me snippets of information from time to time that he thinks might be of interest. I received from him a photocopy of an article recently appearing in "QSO", the Newsletter of the Radio Officers Association that I found to be most interesting. So I wrote to the author, Reg G4BUS who generously agreed that I might reproduce it and also that any Newsletter Editor of an Amateur Radio Club might do the same, if they felt that it would interest their members.

Why did I find it interesting? Well, for a number of reasons. My Training Sergeant at Catterick on the OWL's course (Operator Wireless and Line) in

1946/47 had only recently returned from the Burma theatre. The WS22 was the main set used during that training, plus of course the WS19, and Reg's description of loading and unloading from a mule rang a bell. We didn't have any mules at Catterick so I was sent out on a field exercise with a companion in the worst winter of the last century where the snow was an average of 2 feet, with drifts of 6 feet or more. To say the least it was flaming cold.

I had the WS22 on my back, fastened there by a webbing strap over each shoulder and a further short strap fastening the two together across my chest. The WS22 was not a heavy set but whilst I was not a seven-stone weakling, I was a lightweight, tipping the scales at only eight and a half stone. Apart from the set, I was wearing what was called FSMO (Field Service Marching Order). This comprised what was called a small pack, filled I might add with a very closely specified number of items, and two pouches attached to the front of the webbing belt that would normally have held ammunition. Then of course I was carrying my Lee Enfield .303 rifle.

Between the 2 of us we carried a large wooden-cased lead-acid battery, a signals satchel containing the essential whip aerials, a further signals satchel containing a carbon microphone, Morse key, log book, message pads, pencils etc. etc. Due to the severe cold we were wearing army issue woollen gloves. When wearing these it proves practically impossible to hold anything as things just slip out of your hand.

The whole squad of some 30 men were involved in this exercise at different field locations and we just flung ourselves down in the snow, hooked up the power and the aerials etc. and when on frequency netted into the control stations frequency. Fortunately, I was well past the required Morse passing out speed for that discipline and was instructed by my Training Sergeant to go to a certain training room and act as a monitor station. As Del Boy might have said, Lovely Jubbly. Off we went as instructed, and not only got out of the snow but found that there was a fire burning in the grate in the training room.

Now just imagine the environment being the opposite. Hot, steamy jungle, living out in the open without even the comfort of a tent, eating just by a personal "Brew-up" on little fires and living on American "K rations", always assuming that they had not landed behind Japanese lines. "K" rations were meant to be consumed within an emergency 24-hour period and had such a taste that bully beef would have provided a gourmet meal had it been available. Then there was the proximity of the Japs and the risk of a snipers bullet, all that extra gear including a petrol charger, cans of petrol, radio spares, loads of additional wire for aerials, working into the small hours to try to get through on three watts, plus having to rely on air drops for supplies. Please read on and appreciate just what the British Armed Forces (and of course the merchant seamen and members of the various home defence services), did for their country in WWII.

Derek M0BGX

MULE MOBILE QRP THROUGH BURMA

My old eyes were gladdened to read reference to the British Army WS22 and WS19 in the Reverend George Dobbs, G3RJ's regular QRP column in January's RADCOM. During the war and afterwards as a Royal Signals Operator Wireless and Line (OWL) I became familiar with both these wireless sets. The humble three-watt WS22 was our mainstay in the Chindit columns behind Japanese lines in Burma during Wingate's second campaign in 1944. It far exceeded the distances predicted for it in the War Office's official textbooks.

The WS19 was not then on the strength of footslogging units, still married as it was to the tank. Its general use in field radio communications was to come after the war - and extramurally it proved a handy 80/40m amateur radio transceiver.

Such was the nature of our somewhat desperate operations that wireless-telegraphy was our sole means of communication. We were pre-industrially free of any kind of motor transport on the ground. The front-line extended always a full circle round us and every last item of supplies was dropped to us by Dakota aircraft, usually by night.

Each battalion was split into two independent columns. With four battalions to the brigade and six brigades to the overall Chindit division, a vast signals organisation was required. Each column was served by a wireless telegraphy detachment consisting of an NCO, three wireless operators, a radio mechanic and two cipher NCOs. Mules carried our WS22, 300 watt charging engine and petrol tanks, and four 140ah 12-volt lead-acid batteries. To load and unload these poor, unwilling beasts was an exhausting time for all of us, desperately tired as we were at the best of times. The mules tried to voice their protest unavailingly; their vocal cords had been removed for security reasons.

We marched all day, bearing our 70-pound packs plus arms and ammunition, and then at night while - sentry duties apart - our infantry companions slept, we kept long and heavy traffic schedules with our rear-brigade base at Imphal, some 200 miles to the west. Their splendid 500-watt BC610s replied to our three-watt 22-sets.

The WS22 was not easy to tune; its meter scarcely registered the slightest sign of RF output. We would run out a counterpoise under the long wire aerial with not much luck. As a nimble 19 year-old and the detachments junior op it was always my duty to scale a suitable tree to hitch the far end of the long wire. Red ants would feast upon me, and when we were in close touch with the Japanese I was in a state of terror in those jungle tree-tops.

Nevertheless, apart from battle casualties, we were always THROUGH (that Certa Cito by-word of the Royal Corps of Signals). In a variety of clandestine operations during that campaign I also used the B.2 set in its incongruous suitcase, and the useful airborne combination Tx76/RX109. But it was the humble WS22 that bore the brunt of all that communicating from the columns. Risking a touch of the invidious, I wonder that Chindit radio communications have never been given full recognition for their outstanding success. Perhaps it's that old "Forgotten Army" syndrome, persisting even to this day whenever the modern television media turns its projectors on WWII. I think that those grand friends of mine who lost their lives out there are long overdue for a word or two of appreciation for their dedication to the duty of being THROUGH.

In retirement I have tried to discover the full picture of the whole Chindit radio communication organisation for the 1944 expedition. Not much has been recorded, not even in the museum archives of Royal Signals at Blandford.

My search continues.

After our break-up, a large assembly of ex-Chindit Royal Signals personnel was addressed by an airborne brass hat just out from the UK. Arrogantly he told us how honoured we should feel to be opted into the 44th Indian Airborne Division. He pooh-

pooled our Burma efforts with an airy wave of hand, describing us as 'mere penny packets of men'. We seethed. Like most old-time British Army officers, this brass hat seemed to know little of the business of radio communications. This meeting took place some months after the Arnhem catastrophe where communications proved a sad let down. We held our tongues.

Does the great success of Burma radio communications compared with the Arnhem foul-up not prove the greater the reliability in warfare of wireless telegraphy over radiotelephony? I wonder.

In civilian life some years after the war I became a ship's radio officer, remaining 29 years in that employment. Initially I enjoyed the services of the Empire Area System with its global coverage. In it I found similarities to that of the much smaller scale set-up in Chindits' radio communications.

In the Burma case, if we could not raise our own base HQ in Imphal, then the acute ears at another brigade's base HQ would have heard us and, after passing the coded security challenge, we would send traffic to him for immediate delivery to our own HQ. This was what happened on the shipping bands. If Portishead radio could not be raised directly then an intervening listening station somewhere in the Commonwealth would accept the traffic for onward transmission, free, landline transmission. The dear old WS19 came into more general use post-war. Its 'B-set' VHF component quite disregarded - it certainly outperformed the WS22, which in its turn had outshone the No. 11 set. As a regular, soldering on in Japan, I was employed on the Brigade to Division rear-link, using a WS19 to Div's answering BC610. It was a joy to be sending and receiving unclassified plain language messages after all that cipher stuff - particularly the damnable five-letters per group kind. My first encounter with 'DX', although at the time I had never heard of the expression, came one night watch in the Brigade signal-office in Matsue on the southwest coast of Honshu. Our night frequency was also used by a United States Army station in Shanghai. There was no mistaking the overloaded BC610 with its see-saw drift and slight chirp. The bug key overawed me but we struck up a friendly association. The American would pause in his heavy flow of traffic to allow me to pass some of mine and I would do likewise for him.

The bare-foot WS19 surprised me in that it could obtain a QSA 5 and QRK 5 report from faraway Shanghai. I didn't need the RF amplifier with which my

WS19 was fitted either. But that was mere chicken-feed compared with what was to come.

After having spent over four years in the Far East, in August 1947 I found myself in Malaya. I had spent a month or two in the UK on 'repat' earlier that year and should really have been languishing in Germany or somewhere near home according to Army Council instructions. Unluckily I fell foul of some old dug-out of a major - the kind usually to be found in some admin post in transit camps in those days. My surname had been mistaken for that of a young NS lad with like surname. He longed for a Far East posting but was listed for BAOR, Germany. My posting was back to FARELF, Singapore. I realised the office error so together we made for the OC's office. As usual, overdue for a haircut, I shifted my beret to the back of my head to hide the fact - a bit too far though. Arriving before His Nibs I received the full blast of his displeasure. Before I could utter a word, I got: "Get this man out of my office! I won't have anything to do with anyone who can't put his hat on properly!"

Ho-hum, I was to be transported for not wearing my hat straight then. The Tolpuddle Martyrs had nothing on me. The hell with it, I hadn't much liked the living conditions I'd observed since my repatriation. They were always squalid in Britain's home-based Army. I might possibly get back to Japan, bless the thought.

In Malaya I was posted to 25 Brigade, themselves just transferred from Brindiv, Japan. There, in Kluang, it was where I first encountered soul-saving Amateur Radio. Brigade Signals ran the club station VX2BX. Oh joy! It was an immediate addiction for me. It was the time of general demobilisation and very soon all of my club members departed homewards.

Each of them took as a souvenir some item from our chirpy 25-watt, crystal-controlled, 20m-only transmitter. All that remained was the WS19 I operated as an outstation on Malaya District radio net. On close-down daily I switched over to 7 Mc/s - the tropical static on 80m was too much. The DX just poured in, the exotic VS2BS callsign hauling in all comers.

Night after hollow eyed night I sat up, working the world. First comers would be the eager W6's & W7's and US Army JA's, then VK's and ZL's followed by ZS stations. Sometimes in the light of tropical dawn I would raise a G station. Ecstasy!

My final year with the Colours, 1953, provided me with operation from DL2PA, Lemgo, on a 52-set.

The hook was firmly embedded and remains as firm to this day. Into such pleasures I was led by the blessed WS22 and the WS19.

© Reg Prosser G4BUS

Note1: The author Reg, grew up in Morden and was associated with the area until he lost his parent's in the 1960's so he can be looked upon as a "local" lad.

Note2: The 4th article by Maurice de la Bertauche is not likely to be available for another four or five months so I thought that perhaps the following might be of interest to your members. I have full permission from the author that it may be published in local newsletters so that if you do publish please send a copy of your n/l to the author

Derek M0BGX

SIGNING OFF:

That is it for this month which turned out to be six pages this time!! - if you get this in time it's VHF NFD weekend so please come up to Nore Hill and help, etc. You will be most welcomed.

Monday 5th July is the Summer BBQ which this year is being hosted by our Chairman Gareth G4XAT, details at the beginning of this newsletter. There is no meeting at the Terra Nova this Monday.

Once again the AGM report is held over (still need to write it up!), and also publish pictures of the recent Club Dinner. I am still compiling the next Club membership list, and now plan to issue it with the next Newsletter, apologies for the delay...

See you all over the weekend and at the BBQ and don't forget the CATS Quiz night on Monday 12th July.

Ray G4FFY
73 and 88 Posted: 2nd July 2004

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