

M2Z

M2Z

CATSWHISKER FEBRUARY 2007

G3SDS



G8SDS

**PRESIDENT
GEOFF WATTS
G0EVW**

**VICE PRESIDENT
ROBERT HODGES
G0RYL**

**SPECIAL EVENT STATION
CELEBRATING THE LONGEST
WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY TRANSMISSION
FROM PORTLAND TO GIBRALTAR**

IN 1907

PORTLAND BILL—3RD MARCH 2007

**RE-LIVING THE CONTACT
WITH GIBRALTAR IN 1907**

OPERATING STATIONS

DISPLAYS

**HISTORY OF MARCONI'S
DEVELOPMENT OF
TELEGRAPHY**

(More details to follow shortly)

There is a small Booklet to accompany this Catswhisker



PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

The best man is careful of these things:

His eyes—so that he may observe;

His ears—so that he may hear the truth;

His face— that it may always reflect kindness;

His manners—that they might show respect for other people;

His words—that they may be true;

His dealings with other people—that they may be fair.

THE TRUE VALUE

“Of sentimental value”

Can often be a phrase
Describing the importance
Of a gift in bygone days.

Its cost may not be measured

In sizeable amounts,
But personal connection
Is what really counts.

Thus “sentimental value”

Can often guarantee
It's true worth in recalling
A golden memory

John M. Robertson



**CHAIRMAN
GRAHAM WEBB 2E1GOQ**



Affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

Inspiration for the logo of the front cover came from the late
George Gunnill—G3AVV

Editors Chatter

mm
USE IT OR LOSE IT

IT HAS BEEN SAID BEFORE
AND WILL BE VOICED AGAIN

How often that exhortation is heard these days - theatre, bus route, post office, and the list could go on and on. It's almost part of our modern culture of apathy (which means 'I can't be bothered') and lethargy ('Somebody else, not me').

Here's the crunch - our own South Dorset Radio Society: during the new season, average attendance has hardly reached double figures, yet our speakers have been absolutely top-rate. If you missed November, Rob Micklewright G3MYM gave a most learned and reasoned account of aspects of valve radio technology; December's Christmas bash was most enjoyable; and had Steve White in January.

There are unavoidable overhead costs, to be met by clubs of whatever size, such as Insurance premiums and RSGB affiliation. The Chickerell hall costs us £15 a month, which is a burden on the few members who attend. The hall is big enough for a full meeting, let's try to ensure that is what happens and reduce the risk of apathy killing the SDRS.

Members, it's up to you. Please respond.

NOTE:

There was quite a good attendance figure for Steve White's Talk about the RSGB Year Book. Let's keep it up.

PLEASE HELP JOHN



FINDERS ISN'T KEEPERS!

My Yaesu FT60 handie, which I thought to be securely clipped, fell out of my pocket when I bent down to pick up the dog's ball, but when I missed it a few minutes later, and hurried back to retrace my steps, it was nowhere to be seen.

This was in the fields near Jordan Hill Roman Temple, and the date was Saturday November 4th.

Clearly, someone found it pretty quickly and has so far failed to take it to a Police Station, where I logged its loss.

I call it theft.

There may just be a chance that the finder may discover how to use it (illegally of course) and try to communicate, so should you get to hear anything about this rig, I'd be most grateful to recover it. The serial number ends ..854.

Please keep your ears open!!

Thanks in antic

John, M0BQO

**ANYONE KNOWING OF ANYBODY FINDING THIS HANDIE, PLEASE
GET IN TOUCH WITH THE CATSWHISKER EDITOR.
THERE WILL BE NO QUESTIONS ASKED
COME ON, IT IS CHRISTMAS, SO LETS SEE SOME HONEST SPIRIT
HAND IT IN TO THE POLICE OR CONTACT 01305 820400**

YEAR 2007 SPECIAL EVENT STATIONS

3RD MARCH 2007

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS SINCE THE COMMUNICATION
BETWEEN PORTLAND AND GIBRALTAR
AT PORTLAND BILL, BRANSCOMBE HILL
WHICH LASTED APPROX 1 WEEK

21ST/22ND APRIL 2007

INTERNATIONAL MARCONI WEEKEND
TO BE HELD AT
NEW BARN FIELD CENTRE, BRADFORD PEVERAL,
DORCHESTER

5TH/6TH MAY 2007

WINDMILLS ON THE AIR
(NO ARRANGEMENTS AS SUCH, BUT IF ANYONE IS WILING TO
DO THIS EVENT, THEN PLEASE LET THE COMMITTEE KNOW)

16TH/17TH JUNE 2007

MUSEUMS ON THE AIR
HELD AT
THE NOTHE FORT MUSEUM, BARRACK ROAD, WEYMOUTH

11TH/12TH AUGUST 2007

VICTORIAN WEEKEND AT THE NOTHE FORT
SUPPORTING THE NOTHE

18TH/19TH AUGUST 2007

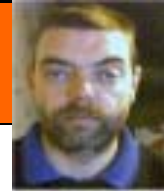
LIGHTSHIPS & HOUSES ON THE AIR TO BE HELD AT
THE NOTHE FORT, BARRACK ROAD, WEYMOUTH
ANY CHANGES IN THIS PUBLISHED PROGRAMME WILL BE

AS SOON AS ANYTHING COMES TO LIGHT
THERE WILL BE MORE INFORMATION AS SOON AS THE DETAILS
ARE COMPLETED

Just a quick note...



Never up to date, unless you up date me.



FROM THE NET MANAGER AND CHAIRMAN
GRAHAM WEBB 2E1EQ

SDRS WEEKLY NETS UPDATE

On going to press the Chairman thanks all those who join in the
Monday Night Net . He would also like to hear more Members join
on the Monday Night.

He would also like to see more Members trying to attend the Club
Nights at Chickerell Youth Club Hall.

Tell us what you want to see or hear, and we will try to provide it for
you. You do not say, we cannot do!

Would you be interested in taking a look at a new, UK based,
Amateur Radio forum at:

<http://sitedreams.com/cgi-bin/radio/ikonboard.cgi>

It's brand new and we'd really appreciate your help in getting it
going. We also have a link exchange scheme to help promote
Amateur Radio websites.

Even if I don't see you there, may I wish you a Happy New Year
for 2007.

Warmest Regards.... Martin.... G8ULV....

**NOTHE FORT
MUSEUM OF
COASTAL
DEFENCE,
WWI, WWII DISPLAYS
AND A LOT MORE
BARRACK ROAD
WEYMOUTH
DORSET**

**THE NOTHE
FORT MUSEUM**



**NOTHE FORT ARTILLERY
RE-ENACTMENT GROUP LOOK
FORWARD TO SEEING YOU
EVERY OTHER SUNDAY
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

**SOUTH DORSET RADIO
SOCIETY SUPPORT THE NOTHE
FORT WITH
MUSEUMS ON THE AIR
LIGHTHOUSE/LIGHTSHIP
WEEKENDS**

CANTEN FACILITIES AVAILABLE

Just a quick note...



73 Trevor M5AKA
<http://www.g0mwt.org.uk/>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY FROM CHELMSFORD AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

THURSDAY—FEBRUARY 8TH—Evening at Danbury—Invite by RPI. 7pm to 10pm. Light refreshments will be available.

WEDNESDAY—FEBRUARY 14TH—CARS—Committee Meeting—Danbury Village Hall at 7.30pm—All welcome

TUESDAY—MARCH 6TH—CARS—Telecomms Over the Years. Alan M0DDT.

CARS AT THE CANVEY RALLY SUNDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2007

NOTE: Radcom Editor Alexander Keams M3LSZ has resigned to take up a commercial appointment. We wish him well

FEBRUARY 2007 CONTESTS FROM Steve G4ZUL

RSGB VHF CONTESTS

4th February—432 Mhz AFS Contest
Starts 09.00 UTC
Finish 13.00 UTC

Sections SF.O. (special rules S3)

Please refer to the RSGB website <http://www.vhfcc.org> for full details of all VHF contests

FOR SALE

Yeasu FT1000 MP HF Transceiver

TX 160—10 Amateur Bands only
RX 100 kHz—30MHz
Modes LSB, USB, CW, FSK, AM, FM
100 Watt output. Auto ATU
240 Volts & 12 Volts

Fitted with extra Yaesu YF—114SN &
YF-110SN Filters
Has not been modified in other way
Hand Mike & Icom SM 20 Desk Mike
(Boxed)
Excellent condition (Boxed) with Manual)
£675.00

----- Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society -----

Support Essex Air Ambulance -
Apply for the Chelmsford Award
See CARS website <http://www.g0mwt.org.uk/>

INVITATION FROM PORTLAND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

**THE CHAIRMAN, DR KERRY MORRIS M0WIK
AND THE COMMITTEE OF
PORTLAND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB**

**REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF THE COMPANY OF ALL MEMBERS
OF
SOUTH DORSET RADIO SOCIETY
SOUTH DORSET REPEATER GROUP
ASSOCIATES OF THE
WYKE REGIS TRAINING CENTRE
AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES**

AN EVENING DINNER

**AT 19.30 UTC ON
THURSDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2007
IN THE
CLIFFTON HOTEL, PORTLAND
TO PROMOTE
NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK**

**COST FOR THE TWO COURSE MEAL WILL BE
£15.00 PER HEAD**

**THE DISTINGUISHED GUESTS WILL INCLUDE
THE MAYOR & MAYORESS OF PORTLAND
MRS HILDA SWINNEY MBE
MR & MRS PETER CLIFFORD (RSGB)
&
MR ANDY DE HAVILAND (RMAC)**

DRESS: CASUAL SMART

RSVP

**NUMBERS MAY BE LIMITED.
THOSE ATTENDING ARE REQUESTED TO CONTACT
KERRY MORRIS OR
ROD WILD 2E0CTS ON
01305 820893 BEFORE 12TH FEBRUARY 2007**

PLEASE MAKE YOUR OWN BOOKINGS FOR THIS INVITE

SECONDHAND LIST UP DATED 16/1/2007

Yaesu FT-2600M 2m mobile transceiver boxed complete £99.00
Yaesu FT-1000MPMK5 200W HF transceiver with PSU
complete boxed £1499.00
Yaesu FT-7100M 2m/70cms mobile transceiver £155.00
Yaesu FT-100MP HF transceiver supplied with SP-8 speaker,
MD-100A8X desk mic. £900.00
Yaesu FT-840 HF transceiver boxed complete £225.00
AR-8600MK2 complete in box £489.00
Yaesu Microphone extension cable £10.00
Yaesu Speaker extension cable £10.00
Heatherlite Neck band microphone for Yaesu £25.00
Microset SR-100 2m amplifier 4-25W in 100W maximum out £169.00
Icom HM-70 Hand microphone £15.00
Icom OPC-440 Mic extension cable (IC-207H) £20.00
Icom OPC-600 Head separation cable (IC-207H) £25.00
6m beam cash sale only £40.00
Midland X50 2m/70cms base vertical antenna £29.00
Kenwood MC-80 Desk microphone £55.00
KW-103 SWR meter £55.00
Icom IC-PS-20 Power supply unit with speaker £120.00
Kantronics KAM PLUS HF /VHF operates modes Pactor, AMTOR ,
Navetex/AMTEX
CW,RTTY,ASCII £220.00
MFJ-945E Antenna tuner £85.00
MFJ-949E Antenna tuner £129.00
Kenwood MC-80 Desk microphone £55.00
Manson EP-925 Power supply £55.00
DL-600 Dummy load £35.00
Heathkit SB-220 2kW amplifier £300.00
G5RV HF wire antenna £10.00

Regards

Jayne

QSL Communications

Tel: 01934 512757

SECONDHAND LIST UP DATED 16/1/2007

Yaesu FT-2600M 2m mobile transceiver boxed complete £99.00
Yaesu FT-1000MPMK5 200W HF transceiver with PSU
complete boxed £1499.00
Yaesu FT-7100M 2m/70cms mobile transceiver £155.00
Yaesu FT-100MP HF transceiver supplied with SP-8 speaker,
MD-100A8X desk mic. £900.00
Yaesu FT-840 HF transceiver boxed complete £225.00
AR-8600MK2 complete in box £489.00
Yaesu Microphone extension cable £10.00
Yaesu Speaker extension cable £10.00
Heatherlite Neck band microphone for Yaesu £25.00
Microset SR-100 2m amplifier 4-25W in 100W maximum out £169.00
Icom HM-70 Hand microphone £15.00
Icom OPC-440 Mic extension cable (IC-207H) £20.00
Icom OPC-600 Head separation cable (IC-207H) £25.00
6m beam cash sale only £40.00
Midland X50 2m/70cms base vertical antenna £29.00
Kenwood MC-80 Desk microphone £55.00
KW-103 SWR meter £55.00
Icom IC-PS-20 Power supply unit with speaker £120.00
Kantronics KAM PLUS HF /VHF operates modes Pactor, AMTOR ,
Navetex/AMTEX
CW,RTTY,ASCII £220.00
MFJ-945E Antenna tuner £85.00
MFJ-949E Antenna tuner £129.00
Kenwood MC-80 Desk microphone £55.00
Manson EP-925 Power supply £55.00
DL-600 Dummy load £35.00
Heathkit SB-220 2kW amplifier £300.00
G5RV HF wire antenna £10.00

Regards

Jayne

QSL Communications

Tel: 01934 512757

SDRS LIST OF EVENTS FOR 2006/2007

13TH FEBRUARY 2007

USING ANTENNA ANALYSER INSTRUMENTS

By Peter Clifford M0PTR
Regional Manager

13TH MARCH 2007

COFFEE AND CHAT EVENING

10TH APRIL 2007

SOUTH DORSET RADIO SOCIETY AGM

8TH MAY 2007

COFFEE AND CHAT EVENING

12TH JUNE 2007

**MY FAVOURITE PC DIGIMODE
& LOGGING PROGRAMME**

By Peter Clifford M0PTR
Regional Manager

10TH JULY 2007

JOURNEAUX

With some of his collection of
Marconi Equipment

14TH AUGUST 2007

TABLE TOP SALE & HOT POTATOE NIGHT

SDRS LIST OF EVENTS FOR 2006/2007

11TH SEPTEMBER 2007

COFFEE AND CHAT NIGHT

Bring along your Holiday Photographs

9TH OCTOBER 2007

SPEAKER TO BE ARRANGED

13TH NOVEMBER 2007

COFFEE AND CHAT NIGHT

11TH DECEMBER 2007

CHRISTMAS DINNER OUT?

JANUARY 2008

COFFEE AND CHAT NIGHT

**IT HAS BEEN DECIDED BY THE COMMITTEE THAT WE
ONLY HAVE A SPEAKER EVERY OTHER MONTH.**

This is to give the Members the chance for a more interactive
association SDRS Members for a chat & cup of coffee etc

**THIS IS NOW GOING TO BE A REGULAR
FEATURE IN THE MAGAZINE AND WILL BE
UPDATED EVERY MONTH DAYS AND DATES WILL BE
PUBLISHED AS SOON AS THEY ARE KNOWN**

****There will be occasions when we will have to change
the advertised programme, this we will do as soon as
possibly known.****

FORTHING COMING EVENTS

AT YEOVIL AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

If anyone is interested in any of these Meetings get in touch with 2E1RBH to see about sharing transport.

Sunday 80 metre SSB 10.30hrs 3.663 freq—**G4PDG** Controller
Monday 6 Metre FM 20.00hrs 51.53 Freq—**G7GGJ** Controller
Tuesday 2 Metre FM 20.30hrs 145.35(S14) - **G8YEO/P(G1EOQ)**

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR YEOVIL

AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY 2007

FEBRUARY 2007

15th—Strength of HF Signals G3MYM
22nd—Committee Evening Station on air

MARCH 2007

2nd—Construction Contest
9th—GB2SLH by G0GFL & M5YLO part 2
16th—Variable Capacitors—M0WOB
23rd—Frequency Accuracy - G6LLP
30th—Committee Meeting

APRIL 2007

5th—Evening Rank/Bush/Murphy Limited
12th QRP Convention Briefing
15th Sunday QRP Convention at Digby Hall
19th—Annual General Meeting
26th—Committee Meeting

MAY 2007

3rd—Ariel's by G3MYM
10th ICO Shack by G3ICO
17th—Hi Fi Amplifier G7LNI
24th—Test Equipment Evening (bring along a piece of equipment)
31st—Committee Meeting

JUNE 2007

7th—Capacitors by Robert G0RYL
14th QRP Convention G3MYM
21st—Foxhunt
28th—Station on the Air

JULY 2007

5th—My First Year as an Amateur 2E0BFJ
12th—Introduction to Morse—G3MYM
15th—Sunday Afternoon Club Barbeque at Ham Hill
19th—What goes on in my workshop—M0WOB
26th—Committee Meeting & Station on the Air

All Members of South Dorset Radio Society, members of the public are invited to these meetings. There is no charge made. Tea or Coffee & Cake are available during the evening. So please come along.

BYLARA LADIES PAGE NEWS AND UPDATES



Bylara Web Site is up and running: www.bylara.net
Information up-date from your Chairman: Carol 2E1RBH



BYLARA NETS

BYLARA (MOBYL) Nets Schedule

Monday 80m 1945 listen from 1930 onwards. Net control Kay G0KTC usually on 3.708 * QRM but can be between 3.680 and 3.710

WEDNESDAY 40m 11.30 Local Time—now on 7.103 ~ QRM

FRIDAY 40m 11.30 Local Time—now on 7.103 * QRM

Net Control both days Irene GM0FTX

With help from Anne M1AIM

If conditions are bad will use the Club Call M0BYL

Or appropriate Regional variation.

YLDX (Triple 2)	14.222 MHz	Mondays	07.00BST
Brazilian YL Net	14.248 MHz	Wednesday	19.30 UTC
CLARA YL Net	14.120 MHz	Tuesdays	17.00z
European YLDX Net	14.242 MHz	Thursday	18.00 BST
Italian YL Net	7.070 * MHz	Mondays	14.00 GMT
Summer—13.00 GMT Winter			
Finnish YL Net		Sundays 80 metres	Phone: 3.688 or 3.710
		CW: 3.533 or 3.522.	No time given.



ACTIVITY DAYS :

6th of every month. Call CQ YL on the hour on frequencies ending 88.

Bylara magazine due out this month, so watch out for it

BOURNEMOUTH RADIO SOCIETY

All Meetings held at Kinson Community Centre on the 1st and 3rd Friday of each Month. Start at 8.00 pm—Meet in Bar 7.30 pm & transfer to Rm5 at 8.00pm

For further information look at Website: www.brswebsite.freemove.co.uk

BOURNEMOUTH RADIO SOCIETY

SUNDAY 11TH MARCH 2007

KINSON COMMUNITY CENTRE

(See further on for more details)

AXE VALE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB (G8CCA)

Club Meetings 1st Tuesday of the Month at “the Old Inn” Kilmington, 1 ‘til 2pm.

Club Nets: Sundays HF 12.30Hrs 80m 3.685Mhz (approx) on LSB

Thursdays VHF 2M 145.450Mhz (approx) FM

NO INFORMATION RECEIVED ON GOING TO PRESS

PLEASE LOOK AT THEIR WEB SITES

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE OPINION OF THE SDRS MEMBERS AS TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

WOULD YOU LIKE YOU MAGAZINE MONTHLY?

YES / NO

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE YOPUR MAGAZINE BY- MONTHLY?

YES / NO

WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR MAGAZINE QUARTERLY?

YES / NO

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN YOUR MAGAZINE?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

ARE YOU WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES FOR THE INTEREST OF OTHERS?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE PART IN THE EVENTS THAT SDRS PUT ON?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

ARE YOU WILLING TO PUT ON TALKS (ABOUT ANY SUBJECT) EITHER TO DO WITH RADIO OR ANY OTHER HOBBY YOU MIGHT HAVE, WHICH YOU THINK MIGHT BE OF INTEREST TO THE OTHERS?

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.....

Please let us know your opinions before the April 2007 AGM, so that we may start the new term 2007/2008 doing what you all want to see happen with your Club

**EVENTS AROUND THE COUNTRY
NOVEMBER & DECEMBER, JANUARY,
MARCH, APRIL, MAY, JUNE & JULY
2006**

3rd December 2006—Bishop Auckland RAC Rally

Contact Mark GOGFG on 01388 745 353 or
Brian G7OCK on 01388 762 678

4th February 2007—South Essex ARS Mobile Radio Rally

Contact Ken (GOBBN) on 01842 861089

18th February 2007—Swansea ARS Amateur Radio Show

Contact Roger (GW4HSH) on 01792 404422

18th February 2007—Spalding and District ARS Junk Sale

Bromley Hall, Pode Hole, Spalding. OT 10.00

3rd & 4th March 2007—M0VOG Radio Club Rally

Email: M1CCF@talktalk.net— On 0208 654 2582
More details : www.firepowerradiorally.zoomshare.com

4th June 2007—Spalding & Dars Annual Rally

Contact Ambrose MODJA on 07989 636 520

24th June 2007—West of England Radio Rally

Contact Shaun G8VPG on 01225 873 098

1st July 2007—Norfolk ARC Barford Radio Rally

Tact David on G7URP on 01953 457322/458844
Or Email: radio@dcpmicro.com

**ARTICLE FOUND BY TONY M0TRW WHILE HE WAS ON
VISITING THE AMERICA
THE CAPE COD TIMES**

**Dated Monday, November 2006
ARTICLE by Doug Fraser (Staff Writer)**

CHATHAM—Affordable housing. Headquarters for a commercial fishing association. A museum dedicated to a once state-of-the-art communication technology that is now outdated.

It's safe to say that none of those uses was contemplated by inventor Guglielmo Marconi when he built the stately brick buildings overlooking Ryder Cove in 1914. Marconi intended the 15 buildings on 104 acres to be part of a global wireless communication network.

The Radio Corp. of America took over operation in 1920, eventually selling it to the MCI corporation, which sold the historic buildings and property to the town of Chatham in 1999 for \$725,000. At the time assessed at nearly \$3 million. The town has been considering what to do with the site ever since. Now, after seven years, it may be closing in on a plan.

Chatham selectmen last month authorized town project consultant Alan McClellan Jr. to begin with three local organisations that submitted bids to renovate and use four of the historic buildings. There are:

*A Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fisherman's Association proposal to spend between \$2.3 million and \$3 million to renovate what is known as the "hotel" into new offices for the organizations, including public spaces dedicated to educational and scientific work.

*Chatham Maconi Maritime Centre Inc.'s bid to raise \$225,685 to \$438,962 to rehabilitate the operations building for use as a marine radio station and communications museum.

*The Chatman Housing Authority's projection that it would cost \$491,654 to \$639,150 to convert two more brick residences into affordable housing.

**THE HISTORIC MARCONI WIRELESS
RECEIVING STATION HISTORY**

1914—Italian Inventor Guglielmo Marconi builds wireless station in Chatham to replace one damaged by weather in Wellfleet. The 15 brick buildings on more than 100 acres resemble a college campus and include offices and an operations centre, a hotel that serves as a dormitory for bachelors, and cottages for families.

The former Marconi wireless station remains the most active marine coastal radio station in the country until 1933, according to the Chatham Marconi Maritime Centre. Historic contacts include communications with Richard E. Byrd's first South Pole expedition in 1928; the Graf Zeppelin in first around-the-world trip by air in 1929; Charles Lindbergh on historic flight across the Atlantic in 1933; last communication with the Hindenburg before explosion in **1939**— one of the first notices of the Andrea Doria's 1956 sinking.

1988— sold to MCI Communications by RCA. Broadcasts and transmission are handled remotely from station in Pt. Reyes, Calif.
1997— broadcasts stop. Role assumed by satellite technology.
1999— RCA sells buildings and property to Chatham for \$725,000.
2001— Two buildings converted to affordable housing.
2006— The town sends out request for bids to use four more buildings.

Sources: Town of Chatham; Chatham Marconi Maritime Centre; www.experts.about.com; www.ptreyeslight.com

The full version of this article are available to read if anyone is interested. Thanks to Tony for bring this to our attention.

**TAKEN FROM THE
"SOUTHERN TIMES"
16TH MARCH 1907**

**"WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY"
FOR THE PAST WEEK CONSTANT COMMUNICATION BY
WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY HAS BEEN KEPT UP BETWEEN
PORTLAND AND GIBRALTAR—THE GREATEST
DISTANCE REACHED
FROM THE BILL.**

**SPECIAL EVENT STATION
CELEBRATING THE LONGEST WIRELESS
TELEGRAPHY
PORTLAND TO GIBRALTAR
IN 1907**

**PORTLAND BILL
3RD MARCH 2007
RE-LIVING THE CONTACT
WITH
GIBRALTAR IN 1907
OPERATING STATIONS
DISPLAYS**

**HISTORY OF MARCONI'S
DEVELOPMENT OF
TELEGRAPHY**



VALVE & VINTAGE
PRACTICAL WIRELESS JULY 1999

IT'S CHARLES MILLER'S STINT IN THE PRACTICAL 'WIRELESS SHOP' THIS MONTH. THIS TIME AROUND HE CASTS HIS MIND BACK TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR WHEN THE BRITISH RADIO INDUSTRY CREATED THEIR VERY OWN 'UNWANTED WAR BABY' - A STANDARD RECEIVER FOR CIVILIAN USE.

Around the time when the Allies were planning to send ground forces into Germany to conquer the Nazi menace, nearly five years of incessant aerial bombing having failed to do the trick, the British radio industry was making plans for the imminent birth of a new baby—a standard receiver for civilian use. The gestation period had been long, about the same as that for an elephant, and, as things turned out it was a white one at that!

Among the many shortages of wartime life in Britain was that of new radio receivers.

While production had not ceased, at least in theory, in practice the resources of the radio industry had been channelled principally into making military equipment and domestic receiver production had to take very much of a back seat.

DOMESTIC PRODUCTION

In April of 1942, 125,000 domestic sets were in course of production. But the restrictions on the use of valves and components meant that by the end of the year, only about half of these had actually been completed and delivered to customers.

At that time, it was reckoned that about 10% of the existing receivers in Britain were unserviceable with half lacking one or more vital parts. These were unlikely to become available in the foreseeable future, and the rest were simply waiting their turns in the dealers' workshops. (This was not surprising, with nearly a quarter of a million sets being taken in for repair each month).

Large numbers of service engineers had gone into the forces, leaving just over 3000 skilled personnel to deal with the repairs, aided by just over 2000 unskilled assistants. This sort of workload would not have been normal, but as it was, lots of time had to be expended on devising modifications to get around the shortages.

The Government had been monitoring the situation closely and because it was well aware of how valuable broadcasting was in keeping the civilian population informed and amused, it was keen to alleviate the famine. At the same time it did not to divert precious materials and production time away from the needs of the military.

The 'famine' meant that by January 1943, the total of uncompleted sets was back up to 125,000, with the prospect of only half of them being completed in the next twelve months.

REPORTS AND RUMOURS

In the early months of 1943, reports (which were really nothing more than rumours) began to appear in the newspapers. The rumours said that 'utility' receiver costing only £7 was about to be put into production.

For the record, the term 'utility' had been coined back in 1941 for any goods—from underpants to furniture—that were made to standard Government specifications.

In March, 1943 the Radio Manufacturers Association discounted the stories saying, in effect, that there was a 'fat chance' of its members producing such a receiver while they had all those existing sets hanging about waiting for parts.

The then President of the Board of Trade (BoT), Hugh Dalton, took the gentle hint and announced that components manufacturers had been informed that parts of the uncompleted sets and for repair work must be given equal priority with the normal requirements of the Armed Forces.

Connoisseurs of official double talk will appreciate the crafty rider—this did not, of course, place such components as high in the priority schedule as those for special productions for the Government and Forces. By such subtle differences are Government ministers 'got off' 'the proverbial hooks'!

As regards the RMA's denial of the utility set rumours, such statements apparently had about the same validity as they have nowadays!

PROVISIONAL CIRCUIT

Month later, the Association announced that, in consultation with the BBC, it had already produced provisional circuit diagrams for mains and battery utility receivers. It then put the ball firmly in the Government's court by saying that it alone could decide if the project should go ahead.

In July, Hugh Dalton said that the utility sets would be authorised once the existing backlog of part-completed sets had been cleared. That there was little chance of this happening quickly was demonstrated by the fact that Mr. Dalton also announced that arrangements had been made to buy receivers in from America. In fact, these sets did not start to arrive until towards the end of the year.

Meanwhile, one of the popular radio magazines had been asking a panel of experts to cook up what it considered to be the most suitable circuit for a mains utility set. (The circuits announced by the RMA apparently being kept secret).

After dismissing a British version of the German Kleinempfänger as useless, the panel plumped for a three-valve 'short' superhet using frequently-changer, I.f. amplifier and double-diode pentode as detector, a.v.c. rectifier and output. To save copper, an a.c./d.c. power supply was suggested and how close this idea came to the RMA's design we'll see in a moment.

In November of 1943 Hugh Dalton was asked in the House of Commons whether the utility sets were being made. He was also asked if and when they would be on sale to the public.

Mr. Dalton replied that designs had been agreed and the delivery of the necessary materials was in the planning stage, but no sets would be available until the following year. He also revealed that only 14 domestic receivers had been delivered to dealers between June 1st and September 30th of 1943, to which were added about 8000 imported American sets.

SUPREME OPTIMIST

Around this same time, C.O. Stanley, the boss of Pye, was clearly making a bid for the title of supreme optimist of the year by forecasting that 250,000 utility sets would be available by March, 1944. In fact, not a single one was ready by that time. However, a total of 10,000 American sets had now arrived and were in the process of being checked over ready for distribution to dealers, hopefully in the same month. Additionally, and all being well, another 20,000 would arrive in the next three months.

It is interesting to look a little closer at what was being imported. There were 15 American manufacturers who, between them, were going to provide no fewer than 140 different models, the common factor being that they all had to work on either a.c. or d.c. mains (although some a.c./d.c./battery types were included) and that they had to be supplied ready for use on UK voltages.

About 75% of the imported sets were to be distributed via British manufacturers and their dealer networks and the rest through established importers and wholesalers and independent retailers. Dealers in d.c. mains districts were to be given priority.

The buying of the American sets was to be financed by the Treasury (which means, of course, the poor old British tax-payer) and it was laid down that this money had to be recovered in full, since it would ultimately come from the buying public anyone who bought a set would end up effectively paying out twice for it.

DIFFERENT CLASSES

Four different classes of receivers were brought over. The first was made up of the smallest midgets with up to five valves, covering medium waves only and housed in moulded cabinets.

The maximum price charged to the wholesaler or radio manufacturer £5.17s.0d, the price to the retailer was £6.16s.0d, and the customer paid £11.14s.2d. In other words just over twice the dockside price.

The sets in the second class were similar to those in the first class, but they had wooden cabinets and some might have short wave coverage as well. The three respective prices were £6.15s.0d, £7.17s.0d., and £13.10s.0d.

The third class consisted of mostly a.c./d.c./battery types with up to six valves, two wavebands and in moulded cabinets. Prices were £7.13s.0d., £8.18s.0d. And £15.15s.10d.

The fourth class had similar specifications to the third but most had wooden cabinets and some had simple push-button tuning. The prices were £8.11s.0d., £9.19s.0d and £17.1s.8d.

Taking into account the fact that the dockside prices included the original manufacturers' profit and transport costs, the factory prices must have been minuscule.

Incidentally, the sets were sold without any guarantee whatsoever.

MIXED RECEPTION

The American sets met with a mixed reception in this country. There's nothing to suggest that the public disliked them, but the comments from dealers, especially those with the 'posher' agencies, were disparaging in no uncertain terms.

Looking back, it's likely that—to a large extent—sheer blind prejudice prompted the dealer disapproval. And it would be nice to be able to observe their reactions could they see what high prices those despised American 'midgets' fetch nowadays.

In June of 1944, by which time C. O. Stanley was doubtless wishing that he had kept his big mouth shut, the utility sets actually seemed to be on the way. The Government announced that (rather surprisingly) the manufacture and supply of valve operated broadcast receivers was to be brought under control for the first time by the issuing of the Musical Instruments and Wireless Receivers Order. 1944.

Radio Firms would have to obtain licences permitting them to continue manufacturing and supplying sets after 1st July and would also be required to place

with the specifications agreed by the RMA and the BoT. These words must not be removed or defaced by anyone or applied to any other type of receiver.

SPECIFICATIONS THE SAME?

Next time I am looking after the 'shop' I am planning to take a detailed look at these specifications. However, whether or not they remained the same in 1944 as those announced a year before is unclear!

There's traditional scepticism as to the designing powers of committees which is justified to a certain extent by the utility set, especially in its mains version.

Technically, a great deal of thought had gone into them but some basic common sense appears to have been lacking.

A remarkable amount of time must have been spent on drawing the specifications up, because they were both detailed and stringent. They covered sensitivity, selectivity, overall response, a.v.c. operation and I.f. rejection.

The specifications making the utility sets unique as being the only British domestic radios whose performance can be checked against standard criteria.

THESE ARE TWO VERY MUCH WANTED "WAR BABIES".

CHARLES MILLER TAKES A LOOK INTO THE HISTORY

AND DIFFICULT 'GESTATION' OF THE

SECOND WORLD WAR 'UTILITY' RECEIVER.

2E1RBH OWNS BOTH THESE SETS

AND REGULARLY DISPLAYS THEM WORKING

WITH OTHERS AROUND THE COUNTRY



MY THANKS TO PW FOR THE USE OF THIS ARTICLE

**SOUTH DORSET RADIO SOCIETY
CLUB NIGHT
CHICKERELL YOUTH CLUB HALL**

MAP AND DIRECTIONS ON REQUEST

**THE NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING
WILL BE HELD AT
THE CHAIRMAN'S RESIDENCE**

**ON TUESDAY
27TH FEBRUARY 2007**

19.30HRS MEETING STARTS

CAH



Registered South Dorset Radio Society

Call Signs

G3SDS

M2Z

G8SDS

Contest Call Sign for selective contests.

For more information on the use of these calls,
please speak to a member of the committee.

*South Dorset Radio Society meets on the second Tuesday of every month,
at Chickerell Youth Club Hall, Weymouth. (NEW VENUE)
7.30 for 8.00 pm. No meeting during August.*

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