

SOUTH DORSET RADIO SOCIETY

Promoting and Supporting Amateur Radio since 1961

AUGUST 2008 NEWSLETTER

THE CATSWHISKER

*Keeping members and
SDRS events and news*



*friends informed about
since March 1967*

CATSWHISKER DISTRIBUTION – UPDATE

All editions of the Catswhisker that have been published since July 1999 are available to read on our web site at www.g3sds.org.uk but prior to each monthly meeting the latest issue can now only be read from the link provided in the members monthly e-mail. If you are not a life member or have not renewed your membership you will not receive any more e-mails.

It was decided some time ago to abandon postal distribution of all membership correspondence and rely instead on e-mail and the Internet. If you have received a printed version recently that is because you have not provided us with an e-mail address or indicated that you have access to the Internet. Please let us know if you really don't have Internet access and we will try and maintain a postal or personal delivery to you but as this means extra work and expense for the few people who are still willing to help run our Society it should only be as a last resort.

From now on, unless we hear from you to the contrary, we will assume that you are happy to read the Catswhisker on the Internet.

FOUNDATION AND INTERMEDIATE EXAM CHANGES

From the 1st June 2009 there will be changes to both the Foundation and Intermediate exam syllabus. Addition material will be added to both the Foundation and Intermediate course. The Foundation exam will additionally cover conductors and insulators but the major change is to the Intermediate exam. It will now cover some material previously in the Advanced exam, such as alternating currents and voltages. This will significantly increase the technical level of the Intermediate exam. The new syllabus will not apply until 1st June 2009 so any exams held before then will still use the current syllabus.

INTERNATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE AND LIGHTSHIP WEEKEND

GX3SDS AT WEYMOUTH NOTHE FORT - AUGUST 16/17th

WEYMOUTH STONE PIER LIGHT UK0031 (ENG-162)

50°37'N 2°26'W QRA IO80SO WAB SY67

In recent years the Society has taken part in this event from the Nothe Fort in Weymouth. This year ILLW takes place over the weekend, the 16/17th of August and the SDRS will once again be taking part using our club call GX3SDS. Station set-up takes place on Friday afternoon. Contact Graham, 2E1GOQ or Carol, 2E1RBH if you are able to help.



More details and pictures of past events can be found on the main SDRS web site www.g3sds.org.uk and also www.sdrs.zoomshare.com See <http://illw.net/> for more information about this international event.

OTHER LOCAL AMATEUR RADIO EVENTS

NEXT SDRS MEETING IS IN SEPTEMBER

Please remember that we don't meet in August! The next meeting is on Tuesday the 9th of September at our usual venue (see below).

FLIGHT REFUELLING ARS HAMFEST

This year Hamfest is on Sunday the 10th of August. The gates open to the public at 9:30am and the official opening time is 10:00am. Set your GPS to BH21 1RJ. See www.frars.org.uk for more information.

Full details of all UK Radio Rallies 2008 can be found here:
www.hamradio-badarc.co.uk/radio_rallies.htm

NEW D-STAR REPEATER FOR DORSET

A new D-Star digital repeater and gateway, GB7MM, is now operational and is located 2km south of Wimborne. This is the FRARS site where Hamfest is held. The repeater will operate on 145.700 and 145.100MHz (RV56).

See www.monitoringmonthly.co.uk/GB7MM for more information.

SDRS JULY MEETING - DISPLAY OF OLD RADIOS

At the July meeting John, M0BQO demonstrated a number of multi-band transistor portables dating from 1966 to the present day, using a variety of control and tuning methods. They included a Zenith Transoceanic Royal 7000Y, a National Panasonic R22, a Barlow Wadley XCR30, a Grundig Satellite 3400 Pro, and a Sony 2001D (the latter being the set that upon its introduction in 1980 made nearly all of its rivals obsolete overnight, with its bewildering array of circuitry and controls in such a small package). Most of these sets are rather heavy and well built; many have dedicated BFO yet cover just the broadcast bands. They are, in effect, communications receivers dressed as ghetto blasters!



The picture above shows Robert, GORYL tuning a Sanyo RP8880, with a Koyo beside. In the picture opposite Graham, 2E1GOQ pushes one of the many buttons on a Grundig 'Satellite 800 Millennium', a set that is basically an American Drake but in a Grundig box. These were manufactured by the Chinese firm Tacuma and were also sold under that name.



John went on to explain that as with collecting anything mechanical, the radios need to be used, or else switches would fail and locking devices refuse to hold.

SDRS MEETING VENUE

The Society meets on the second Tuesday of every month (except August) at the Chickerell Youth Club Hall.

Directions: From Weymouth, proceed northwest towards Chickerell along the B3157 (Chickerell Road) from its junction with the B3156, Lanehouse Rocks Road (or the Marquess of Granby junction) for approximately one mile. Passing the Army Camp on your left, at the bottom of a dip, turn right into Glennie Way. Follow this road until you pass the Willow Bed Hall on your left. At the bottom of the hill, take the next turning left into Lower Way and then left again into Rashley Road. Ahead you will see the entrance to Chickerell Primary School with the Chickerell Youth Club building to the left. Please note that you have to use the entrance at the side of the building accessed from Fairfield.

BEACHCOMBER'S STORY

Part six of the fascinating autobiographical account of his life and work in the world of music and wireless by the late Ray Shaddick, G1YRS.

All good things come to an end, and I decided to make a change once more. A chance to join another local firm as a Branch Manager tempted me to work for George Mace, a Family firm at Staple Hill. The Branch shop was to be in Filton, but until things were ready for the opening, I helped to clear up some of the outstanding sales that were pending at Head Office. I soon discovered that there were well over 100 customers who had two or three new Television sets left with them for their appraisal. There were only sketchy records of who had what, so I approached everyone with a similar question..."Let's see, I think you have three TV sets on trial" "Oh no, only two" they assured me. Some did admit to having three, one had four! But at least I was able to get them to decide, collect the cash, and the surplus TVs. Some 250 sets were returned to stock, plus the settlement for the one that they kept.

The Mace family were a very trusting organisation; they had little experience of commerce. George had been a jockey at his home at Newmarket, where he had won a Classic race, the 2000 Guineas back in the late twenties. Mrs Mace was a plain and simple Yorkshire woman, but with business sense that kept the two men from giving away their stock and profits.

The Filton branch opened in due course, and was very successful. Despite having a competitor just across the road, I managed to supply most of the district with Television and radio, including all of the local Police force. This was in Gloucestershire of course and as County officers are posted regularly, it became the custom to move their sets and retune them to the local station. This was done without charge, but the gimmick paid off, and a long and happy relationship was built up with the force, most of whom were personal friends.

It was not unusual to see the firm's van being driven by a uniformed officer who had borrowed it to collect the refreshments for the Police Ball, an event that took place annually in the Church Hall at Filton. In return, all Police officers at Filton, and quite a number at Divisional HQ at Staple Hill bought their equipment from me, a point that did not escape my employers, who being at Staple Hill themselves, would have expected to get that business locally. But as I explained to them it all goes into the same till eventually.

After a few years successful trading, another firm at Westbury on Trym made me an offer that I could not refuse. A considerable increase in pay, and the freedom to control buying as well as selling made the job very attractive. After a while, a vacancy occurred in the Office, and the owner approached Irene and offered the job to her. So now we were both working at the same place. The Office and workshops were a short distance away in Westbury High Street. Irene dealt with Rental account records and correspondence, and subsequently helped to organise the workshop and spares for the Engineers.

After about three years, the owner decided that he would like to retire, and offered the business to me. The sum required was beyond my reach, so I went into partnership with the Chief Engineer and our Accountant. As it is illegal for a Limited Company to buy its own shares, we paid ourselves extra wages so that as private individuals, we could buy them, and this was quite all right under the Companies Act. Despite this burden on the profits of the firm, it was achieved quite comfortably, and we could look forward to owning the entire share capital within eight years.

This was not to be, as my two partners had other ideas. The Accountant had been offered the firm of Begbie Taylor Ltd in Park St at a very low price. They were both keen on the idea of having a prestige outlet in the City Centre, and as a minority shareholder, I was unable to block the move. After moving in to Park St, it was discovered that the previous owners, who still occupied one floor of the premises for their Finance business, had a Bank loan of 8000 pounds, and a further overdraft of another 8000 pounds. This was a burden that I was sure we could not support, and after many fruitless attempts to reduce our costs, I resigned my Directorship. Irene was also asked to leave, and from that day we were virtually unemployed, with the security of our house at risk.

To be continued.

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FROM THE CATSWHISKER ARCHIVES

Taken from '40 YEARS OF AMATEUR RADIO' by John Rose, M0BQO

(Published in booklet form in January 2002)

25 YEARS AGO

JULY 1983 - DF HUNT NEWS

Tony, G3YWG was the operator (or hider) on June 12th and was so expert that only one participant managed to locate the transmitter. So Geoff, G8BCH the successful winner can add more points toward the trophy. However the event was not without incident since the Chairman drove his car into a ditch and had to be rescued, whilst Geoff mislaid his attenuator cluster and had to arise at 6 am on the Monday morning and start a solo DF hunt for it! With success I should add - John, G2FNK.

20 YEARS AGO

JULY 1988 - SPANISH ARMADA BEACON

G8SDS/P will operate from Hardy's Monument Beacon Site on July 19th. The beacon will be lit at 10.17pm as part of the chain of beacons stretching from the Lizard to the North of England as it did 400 years ago to warn of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

See here for the full article: www.g3sds.org.uk/sdrs40.htm

SOUTH DORSET RADIO SOCIETY 2008/9 G3SDS G8SDS M2Z

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SDRS Web Site: www.g3sds.org.uk **Pictures here:** www.sdrs.zoomshare.com

SDRG (GB3SD/DR) Web Site: www.gb3sd.radiouk.com

WORDS OF WISDOM

“The church says the earth is flat, but I know that it is round, for I have seen the shadow on the moon, and I have more faith in a shadow than in the church.”

Ferdinand Magellan 1480 -1521

THE CATSWHISKER

Our Societies Newsletter has been called 'The Catswhisker' since its inception. The word is defined thus in the Oxford Concise Dictionary.

cat's whisker n.

a fine adjustable wire in a crystal radio receiver.

the cat's whiskers (or pyjamas) slang an excellent person or thing.

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION

Until a new editor/producer can be found, the SDRS Newsletter is being produced and edited by our President, Geoff Watts, G0EVW.

Please send any material for inclusion in Catswhisker to Geoff using e-mail g0evw@g3sds.org.uk. Or by post to: 46 Links Road, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 0PE. You can also phone or send a text message to Geoff on 07882063782.