

March 2004



G3SDS



G8SDS

Affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

March! Only 9 months until Christmas. But what you are all wondering is, when do we all pay our subscriptions again for the SDRS? Answer: Next month. Yes, at the AGM John Rose will be greeting you all with a huge smile and holding out his hand for a few pounds to keep the show on the road. I think we all get terrific value for our money. In case you can't make it to the AGM and want to send a cheque then that's ok.

Right, enough about things like money. I know you all have plenty of the stuff, but we do have to ask the odd one or two of you now and again.

At our last meeting we were treated to an excellent talk and presentation all about the history of the Weymouth Nothe Fort. As our radio society uses the fort during the year for special events, we now have a much better idea about the place we will be working from and may be able to pass on some of this information when talking to others on the air?

Don't be shy. I know that when 1st Aid is ever mentioned people think it's not for them. Well it does happen and happens when we least expect it. We join motoring organisations, in case the car breaks

down! So why not learn a little about how to stop yourself or someone else dying in your radio shack?



A bit over the top I know, but accidents do happen and I for one will be there trying to find out how to make a tourniquet to put around someone's neck in the case of a nose bleed and things like that.

Have you made something you are proud of? Or spent ages trying to find the fault on a piece of equipment and finally tracking it down prior to carrying out the repair? Well if so, please bring it with you at the next meeting as we will also be judging bits and bobs for the constructors cup. It's not a case of it's no good to win, it's so others can see that we don't all sit at home in front of the TV every night, but do continue the hobby of amateur radio.

Won't you all be glad when I give up as being the editor? Only April to go and I can stop! But keep the information coming in please.
Thank you all.....

**Neville M5NEV
&
Carol 2E1RBH**

Next Meeting Night Tuesday March 9th

Accidents in the shack and what to do or not to do.



You will be able to take part or just sit back and enjoy the evening.

St John's Ambulance Brigade will make it an evening to remember and also help all of us to avoid the accident that's waiting to happen!

Also the judging for the Constructors Cup

Please bring along something you have made or repaired, it doesn't have to be perfect in any way. What we are looking for is ideas and giving others the incentive to get the soldering iron and test gear out again.

WANTED - TREASURER

John M0BQO intends to stand down from the office of Treasurer of SDRS at the Annual General Meeting in April.

Would anyone who is prepared to take over this role please contact John or chairman Mark for further advice?

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Very Important Message to ALL Members

In the light of the current climate regarding the protection of children and vulnerable adults, consideration needs to be given to the following proposal: SDRS will adopt the guidelines set out by the RSGB.

The appropriate amateur radio training would be carried out under the umbrella of both the SDRS and those that have also adopted the said guidelines.

From The SDRS Constitution.

Objects

The objects of the Society are to:

- a) *Further the well being of every aspect of Amateur Radio.*
- b) *Encourage the free exchange of information concerning every aspect of Amateur Radio and associated subjects.*
- c) *Assist in the training of members who wish to attain an initial licence or upgrade.*
- d) *Promote friendship and co-operation.*

As the survival of any club is paramount to having younger people training and taking up the hobby, this must be considered by the society. The definition of a young person is "under the age of eighteen (18)". Unfortunately in the future all clubs and societies will have to have some form of guidelines which will eventually be enforced by government legislation.

Therefore, the society has to make a choice in a course of action, not only for the benefit of the society, but also for the protection of its members.

This information has been put forward before the AGM as it will give members the additional time required to read and digest the proposal.

The proposal is: South Dorset Radio Society will adopt the Radio Society of Great Britain's guidelines for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

This can be found on the Internet at:

<http://www.rsgb.org/policy/childprotection.pdf>

Protection of children and venerable adults leaflets are available at Neville's shack and at each SDRS meeting. They must be read by all of the society members and anyone involved in training/assisting in the teaching of young persons.

Mark M5MKW (SDRS Chairman)

Ladies only page! Now all the men have to read it!

Hi gang, still do not know whether there are any ladies on the outside of the world of Radio Ham's but that's up to you, because you do not know what you are missing in the long run.

I am getting my radio ready for the Monday Night Net, have tuned it in and waiting with butterflies in my stomach to hear it burst into life at about 20.00 hours. Do not know what I am talking about? Well tune in and listen, you will find out. I really enjoy the relaxed banter of the others that join us on the air. They are nearly all Club Members with the odd outsider (no offence) coming in. Last week it was a young lad who had just moved to the Blackmore Vale area, just asking questions about Radio and introducing himself to us all, it was lovely to hear. Jamie Wrightson (M3WON) joined the Group last week for the first time. He made a few mistakes (as we all do) but muddled on through with everyone giving him tremendous support. I would like to say, "Thank you" to them for their Patience, help and understanding of both Jamie and myself.

I would also like to pass my congratulations to Mervin Bown (M0ESU), Dave McEwen (M0MCE) Phil Bridges (M0PKB) all who passed their RAE and Alan Watts (M3WSZ) and Jamie Wrightson (M3WON). Who all got through their examinations to become Radio Hams or at least well on their way to becoming involved in our Hobby? May it long continue?

M3WON is still at school and has not got a radio of his own to practice on, so he comes over to our house on a Monday Night where he can practice and get some confidence in using the microphone. Learning when and when not to speak, use his call sign and everything else, we all have to learn when we first start to use our Radio Equipment.

Funny story, could not understand why the other day (over the weekend) Robert (G0RYL) was operating; I could not get any reply to my G0RYL/2E1RBH, when everyone else was getting through including Robert. Guess what, I had the microphone the wrong way round. Now how stupid can one get? Well, at least I can laugh at myself, because that is the way my life is, doing things and not understanding why they are wrong, saying things, but not saying them properly, writing letters or typing and not being able to see that it is wrong.

Dropping things even when my head and hands tell me I have hold of them.

If I do not laugh at myself, then I would probably cry.

So it is really lovely when most of the people in SDRS are understanding towards us that have disabilities and to those of us that have to learn our new trade.

So come on ladies please try and join in the Monday Night Net, you cannot do any worse than me, and you can get the enjoyment and friendship that it brings three fold.

73 to all of you, Carol

Might be a good idea?

Hello everyone,

Isn't it great to have the Echolink station running once again ?

As you are aware this is being run by Mark M5MKW.

Although this isn't a profit making venture there are and there will remain to be, certain costs incurred by Mark for the continuation of this mode of transmission.

Mark will be very pleased to receive any donations made to him for Echolink.

I am going to suggest that it be run very much like our repeater, although Mark may have a better way and will of course let us know in due course.

Now a bit about myself,

I am sorry to say that I have now had to give up most of my work via the RSGB due to health problems.

I am unable to give the work justice and although I would very much like to keep going I find it more difficult to continue.

John Illsley G2FHF has kindly offered to take over from me and he's now been appointed the jobs of, Foundation Morse Assessment Officer and Foundation Course Instructor to work alongside Mark M5MKW. Should Mark for any reason be called away or can't manage to do it himself.

John G2FHF has also taken up the post as **Assistant Regional liaison Officer** and will of course work alongside Phil Mayer G0KKL. This allows Phil the option of not having to travel all the way to Weymouth to deal with anything that John can do.

Although I have cut back the work I'm doing, this doesn't mean that I will be off air and as you may be aware, I'm usually listening on the side lines.

All the very best, from Graham M0GAB.

“ON MY AERIAL” (By Radio Rex)

SOUTHERN TIMES FEBRUARY 1927

Listeners-in who keep crystal and tube receiving sets in the same house sometimes complain that they have trouble in getting the crystal set to work properly. The reason is that the crystal set absorbs the energy before the crystal obtains enough to operate it. The same effect has been noticed when two tube sets operate close to each other.

The more powerful set acts as a sort of shield for the receiver with the smallest number of tubes.

SOUTHERN TIMES APRIL 1927

SPRING CLEANING FOR SET

Ought the wireless set to be spring-cleaned with the rest of the family effects? This enquiry has reached me from several sources. I reply “It depends on the cleaner.” I have heard of sets taken down and re-assembled during this upheaval by well-meaning women. The last state of these sets reminded me of my father’s pet model ship, re-rigged with the best intentions by myself and a fellow criminal aged nine, (and you cannot deal with the lady of the house and her accomplices as my father dealt with us.) There was once a housewife who “put back all the wires”, connecting the LT terminals to the HT battery ... but we will not go on with the story: it is too tragic.

Don’t invite trouble: disconnect the set yourself and lock it up - in the safe if you have one. And when the womankind have done their worst, start in yourself. Dust should be removed from between condenser places either by blowing or with a feather or pipe-cleaner. Go over all connections, particularly those of flex. Brighten contacts of switches and keys, applying a knife blade or very fine file (don’t let the metallic dust get into the set.) Then take down the aerial and clean the winter’s deposit of soot off the insulators.

Sent in by John Rose M0BQQ

The good old days! We have never had it so good! *Editor.*

UOSAT Twenty Years in Space - Special QSL



On 1 Mar 2004, UO-11 (aka UOSAT-2) will have been in space for 20 years! To mark the event, AMSAT-UK will be issuing a commemorative QSL card in exchange for listener reports from stations hearing the signals during the month

of March 2004. The reports MUST be made by way of the reporting page on the web site and the QSL card will be in the form of a downloadable "E-QSL".

UO-11 was the second satellite to be launched by Martin Sweeting G3YJO's group at the University of Surrey, and its telemetry beacon can be heard on 145.825 MHz FM using just a handheld rig. There is also a 2401.5 MHz beacon but signal is not very strong and represents quite a challenge. Depending on the status of the satellite, it sometimes goes into 'safe' mode, and the beacon transmitters are not activate for days at a time. The University of Surrey Ground station staff will attempt to maximise the number of days the transmitters are active during March.

An article and pictures about UO-11 and the 'rules' for reports are available on the AMSAT-UK website <http://www.uk.amsat.org/> For further information please post on the UO-11 Forum on the AMSAT-UK web site at <http://www.uk.amsat.org/aukbb/index.php> or contact the AMSAT-UK secretary Jim Heck G3WGM
E-mail: g3wgm@amsat.org

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Intermediate Radio course

*** * * Last chance this year * * ***

If you or any one you know would like to attend the next intermediate course at Wyke Regis, please contact either Mark M5MKW or Neville M5NEV.

As soon as possible please.

We are compiling a list of names and will announce the starting date as soon as we have the right numbers.

If you have already told us of your interest, please remind us as we don't have any details.

Email or phone, details on back page.

MORNING LIGHT

'Tis the darkest hour of the weary night
That heralds the glorious dawn
When the sun bursts forth in fiery might
And another day is born.

Through the morning mists ere the red orb shows
There glimmers one cheering ray,
But only the watchmen sees and knows
The sign of the coming day.

Hear the rousing call ring out to the skies,
"O watchmen, what of the night?"
"The morning cometh" a voice replies,
"Soon, soon shall appear the light."

Written by our anonymous radio amateur / poet.

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U4 MALAWI DX-PEDITION 2004

www.malawi.digital-crocus.com

More about the Dxpediton. How to contact them and the best times to do so. Also what equipment they will be using.

They are pleased to announce that Kenwood (UK) have generously agreed to sponsor them and will be providing the DXpedition with the TS-480HX transceiver. This new HF / 6m transceiver weighs just 3.7 kg yet has a big 200 W output, making it absolutely ideal for DXpeditioning!



Kenwood is also providing its top-of-the-range TS-2000 transceiver to the DXpedition.

The heaviest piece of equipment we're taking is Rich's Acom 1000 amplifier. Our second amplifier, Steve's Louden-boomer, is so light that we'll take it on the plane as hand luggage.



Aerials



- 10m Cushcraft A3S 3-ele beam
- 10m HB9CV 2-ele beam
- 12m HB9CV 2-ele beam
- 12m Delta loop
- 15m Cushcraft A3S 3-ele beam
- 17m Delta loop
- 20m Cushcraft A3S 3-ele beam
- 30m Delta loop
- 40m 2-ele phased vertical array
- 80m Vertical

More information on the radio equipment can be found on the web site, on the page called named 'gear'.

Band	CW	SSB	RTTY	PSK31	FM
160m	1822
80m	3502	3800*	.	.	.
40m	7002	7065	.	.	.
30m	10102
20m	14022	14195	14085	14071	.
17m	18072	18145	.	.	.
15m	21022	21295	21085	21071	.
12m	24892	24945	.	.	.
10m	28022	28495	28085	28071	29580

*QSX 3790 - 3795 EU, 3805 - 3810 NA

Operating procedures

They will normally be working split. Normally this will be over a range of about 5kHz on SSB or perhaps 3kHz on CW - it should never be more than 10kHz on SSB. They will not 'work by numbers' because it only causes resentment and leads to stations calling out of turn (exception: when conditions allow, they will call for the West Coast of USA / Canada by asking for "W6 and 7 and VE7", for example.)

All the operators will give the callsign with every QSO or at least every other QSO. There will be no 'anonymous operating'!

How can you help?

Besides wishing the DX team all the luck in the world, what they would like each and everyone of us to do, is to try and make at least one contact during their time in Malawi. If possible, please try and make a contact on more than one band. All contacts will help them and of course the charities that will benefit from the Dxpediton.

More about this next month.

Our thanks once more to the Dxpediton web master for letting us copy from their web site.

Yaesu FT-817 - A long Term Review

The Yaesu FT-817 was introduced as replacement for the popular FT-290 2m rig but they decided to add HF as well, in doing so Yaesu created one of the most popular radios of all time.

I bought my FT-817 shortly after they were introduced in the UK. My first thoughts of it were what a great little radio but what can I do with 5 Watts?

I tried it on my doublet at home and quickly found that the receive on HF was every bit as good as my FT-920. My first contact that day was Egypt breaking a sizable pileup. It seemed that this was going to be an excellent bit of kit. It is a big radio in a very small package. Obviously the 817 lends itself very well to backpacking and portable operations with portable antennas and I have made many antennas and miniature ATU's. In fact I seem to make a new ATU at Neville's almost every week!

I run it from a 12V 3Ah sealed lead acid battery, which provides adequate power for several hours operating. I have used many different antennas, mostly homebrewed ones, and have made some excellent contacts.

Two of the most memorable were ZL1ABD whilst driving along the A35 on 20m and being called by a VQ9 (Chagos) station one Sunday afternoon while on 17m.

I have done several modifications to my FT-817, the first was fitting the W4RT One Big Punch RF speech clipper into the microphone. This provides a boost in the average SSB output power, reduces the background noise and is well worth buying.

The second modification was the BHI DSP unit, which Santa brought me for Christmas. The cost of this unit is £89.00 +p&p, and fitting. After adding in the cost of fitting and posting the rig both ways to the shop I decided to fit it myself and save £50. The fitting was very easy although there was some very delicate soldering to be done when removing a surface mount capacitor. The DSP unit has absolutely transformed the receive quality and I can now hear stations that were previously lost in the noise.

The final modification was to adjust the power settings. The FT-817 will work with an input voltage of between 6 and 15V, it automatically reduces the output power as the voltage drops. This has been a problem for me as the radio will not produce 5W on voltages less than 13V.

As my battery packs produce only 13V for a few minutes after coming off charge and even my car doesn't get up to 13V with the engine running I was always limited to 2.5W.

I found a modification on www.mods.dk to re-align the power settings and to increase the output power. I was cautious about upping the power to the full 15W as the mod suggested so I have set mine to 10W on the HF bands and left the VHF and UHF alone. I rarely use the 10W setting but it is there if I need it, the benefit of this mod. Is that the radio will now produce 5W right down to 9V, with the lower power settings re-aligned to give 3W and 1W.

I have also built an Ertec ZM-2 low power ATU, which really is a great little ATU. It easily matches almost anything and is well worth buying.

The picture below is of my portable setup on the cliff top at Portland last summer whilst working the Holy Land contest. I have used the FT-817 in several European countries with good effect. My main problem has been trying to find a suitable tree from which to hang a piece of wire, rather than trying to explain to the locals what I am doing.

To make operating easier I have just bought a Buddipole portable antenna, more on this another month.

Jon Illsley G2FHF



Photo by kind permission of Jon G2FHF
The PDF file on the SDRS web site
enables you to zoom right in.

Forthcoming Events to look out for during 2004

6 MARCH 2004

CRYSTAL PALACE R & EC Spring Radio Fair - Bob, 01737 552 170.
[www.members.aol.com/rfcburns]

7 MARCH 2004 **BLACKMORE VALE ARS Valve Day - Free Entry**
10am-16:pm Tony, 01258 860 741. Valves-Early Radios-Talks-Trade Stands
Youth Club Hall, Coppice Street, Shaftesbury, Dorset.

7 MARCH 2004

Vintage Valve Technology Fair - Trevor, 01274 824 816 or
vvt@supanet.com [www.myciunka.supanet.com/VVTF2003]

9th March 2004 **South Dorset Radio Society Meeting**
Accidents in the shack and what to do and not to do.
Judging of the constructors cup & Special Presentation.

14 MARCH 2004 BOURNEMOUTH Radio & Computer Rally
Kinson Community Association Centre,
Pelhams Park, Millhams Road, Kinson

13th April 2004 **SDRS AGM**

Presentation of annual awards

Everyone welcome, bumper raffle, tea and coffee.

Also Annual Subscriptions are Due!
Still the same low price as last year!

16 MAY 2004

MIDLAND ARS Drayton Manor Radio & Computer Rally - Norman,
G8BHE, 0121 422 9787 or 07808 078 003.

6 JUNE 2004

SPALDING & DARS Annual Rally - John, G4NBR, 07946 302 815. [www.
sdars.org.uk]

20 JUNE 2004

NEWBURY & DARS Car Boot Sale - [www.nadars.org.uk]

25 - 27 JUNE 2004

HAM RADIO 2004 - [www.messe-friedrichshafen.de]

27 JUNE 2004

SEVERNSIDE TV GROUP West of England Radio Rally - Shaun, G8VPG,
01225 873 003 (OH), 01225 873 098, shaunosullivan@brea themail.net

27 JUNE 2004

SWINDON & DARC Car Boot Sale - Mike, M5CBS, 01793 826 465.

18 JULY 2004

McMICHAEL Amateur Radio Rally & Car Boot Sale - Dave, G4XDU, 01628
625 720 or g4xdu@amsat.org

8 AUGUST 2004

FLIGHT REFUELLING ARS Hamfest - Mike, G0MJS, 01202 883 479,
hamfest@frars.org.uk [www.frars.org.uk]

17 / 18 SEPTEMBER 2004

LEICESTER Amateur Radio Show - Geoff, G4AFJ, 01455 823 344, fax
01455 828 273 or g4afj@argonet.co.uk

19 SEPTEMBER 2004

LINCOLN SWC Hamfest - [www.hamfest2004.secretbunker.org.uk]



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Listen out !!

'If members hear G3EFK calling on 40m or 80m, particularly late evening, that will be one of our members, 'Lofty' from Winfrith. He would be grateful for a response as he thinks everyone is watching TV in the evenings!'

WANTED

Mr. D. Parsons of Bournemouth is looking for a **Sony PRO-80 scanner**. Any help would be appreciated.
Tel: 01202 422006
Mention you saw this in the 'Catswhisker' please.

SDRS Weekly Nets

Mondays 22.00hrs onwards 2mts on 145.350 MHz.

Thursdays 22:00hrs onwards 6mts on 51.530 MHz

Thanks to Graham 2E1GOQ for running the nets.

Also Echo-Link on 434.525 MHz.
Through M5MKW station when at home!

Next committee meeting is Tuesday 30th March 2004

If you have anything you would like them to discuss, please contact any member of the committee before that date.

Or if you have anything you would like discussed at the AGM Please put it into writing and send to the secretary as soon as possible.

Registered South Dorset Radio Society Call Signs

G3SDS

G8SDS

M2Z

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 Church Hall, Weymouth.
7.30 for 8.00pm. No meeting during August.*

SDRS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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John Rose M0BQO Treasurer 832057
Carol Hodges 2E1RBH Secretary 820400 or 07899815984 Mobile
Richard Brokenshaw M5RIC Committee
Janet Dean 2E1NRQ Committee
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DEADLINE FOR
NEXT MONTH

26th March 2004

Please ensure that I receive your contributions before that date.

All information contained in the 'Catswhisker' including Editorial and Advertisements is printed in good faith. We cannot be held responsible for any incorrect information. The opinions voiced in articles are not necessarily those of the Editor or Publisher.