



# SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB

**MAY 2006** — No: 764

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  
 9 Aultone Way  
 SUTTON  
 Surrey SM1 3LD  
 (020) 8644 7589  
 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**

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

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**"A" MEETING 8<sup>th</sup> May 2006 PROJECT CONSTRUCTION EVENING - SPRAT Counter**

**"B" MEETING 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2006 FIX-IT, ADVICE, CHIN-WAG, CLUB STATION + "MOVE-IT-ON"**

Chairman & Club Meetings	G4FDN Pat McGuinness	020-8643 0491
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
Technical Topics	G4XAT Gareth Evans	020-8462 2837
Members	G3RJW Graham Marshall	020-8647 1186
	2E0UY Peter Sutton	07974 296045

## Dear Members & Friends

Hello and welcome to the May 2006 newsletter which I am composing over the May Day Bank Holiday. Another year in the Club has gone by and following the April AGM we now have a new Chairman, namely Pat G4FDN who steps into the shoes vacated by Gareth G4XAT. Bernie G8TB has also decided to stand down from the committee and we welcome Peter 2E0UY. Details have been updated in the list above.

I've just had another MRI Scan at the Royal Marsden and my second Hormone Injection last Friday – it seems to give me a headache for a couple of days and I've noted I am more tired in the evenings. I see the team on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at the Royal Marsden which should decide when the Radio Therapy will start.

For this month, the "A" meeting is on Monday May 8<sup>th</sup> due to the May Day Bank Holiday and is our annual Project Construction Evening. The other meeting this month is the regular "Fix-It" and "Move-It On" Meeting on Monday May 22<sup>nd</sup>. More details on these are given below:

### **NEXT "A" MEETING: Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2006 PROJECT CONSTRUCTION EVENING**

After careful consideration your committee have chosen "The SPRAT Counter", a neat little project for your enjoyment this year. We are once again indebted to Gareth G4XAT who will be supplying all the kits, along with tools we can use on the night. Gareth has supplied the following information:

"...This project was published in SPART, the G-QRP club journal, in the Spring 2005 issue. I think it is yet another example of how the internet is improving amateur

radio, as pursuing the .hex code for the PIC and getting the PCB artwork was all done via e-mail or email reflectors.

Thanks are due to Fred, DJ3KK and Dieter, DL2BQD for the hex code and PCB artwork respectively. They both wish us well with the project. So what does it do? By pressing a single push-button the PIC measures an input frequency and then translates it into CW for you. Tests show it works fine on under a volt of RF and to at least 30 MHz. I think it worked at 40 MHz but my CW is too rusty and time was too short to clarify. The design features variable speed from a few w.p.m. to furious w.p.m., an ability to add or subtract an IF and a number of readout (sound-out??) options. Whatever you choose is saved to EEPROM ready for next time – it can be changed as many times as you like. The output is in the form of an audio signal for feeding into your audio stage, but it will drive a small piezo sounder directly.

The kit is PCB based, ready programmed and supplied with all parts needed for a mere £3. I have had one working on a breadboard so as usual I am happy to guarantee a 100% success rate. A sufficient supply of kits (25) will be available for purchase on the night. To absolutely guarantee yours (remember the PSK31 interface kits that sold out, all 23 of them??), email or phone me to reserve one. I'll write your name on the bag....."

### **NEXT "B" MEETING: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2006 FIX-IT, Advice, Chin-Wag & "MOVE-IT-ON"**

The "B" meeting on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May is 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr 2006 66th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The meeting was opened with 20 members present and apologies from a further two. The minutes of the last 65<sup>th</sup> AGM had already been circulated to members, and these were accepted

As is customary, the **Chairman** Gareth G4XAT gave his report on the past years' activities and thanked the committee and members for their support. The **Treasurer**, Maurice G4DDY, then gave his report concluding that the subs are remaining at their current levels and thanked all the surplus equipment contributors and supporters which help to keep the subs low.

The **Election** was a quiet affair as we had the same number of nominations as committee posts. Firstly, I was re-elected as Secretary (Ray G4FFY), and then Maurice G4DDY as Treasurer. For Chairman Pat G4FDN was elected with Roger G4WAY re-elected as Vice-Chairman.

The remainder of the committee is Graham G3RJW, Gareth G4XAT, Robert M1MRS and we welcome new committee member Peter 2E0UYP.

For the **Awards**, the Johnny Hayden Rose Bowl was presented to Bernie G8TB in recognition of his many decades on the committee; the SRCC Club Cup was presented to Gareth G4XAT and the Sutton Trophy (CW Cup) was presented to Graham G3RJW.



Johnny Hayden Rose Bowl presented to Bernie G8TB



SRCC Club Cup being presented to Gareth G4XAT



Sutton Trophy being presented to Graham G3RJW

**AOB** highlighted the Sutton Model Engineering Club (SMEC) Annual Show Day on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May but it clashes with the Kempton West London Radio & Electronics Show. A discussion on possible trips was held highlighting Chatham Docks, Bletchley Park, and Greenwich Observatory. Mentioned was also given to the forthcoming Wimbledon Camp which runs for a week or so and definitely worth a visit.

Formal minutes will be written and will be circulated to those members on E-Mail; those on snail mail will get them next year prior to the 67<sup>th</sup> AGM.

### LAST "B" MEETING: Monday 24<sup>th</sup> Apr 2006

Due to a work commitment, I was unable to attend the last "B" meeting. Pat G4FDN sent me the following briefing:

"It was quite a well attended evening. John G8MNY brought along an array of test equipment (as usual) this time to help Gareth G4XAT with a problematic frequency counter. I gave a demo of CAT on the FT-817 using FT-817 Commander and also managed to get Graham's G3RJW's little 6" B&W monitor working with my laptop. Roger M0BIN and Graham G3RJW seemed to be busy with Morse practice and testing various keys and keyers.

Pat G4FDN"

### CHAIRMAN'S BLOG - May 2006

"Firstly I must thank those who nominated and voted for me to take over this year as club chairman from Gareth, G4XAT and hope I live up to expectations. I will try and follow in Gareth's footsteps by including a few words each month on my current activities both radio and non-radio.

One thing that continues to strike me again and again is the breadth and depth of experience and knowledge amongst club members and how forthcoming people are in offering help and advice. Recently, I acquired a used English Electric vacuum variable capacitor which I hope to use in a loop tuner project.



English Electric Vacuum Variable Capacitor

A slight imperfection in the glass envelope gave rise to suspicions that the vacuum within may be suspect so I sought a HV flash test as an indication of integrity. Immediately to hand I could source 2kV, but needed at least 5kV for a reasonable test.

Within 48 hours of sending out an e-mail I received three replies offering suggestions/help from Gareth G4XAT, Bernard G8TB, and Graham G3RJW -the latter having a ready 5kV source from an insulation tester. Graham's tester` passed the capacitor so my purchase was not in vain. A discussion with Brian G6ODE at the next club meeting revealed that he had actually been involved with the manufacture of these capacitors and advised that the bellows like coupling to the 'rotor' had quite a limited life and if repeatedly extended between maximum and minimum capacitance a short life could be expected.

My intention is to build a tuner along the lines of that developed by Ben Edginton G0CWT for intermediate size loops (1/10<sup>th</sup> to 1/4 wavelength in circumference). See <http://www.magnetic-loops.info/> for further details. The next task is to fabricate suitable mounting brackets and decide on an enclosure - my initial thoughts being on an IP65 rated non conductive case. The theory relating to intermediate size loop antennas and their efficiency is quite a controversial area reaching almost a level of religious fervour amongst some on either side. My own view is that at best our understanding and theories in this area are incomplete and need more objective experimentation and measurement, but that is best left for another time and place.

I hope to see a good turn out for the next 'A' meeting when we will be assembling the PIC based CW frequency counter - I've put my name down for two kits. Get them while you can. Thanks are due to Gareth G4XAT for organisation and supply of bits for this project.

Regards,  
Pat, G4FDN"

## THE CALENDAR SECTION

### SRCC and Local Club Meeting Dates:

5 <sup>th</sup> May	Crystal Palace: Hands On – Aerials and Feeders @ All Saints Church Parish Rooms, Beulah Hill from 7:30pm. Bob G3OOU 01737 552170 (Meet monthly on 1 <sup>st</sup> Friday) <a href="http://members.aol.com/rfcburns">http://members.aol.com/rfcburns</a>
8 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Project Construction Evening – The SPRAT Counter</b>
8 <sup>th</sup> May	CATS: GB200T – Celebrating Trafalgar with Bob Treacher – Meetings normally held @ St. Swithun's Church Hall, Grovelands Rd, Purley 8pm 2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday's. Contact Andy Jackson G8JAC on 020-8651 2727 <a href="mailto:g8jac@btinternet.com">g8jac@btinternet.com</a>
12 <sup>th</sup> May	W&DARS – My Holiday in Kenya with Joyce Plant M0JCL @ Martin Way Methodist Church, Buckleigh Avenue, MERTON PARK SW20 9JZ – 7.30 for 8pm 2 <sup>nd</sup> & last Friday's Details: Jim M0CON on 020-8874 7456 <a href="http://www.gx3wim.org.uk/">http://www.gx3wim.org.uk/</a>
16 <sup>th</sup> May	Bromley & District – Antenna Working Party - Meetings normally on 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday's @ Victory Social Club, Kechill Gardens, Hayes – 7.30 for 8. Paul M3PGW <a href="mailto:bdars@greenwand.net">bdars@greenwand.net</a> or <a href="http://www.bdars.org.uk">www.bdars.org.uk</a>
18 <sup>th</sup> May	Sutton & Cheam RS – AGM and Construction Contest. Meetings @ Vice Presidents Lounge, Sutton United Football Club, Gander Green Lane, Sutton – 7.30 for 8pm. Sec: John G0BWV 020-8644 9945 <a href="http://www.scrs.org.uk">www.scrs.org.uk</a>
22 <sup>nd</sup> May	<b>Fix-It, Advice, Chin-Wag, Move-It-On</b>

23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Dorking & District Radio Society – normally meet on 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesdays @ Friends Meeting House, Butterhill South Street, Dorking – opp. Spotted Dog. Details: Walter Blanchard, G3JKV on 01306 884359 <a href="mailto:wb@g3jkv.co.uk">wb@g3jkv.co.uk</a>
24 <sup>th</sup> May	Crawley ARC – Spring Surplus Equipment Sale @ Hut 18, Tilgate Forest Recreational Centre, Tilgate Forest, Crawley – 7.30pm. Sec: Keith G8KZZ on 01403 257788 <a href="http://www.carc.org.uk">www.carc.org.uk</a>
26 <sup>th</sup> May	W&DARS – Club Website Technology with Peter Jenner M0PDJ @ Martin Way Methodist Church, Buckleigh Avenue, MERTON PARK SW20 9JZ – 7.30 for 8pm 2 <sup>nd</sup> & last Friday's Details: Jim M0CON on 020-8874 7456 <a href="http://www.gx3wim.org.uk/">http://www.gx3wim.org.uk/</a>
31 <sup>st</sup> May	Mitcham & District ARS (Meetings normally last Wednesday of each month) @ ATC Headquarters, Commonsides West, Mitcham. Sec: Mike Knott G0WCR 020-8764 4716
5 <sup>th</sup> Jun	<b>Summer BBQ at QTH of Peter G3ZPB</b>
12 <sup>th</sup> Jun	<b>VHF NFD Meeting</b> on Site from 19:30hrs, afterwards QTH of John G8IYS
3 <sup>rd</sup> Jul	<b>Construction Contest</b>

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

### Rally Calendar, etc:

7 <sup>th</sup> May 06	<b>West London Radio and Electronics Spring Show</b> – Kempton Park. Talk-in, Icom, Kenwood, Yaesu, Major Traders including Martin Lynch, Moonraker, Waters and Stanton; Short-Talks, Club Stands, Klub Korner, Flea Market, CATS Bring & Buy; etc. Entrance still only £3.50 with tickets on sale from 9am Doors opening 10am see <a href="http://www.radiofairs.co.uk">www.radiofairs.co.uk</a>
14 <sup>th</sup> May 06	<b>Dunstable Downs Rally</b> – Stockwood Park, Luton. Plots £7.50 if pre-booked by 29 <sup>th</sup> Apr else £10 on the day. Entrance/Car Park £2.50 from 9am; See <a href="http://www.ddrcbootsale.org/">http://www.ddrcbootsale.org/</a>
18 <sup>th</sup> Jun 06	<b>Newbury &amp; District Amateur Radio Society Boot Sale</b>
12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 06	<b>West London Radio and Electronics Autumn Show</b> – Kempton Park <a href="http://www.radiofairs.co.uk">www.radiofairs.co.uk</a>
19 <sup>th</sup> Nov 06	<b>CATS Bazaar</b>

### From Our Hayes, Kent Correspondent

"The AGM went well and a good number of you turned out to hear what we have been up to for the last year or so and to vote on sundry matters. The committee are sorry to loose the technical expertise of Bernie, G8TB but of course he remains an active club member and can still be relied upon for technical insight. The alert amongst you will see from the new committee line-up on the website that I have inherited the 'post' of 'Technical Topics'. Before you all inundate me with your problems please remember that I have no formal training in electronics and that I am hopeless at maths.....however I do enjoy the adapt and try aspect of our hobby and will endeavour to live up to the posts' title!!

As I write this I am at the end of a well enjoyed Easter holiday and have lots to report on. Just after the AGM the family took a short break down near Bath so that Joshua could attend his Arkwright scholarship award (see [www.arkwright.org.uk](http://www.arkwright.org.uk)). Arkwright's aim is to encourage and stimulate high ability 15/16 year old students to take up engineering or technological careers by awarding Scholarships during 'A' Level/Scottish Highers which are funded by industry partners and charitable trusts. It was held at Bath University and involved a team challenge (using Lego Mindstorms which Joshua, just happens to be a past master of, if I recall he entered his line following robot in a construction contest a few years ago) and an interview to discuss his GCSE project work and the test paper they set. He reported that it went well and we await the outcome with interest, some time in June. We also enjoyed a tour around the Engineering faculty (one of the top 10 scoring such departments in the country) including a quick look at their formula Student cars (see

<http://www.imeche.org.uk/formulastudent/>) which rather caught his eye. Whilst there we enjoyed a walk up and down the superb flight of locks at Devizes, a visit to a glass blowing/working enterprise, a visit to the Roman Baths (truly amazing, I want a warm spring in my garden please!!) and 'enjoyed' a glass of warm water directly from the source. It tasted rather 'irony' if you were wondering. No ill effects were experienced by your scribe anyway. Soon to be open is a whole new spa/swimming pool complex using the waters (if I recall 250,000 gallons a day at 40+ degrees centigrade!!) and that will be worth a visit. An absolutely fascinating afternoon out, well supported by a take it with you audio tour that speaks each feature or exhibit at your key press. More details can be found here <http://www.romanbaths.co.uk/>.

The next day we visited Longleat, sort of on the way home from where we stayed (Premier Travel Inn, Chippenham, about 2 ½ hours drive from home) and that was really good too. Inevitable the monkeys jumped on the car, much to the children's enjoyment but we also saw white rhino from a mere 2 yards away and of course lions. This included a CD to be played in the car as we drove around detailing the various animals and features. The only down side was the A303 on the way back, with its seemingly endless traffic jams for no visible reason.

Back at home I have been busy on the radio front and have discovered the joys of Elecraft kits (see <http://www.elecraft.com/>). These products are surely the modern 'Heathkit' (not that I ever built any Heathkit stuff) and are available via the wonders of the global economy, or if you prefer, from their agent in Germany. I bought their T1 auto ATU as a kit (cost just under £120, but I can't take it with me....) and I spent an absorbed 3 ½ hours building it. I really appreciate compact 'thought-about' designs and this is just that. A superb piece of kit, very well recommended by me, and others on the e-ham forum. Joshua had planned a mini-expedition for Easter Monday and Tuesday so I needed a portable dipole to take with. I found this site <http://www.ad5x.com/>, click on articles and then portable 40-10 dipole. Thanks to Robin Sykes who supplied some excellent dpdt slide switches and to my MFJ aerial analyser for sorting out the lengths. The high voltage at the end of a dipole was a concern but the designer of the project told me (via email) that he has been running 100 watts through it for years and has never had a problem. 5 watts should be OK then....

For the expedition we carried everything we needed with us, Joshua, Reuben and I, booted, radioed and rucksacked we got on a bus to East Croydon and then a train to East Grinstead. From there we walked 12K to Hindleap Warren where we struck camp and set up the mast (I also took my 12 element ZL special but ended up not using it...), had some tea, lit a fire and played radio. On 20 metres I worked 7X (Algeria) on 5 watts, listened to a heap of East coast US stations and then QSY-ed to 17 Metres where I heard PY2 at good strength (400 watts and a beam). I tried (5 watts) but could not be heard over others. But at least it works...

The evening was spent around the fire, watching the stars (hundreds visible compared to home) and also a satellite scooting across the sky. From its direction Joshua pointed out that it was a polar orbiter (at least they still teach them stuff in Physics!!). Next day we packed up and took a different route back to the station with my pack taking some from Reuben and all of us lighter having eaten most of the food. Joshua's planning was excellent and Reuben learnt to map read and understand the terrain. The route we followed matched the GPS track Joshua had uploaded for me (to check on progress you understand!!) and we arrived at East Grinstead station at about ¼ to 2, reversing the journey home. By 3:30 I was in a hot bath soothing my aching feet/joints etc but felt it worthwhile and a learning experience for us all. Using a well known quote..."a man's got to know his limitations..." well I found (some more of) mine; don't carry 18 KGs on your back for a 8 mile walk!! It was a bit much so I need to look at the contents of the radio package for future trips. It all adds up and where RG174 could replace RG58 and fishing line could replace washing line, savings can be made. Although the pole

and ZL special only weigh 1.5 kgs, it was weight we did not use at the end. Joshua was fine, Reuben said his feet hurt but we enjoyed it really, apart from the lunatic speeds that some people seem to think appropriate for county lanes - that bit was scary!!

The remainder of the holiday has been absorbed working on our electric racer, TSR-2. It is being 're-bodied' in an attempt to improve the aerodynamics and will emerge sleeker, but fatter, ready for the first race this year on 30<sup>th</sup> April at Goodwood (free entry, racing starts at 11 am, until 5 pm). We hope to exceed 180 miles this time....not bad on less than 50 pence worth of electricity, I wish my car was that economical!!



Gareth operating the HF Station on Camp



Evan's Family enjoying the Camp Fire



Out in the wilds with Weirwood Reservoir in background

In the photo above of us out in the wilds with the Weirwood reservoir in the background, you can see the whip Joshua was using for /M operation (we could not raise the West Sussex repeater or any amateurs on 2 Metres!!) on his rucksack and the portable pole on my rucksack. {Ed: Apparently WS was not in operation}



Flight of Locks at Devises



Gareth using the Elecraft T1 ATU (not actually needed but taken just in case)

Gareth G4XAT"

## VHF NFD 2006

Following the meeting held Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2006, and subsequent discussions, the farmer has agreed for us to use the field on the Botley Hill side of the gated lane off Croydon Road (which is what Limpsfield Road becomes near this point). We are seeking permission for an on-site meeting on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June at 19:30hrs. Guidance on the best access route for vehicles has also been requested.

Please advise John of your intention to attend either on 020-8657 0454 or [johns@connectnet.org.uk](mailto:johns@connectnet.org.uk) Those of you who were at the last meeting should have by now received John's write-up.

## RSGB, DRM Vacancies in Region 9

On Tuesday 11th April Paul Berkley resigned from the post of Regional manager for the Thames valley area (our Region) due to personal reasons and work commitments. Dr Alison Johnston (G8ROG) has now taken over this position up to the formal elections for this post later this year. We would like to thank Paul for all the hard work and time he has put into the job and wish him the very best for the future.

Due to the recent changes in the RSGB regional volunteer staffing of the London and Thames Valley area there are now vacancies for the posts of RSGB Deputy Regional Managers (DRM's) within the following districts:

- District 91, North London and Hertfordshire
- District 92, Berkshire
- District 93, North Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire

What's exciting about working in amateur radio is that no day is the same. Every day, the RSGB helps amateurs with a wide variety of enquiries, whether it's licensing, membership or newcomers starting out in the hobby. Whatever the request, we are here to help.

To enable the RSGB to carry out this valuable supporting role, we rely on the goodwill of our volunteers. The work the RSGB does is only made possible through this unique partnership and its people like you, as a volunteer who can make a difference.

Having the opportunity of putting something back into the hobby, passing on your experiences, knowledge and specialised skills is a rewarding and fulfilling experience. However much or little time you can spare as a volunteer, together we can make it count.

So, if you have time on your hands and passionate about the future of amateur radio, wish to help promote amateur radio, support the work of the Society, active and full of enthusiasm, like a challenge, able to travel, able to handle e-mail and telephone enquiries? If you think you fit the bill, then please contact myself or RSGB HQ for further information about a position in your local area.

Contact details are as below and further information can be found on the local regional website [www.region9.org.uk](http://www.region9.org.uk) or the RSGB main site [www.rsgb.org](http://www.rsgb.org) or within the RSGB yearbook.

Local Contact:

Dr Alison Johnston (G8ROG) - Regional Manager, Region 9, London and Thames Valley

Tel: 0118 954 5368 (Evenings - Answer phone available at other times)

e-mail: [g8rog@no-spam-rsgb.org.uk](mailto:g8rog@no-spam-rsgb.org.uk)

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

Tel: 0870 904 7373

e-mail: [ar.dept@no-spam-rsgb.org.uk](mailto:ar.dept@no-spam-rsgb.org.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you

Dr Alison Johnston (G8ROG)

Regional Manager,

Region 9

London and Thames Valley

## Members News

### Hazel Headland (XYL of John G3BFP)



*It is with great sadness and shock that I have the sad task of advising that last Wednesday night, 26<sup>th</sup> April, Hazel died suddenly of a blood clot in her lungs that had moved from her leg. She had been a little unwell for a few days and on the Wednesday evening developed more pain and they rushed her to Mayday Hospital. They sadly were unable to save her.*

*My memories of Hazel are of a happy, cheerful, lively and full of life woman. Hazel will be greatly missed. If any of you have some memories and anecdotes of Hazel please send to me and I'll publish them next month.*

*There will be a private family cremation service at Croydon Crematorium to be followed by a Thanksgiving Service at 2:30pm on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May at The Old Coulsdon Congregational Church, Coulsdon Road, Old Coulsdon. It was Hazel's wish that instead of flowers, donations, if desired, be made to The Old Coulsdon Centre (for the Retired), Grange Park, Old Coulsdon CR5 1EH.*

*All our thoughts and sympathies are with you John and Sally and the family at this very sad time.*

## Orpington 2m Repeater - Correction

In the last Newsletter I quoted the wrong call-sign. I should have given the call-sign of GB3OK. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

## Sun's Next 11-Year Cycle Could be 50 Percent Stronger

WASHINGTON - Sun-spawned cosmic storms that can play havoc with earthly power grids and orbiting satellites could be 50 percent stronger in the next 11-year solar cycle than in the last one, scientists said on Monday.

Using a new model that takes into account what happens under the sun's surface and data about previous solar cycles, astronomers offered a long-range forecast for solar activity that could start as soon as this year or as late as 2008.

They offered no specific predictions of solar storms, but they hope to formulate early warnings that will give power companies, satellite operators and others on and around Earth a few days to prepare.

"This prediction of an active solar cycle suggests we're potentially looking at more communications disruptions, more satellite failures, possible disruptions of electrical grids and blackouts, more dangerous conditions for astronauts," said Richard Behnke of the Upper Atmosphere Research Section at the National Science Foundation.

"Predicting and understanding space weather will soon be even more vital than ever before," Behnke said at a telephone news briefing.

The prediction, roughly analogous to the early prediction of a severe hurricane season on Earth, involves the number of sunspots on the solar surface, phenomena that have been monitored for more than a century.

### TWISTED MAGNETIC FIELDS

Every 11 years or so, the sun goes through an active period, with lots of sunspots. This is important, since solar storms - linked to twisted magnetic fields that can hurl out energetic particles - tend to occur near sunspots.

The sun is in a relatively quiet period now, but is expected to get more active soon, scientists said. However, there is disagreement as to whether the active period will start within months - late 2006 or early 2007 - or years, with the first signs in late 2007 or early 2008.

Whenever it begins, the new forecasting method shows sunspot activity is likely to be 30 percent to 50 percent stronger than the last active period. The peak of the last

cycle was in 2001, the researchers said, but the period of activity can span much of a decade.

The strongest solar cycle in recent memory occurred in the late 1950s, when there were few satellites aloft, no astronauts in orbit and less reliance on electrical power grids than there is now.

If a similarly active period occurred now, the impact would be hard to predict, according to Joseph Kunches of the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's Space Environment Center in Colorado.

"It's pretty uncertain what would happen, which makes this work more relevant," Kunches said.

"What we have here is a prediction that the cycle is going to be very active, and what we need and what we're of course working on is to be able to predict individual storms with a couple days or hours in advance so the grids can take the action," Behnke said.

Story by Deborah Zabarenko - Date: 7/3/2006

Story Source: <http://www.planetark.com>

## SIGNING OFF:

I think that is it for this month - if I have missed anything I give my apologies and hopefully remember it next time. It's great to have two regular contributors - always welcome more.

So for our main meeting on May 8th it is the Project Construction Evening - The SPRAT Counter - and please contact Gareth G4XAT to secure your kit/s. The "B" meeting is on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and don't forget the **Kempton Rally on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May** - it will be good to see you all there - [www.radiofairs.co.uk](http://www.radiofairs.co.uk) for more details.

Regarding the sad news of Hazel I have located this Web Link for The Old Coulsdon Centre (for the Retired) <http://www.occfr.org/>

A final thought - how many of the Club Nets mentioned in the header of this Newsletter are still active? I know that the Sunday morning net on Top Band is very active but what about the 2metre ones? Or is there one I'm not aware of? Can the members please advise me - thanks.

Have found this Web Link for The Old Coulsdon Centre (for the Retired) <http://www.occfr.org/>

73 and 88 *Ray G4FFY* Posted: 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006

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### SRCC Subscription Renewal Form May 2006

Name: ..... Callsign/RS: .....

Address: .....

..... Tel: .....

E-Mail: .....

Member: £8.00 Family: £12.50

Cheques payable to SRCC and send to:

Maurice Fagg G4DDY

113 Bute Road, WALLINGTON SM6 8AE

Tel: 020-8669 1480

