



SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB

FEBRUARY 2024 – No 978

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Club Website:	https://www.srcc.uk	

MONTHLY MEETINGS NORMALLY ON 1ST AND 3RD MONDAYS 7.30 FOR 7.45pm

Meetings at **St Paul's URC, Croham Park Avenue, Croydon CR2 7HF**

1st MEETING Monday 5 Feb: RSGB video on licence changes, followed by discussion

2nd MEETING Monday 19 Feb: Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat with John G8MNY

SRCC COMMITTEE 2023/24

Chairman & Publicity	G3MCX John Kennedy	020 8688 3322
Vice Chairman	G4LZE Colin Lugard	07533 174388
Hon. Secretary & Newsletter Editor	G3WRR Quin Collier	020 8653 6948
Treasurer, Membership & Liaison	G4FFY Ray Howells	07921 567651
Events	G6JXA Kim Brown	07812 735507
Webmaster	G4FYF Steve Jones	01424 584143
Trophy Manager	G7RUX Jason Gardner	07515 357630
VHF NFD Co-ordinator (Co-opted)	G3ZPB Peter Burton	07989 557888

EDITOR'S OPENER

Dear Members & Friends, welcome to the February 2024 SRCC Newsletter.

Now that the flurry of activity related to Christmas and the New Year is over, life seems to be returning to normality. Here at Mission Control Norwood, with the activity associated with the HF AFS contests done and dusted (see later), I have started thinking about activities later in the year. These include the Commonwealth Contest, HF NFD, VHF NFD and the IOTA Contest. And no doubt others will crop up....

Many of you will recall the excellent May 2022 presentation by Chris Deacon G4IFX on 6m propagation, in which he mentioned that he had been investigating polarisation of 6m sporadic E signals as part of his work towards a PhD. This work resulted in the production of a thesis entitled *Radio Propagation Through Ionospheric Sporadic E* and it is good to report (courtesy of GB2RS News dated 19th January) that he has now been awarded his PhD from the University of Bath. I'm sure the SRCC membership wish Chris our congratulations!

A mercifully short opener this month, so on we go....

73, Quin G3WRR.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

January A meeting (8th) This was something new for us – a “Show and Tell” session in which members come along and give a short (typically ten minutes) informal display and/or description of anything they have been doing recently that might interest other members. Thanks for this idea from West Kent ARS via Ray G4FFY. Items presented were:

Pat G4FDN: Pat said that among his interests were “pedestrian mobile” and digital voice modes. He showed us a Kenwood THD74A handheld which covers off both aspects! It supports three bands (2m, 1.25m [not to be used in the UK...] and 70cm). It is a rugged piece of kit with a clear multi-colour display. It supports a wide range of functionality, with modes that include FM, DSTAR and DMR. He also displayed Anytone D878UV and Yaesu VX5 handhelds.

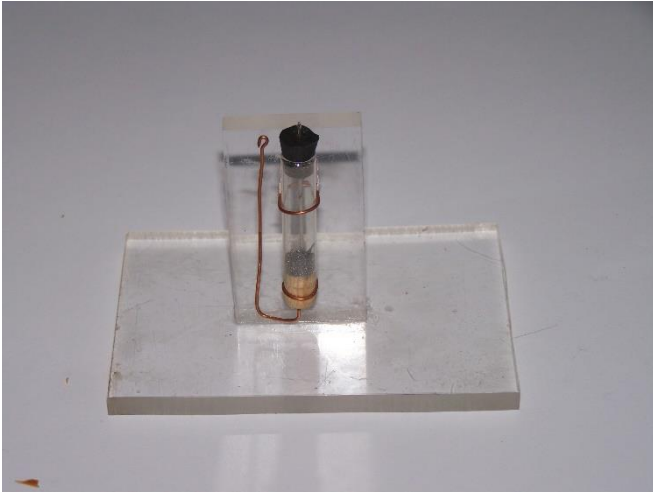
John G8MNY: John displayed a Telequipment DM74 single beam oscilloscope that he had acquired at CATS Bazaar for £5. This had required a certain amount of repair work (fortunately he had a manual) including replacement of the Y output amplifier and a broken knob. Repair was simplified by some of the components being plug-in. John noted that on completion of repairs the calibration was within 1% of specification.

Peter G3ZPB: Peter opened by commenting on Pat’s item on portable / mobile operation: he said that in the late 60s / early 70s he had used a Yaesu FT200 (precursor of the well-known FT101) with a homebrew 12V / mains converter to work a VK on 10m from his car at the top of Purley Way. He went on to show his nano-VNA network analyser. He noted that a number of variants existed, one main difference being the availability of versions with either 2.5” or 4” LCD displays: in his opinion the 2.5” screen was a bit small and recommended the 4” He demonstrated its operation by measuring the SWR of a VHF dummy load across a range of frequencies. This item attracted a significant interest as it appeared that several members had nano-VNAs, and it is likely that a dedicated meeting on them would be of interest.

Quin G3WRR: Quin displayed a couple of interesting items that had been found while clearing out Maurice G4DDYs house. One was a coherer, a very early - and seriously insensitive - detector of radio waves used up until about 1910 when it was superseded by the much more sensitive magnetic detector (as used on the Titanic, but that’s another story...). Their operation is based on the fact that when exposed to an RF signal, metal filings will cohere (hence the name) into a solid mass (wonder who discovered that!). He thought that the coherer displayed was not original, a view supported by Pat G4FDN who said that Maurice had demonstrated coherer operation to SRCC in the early 2000s and suggested that this was the coherer used. One facet of coherer operation is the fact that once cohered, the filing stay cohered until decohered, usually by a gentle tap. The second item was believed to be a decoherer - and seemingly original - although the precise modus operandi was not clear. Pictures of both items follow.

John G8MNY: John displayed an Icom IC735 transceiver of around 1985 vintage that had been acquired in non-working condition from Maurice G4DDY. The main problem was found to be a failed on/off switch: apart from replacement of the backup battery and a full CPU reset it works well.

The new format seemed well received, and it was agreed to be complementary to formal talks and short talk evenings and is likely to be repeated.



COHERER



DECOHERER

January B meeting (22nd) This followed the usual Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat format.

FUTURE MEETINGS

February A meeting (5th) Following issue of the Ofcom Statement resulting from their Consultation “Updating the amateur radio licensing framework”, the RSGB has produced a video summarising the outcome as part of the “Tonight at Eight” series. The Statement is important because it affects all of us who hold licences, so the video will be shown at the meeting, and will be followed by a discussion to see how we think it will affect us. For those who want to do a bit of preparatory homework, the Statement is available via the following link:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/category-2/updating-amateur-radio-licensing-framework>

March A meeting (4th) Surplus Equipment Sale – come along and gain money for all that gear you no longer require – and use it to buy more!

April A meeting (8th) Annual General Meeting. Potentially this is a dry topic, but it affects the club and the part the members play in it, so please come along and have your say.

B meetings, Unless specifically advised otherwise, these will continue to take place on the third Monday of the month and will follow the current Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat format.

73, Quin G3WRR

AFFILIATED SOCIETIES CONTESTS – SEVEN DOWN, ONE TO GO....

So far, seven of the eight individual contests which make up the AFS Super League series have taken place, with only the 70cm session to go – and that happens this coming Sunday 4th February from 0900 – 1300 UTC.

The overall club position with one session left to run was 26th out of 59. This puts us at just over the half-way mark – on the upside - not bad for a not particularly contest oriented club. It's interesting that our overall position was considerably higher than that for the individual sessions.

The results of the individual sessions so far are as follows:

SESSION	SECTION	ENTRANT	QSOs	POINTS	INDIVIDUAL POSITION	CLUB POSITION
70 MHz		NONE				
50 MHz	Single op fixed	G3WRR		68877	48/60	19/24
		G4WGE		32714	57/60	
1.8 MHz (CCC)	SSB + CW	G3SRC	36	515	33/51	26/32
144MHz		NONE				
3.5/7 MHz (CW)	400W	G3SRC	255	255	50/71	24/56
	10W	G4WGE	103	103	8/24	
3.5/7 MHz (data)	100W	G4WGE	64	61	87/103	35/44
	100W	G3ZPB	33	29	97/103	
3.5/7 MHz (SSB)	100W	G3SRC	132	129	72/128	33/53
	100W	G3ZPB	66	64	106/128	
	100W	G4WGE	50	50	115/128	
432 MHz	(YET TO TAKE PLACE)					

Watch this space next month for the whole year results....

73, Quin G3WRR

HOW TO PLAN TO WIN A MAJOR CONTEST – AND FAIL.....

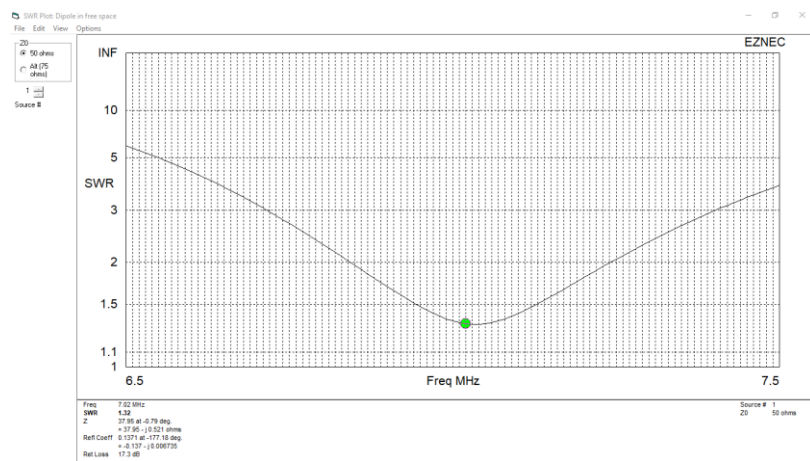
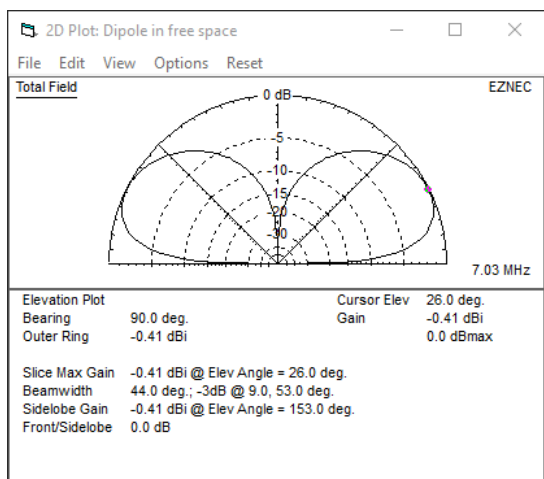
The Commonwealth Contest was referred to in the Editor’s Ramble above, It is still largely referred to by its old name going back to the 1930s, BERU (for British Empire Radio Union Contest). This is a rather unusual contest in that, unlike the majority of contests which these days are tending towards an “anyone can enter and work anyone” format, BERU can only be entered by British Commonwealth stations who can only score points by making contacts with other Commonwealth entrants in DXCC entities other than their own. These days it is regarded as distinctly non-PC in some quarters but nonetheless it remains very popular :2024 will be its 87th year, with 273 entrants and 34 DXCC entities appearing in the 2023 logs. It also introduces a number of unusual challenges – for example in selecting antennas that provide good DX performance on all the non-WARC bands between 80m and 10m – and knowing exactly when to be on them to catch the grey line openings. BERU is a particular favourite of mine – partly because in 55+ years it is the only contest in which I have ever won a trophy, but also because there are always a few keen operators who make heroic efforts to visit interesting (for which read “rare”) Commonwealth countries. For instance, Mike Franklin G3VYI (whom some of you will know from VHF NFD) is this year going to Jamaica to operate as G3VYI/6Y, having in recent years also operated from 5B (Cyprus), 9H (Malta), 9M6 (East Malaysia), VK2 (New South Wales) and VY2 (Prince Edward Island).

Moving from the sublime to the ridiculous, for the last several years I have done BERU from the Isle of Wight where access to a good site right on top of the South-West facing cliffs near Brightstone is available. Unfortunately, the cliffs are mudstone and frighteningly susceptible to erosion – several feet a year when there has been rough weather - and year on year one can see that there is less or less of the site left. However, I am hopeful that the recent awful storms will have left enough room to set up a the station... The majority of the gear is by now well tried and tested - Elecraft K3 with N1MM+ for logging – although a quirk or two seems to show up every year. But I am keen to try something different on the antenna front.

For the last few years I've used a Titan DX vertical but it's quite complex to assemble and erect – particularly single-handed - owing to the complex arrangement of stubs and stand-offs needed to support all the HF bands. (See left hand picture below)



This year I am keen to try something simpler and have been thinking about either a commercial Hygain 14AVQ 40/20/15/10m trap vertical (which I already have) or a homebrew non-trapped multi-band vertical of the type used by Mike G3VYI when he was in Malta (see right hand picture above) which would need to be constructed. Neither of these antennas would be much good on 80m so that aspect will need to be considered too – but one thing at a time.... So far, I have got no further than starting to model these two options (to work out radiation patterns and gains on all five bands) using the excellent W7EL EZNEC program. This is a really useful tool if you are at all interested in planning antennas – or to see how well the ones you already have are supposed to work! Pictures of EZNEC plots showing the elevation pattern and SWR against frequency for a 40m quarter wave vertical follow to show some of the simpler stuff that it can do.



Anyhow I still have a little over five weeks in which to sort things out – so we shall see what happens.!

73, Quin G3WRR

HERE AND THERE

Paul G7VAK has been having a clear out of books, and is happy to donate them free of charge to any club member who is interested. A list of these is attached at Annex A. If you are interested please contact him at g7vak@yahoo.co.uk or 07818 660493 to arrange collection.

SRCC LEAGUE TABLE – DECEMBER 2023

Seven entries were received for the December league table. In the absence of a log from Quin G3WRR (who returns to his usual position of absence) all entrants move up one place compared with November!

ENTRANT	WORKED DXCC / SQUARE	WORKED SRCC MEMBER	WORKED IN CONTEST	POINTS THIS MONTH
G4FFY	66	1	13	147
G3ZPB	44	1	11	101
M0CGF	36			72
G4FYF	21	2		46
M0LEP	11	1		24

The following notes come from the entrants...

G4FFY: *I was unable to partake in the 2m UKAC as being in Leeds, and there was no FT4 HF Contest as that had finished in November. Did, however, operate in the 2m and 70cm FT8 AC's, and also the 50MHz and 70cm UKAC's. After Christmas I did some FT8/FT4 operating with just 10W or less and worked 19 DXCC's, mainly on 40m. As at end-December 2023 I'm still on 160 DXCC's, no new DXCC's were added in December*

G3ZPB: *101 points please! All on data modes this month BUT 2 on "VARA HF", 1 on PSK31, 16 on FT4 and the rest on FT8. The only contest entries were during the 70cms FT8 contest. No new DXCC but I did work stations in Ukraine and Israel (in spite of wars going on) and a comparatively rare GJ0.*

M0CGF: *Heading off to Bangladesh for I expect most of Jan and Feb, so will see if I can play any remote FT8 while I am there. Most of December done whilst out portable, the only exception I believe was the VK who I worked from home. Best DX into Alaska from my car, AM-PRO monoband on the mag mount and 50w from a park in Kent.*

M0LEP: *Here's my entry for December. It won't be breaking any records. It's mostly down to SOTA chasing and SRCC Nets. This time round some of the chasing has been on SSB rather than CW.*

G4FYF: *Lightweight radio activity in December. 40 and 20 meter stuff again. 10 meters still yielded USA, Brazil, Spain, Cyprus. This came my way; forget OBE, MBE, etc gongs, I am awarded the prestigious 'A Hunter of Swiss Castles 2023'.*

[Editor's note: Unfortunately, the certificate didn't copy across, which is a shame as it was very tasteful]

Achieving this wasn't onerous. I worked a (i.e. one) Swiss station purely for the purposes of the league table. A fine accolade I'm sure you'll agree!

Moving on to the final annual cumulative listing, as expected at this time of the year there is no change in positions since November. Congratulations go to Ray G4FFY who is the 2023 winner and gains the SRCC Club Cup.

ENTRANT	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
G4FFY	155	213	95	109	427	394	309	157	214	231	165	147	2716
G3ZPB	43	150	131	94	126	134	59	69	125	111	85	101	1218
M0CGF	70	84	109	110	162		40	102		16	80	72	843
G4FYF	24	38	100	48	30	48	76	50	42	62	42	46	632
G3WRR	63	21		21	32	102	84			12	207		542
M0LEP	71	40	46	26	44	40	12	16	24	28	16	24	355
G7RUX				74									74
G4LZE	46	12											58
G3EUE	10	10											20
G4WGE											2		2

Solar cycle 25 continues to seesaw up and down (but how else would a seesaw move?). However, the smoothed figure shows no clear sign of a downturn so let's keep our fingers crossed. Hope to see you in the league table next year!

73, Quin G3WRR SRCC Leaguemeister

SRCC BANK DETAILS

Would members please note that the Club has moved bank accounts from HSBC to Virgin Money. For those that pay their subs by Standing Order, you will need to amend these please to the details below:

Name: Surrey Radio Contact Club
 Sort Code: 82-11-07
 Account No: 80537013
 Type: Business

SRCC NETS

The following is a list of structured nets on which members of SRCC meet regularly. They are sometimes joined by members of other local clubs, who are always made most welcome. The net is not usually led by a nominated controller, but stations normally transmit cyclically in the chronological order in which they sign in. If any member wishes further occasions and frequencies to be added to the table, please let me know at g.g.collier@btinternet.com.

BAND/FREQUENCY/MODE	DAY OF WEEK	START TIME (clock)
160m / 1905 kHz / LSB	Sunday	9.30 am
80m / 3710 kHz (+/- QRM) LSB	Monday	9.00 am
10m / 28.078 MHz / JS8	Wednesday	10.00 am
6m / 51.55 MHz / FM	Tuesday	8.00 pm
4m / 70.30 MHz / FM	Thursday	8.00 pm
2m / 144.6125 MHz / Digital Voice	Friday	7.30 pm
2m / 145.35 MHz / FM	Friday	8.00 pm

* The Friday night Digital Voice net usually starts with D-star.
In addition to the regular Club Nets, several members monitor the local repeater channels, particularly GB3XP (145.6875MHz 82.5Hz CTCSS FM)

THAT'S ALL FOLKS.....

Apart from Annex 1 (Paul's list of books), that's it for this month. See you next time.

73, Quin G3WRR

CODES & CIPHERS

Codes, Ciphers & other Cryptic and Clandestine Communications
Code Book, The
Radio Hacker's Code Book, The

Fred B Wrixo
Simon Singh
George Sassoon

AERO-SURVEILLANCE

Shadow Flights
Spy Flights of the Cold War
Spies in the Sky

Curtis Peebles
Paul Lashmar
Pat Norris

CLANDESTINE SURVEILLANCE, AUDIO AND CYBER

Bugging
Intercept
M Room, The
Stranger on the Line

John Wingfield
Gordon Corera
Helen Fry
Fitzgerald & M Leopold

MOSSAD

By Way of Deception
Gideon's Spies
Every Spy a Prince
Israel's Secret Wars

V Ostrovsky & Claire Hoy
Gordon Thomas
Dan Raviv, Yossi Melman
Ian Black & Benny Morris

CHINA

Every Breath You Take
Fire of the Dragon
Horse Grows Horns
Tiger Trap (US Secret War with China)

Ian Williams
Ian Williams
Kenneth Sly
David Wise

BRITISH MATTERS

My Life as a Spy
Naked Spy, The [*Christine Keeler Affair*]
Queen of Spies (Daphne Park)
Spy Who Tried to Stop a War, The
Time of Trial [*Refers to Geoff Prime GCHQ spy*]

Leslie Woodhead
Capt. Yevgeny Ivanov
Paddy Hayes
Marcia & Thomas Mitchell
Rhona Prime

RUSSIAN MATTERS

Biological Espionage

Alexander Kouzminov

Breaking with Moscow

Arkady N Shevchenko

Daughters of the KGB
Moscow Rules
Next Stop Execution
Spymaster

Douglas Boyd
Antonio & Jonna Mendez
Oleg Gordievsky
Oleg Kalugin

TERRORISM

Inside al Qaeda
NATO's Secret Armies, Operation Gladio etc
Sunday Times Insight on the Great Embassy Rescue

Ronan Gunaratna
daniele GanserSiege!
ST Insight Team

State We Are In, The
Terror! The West Fights Back

ed. Aftab A Malik
Dobson and Payne

ESPIONAGE, general

A Matter of Trust, MI5 1945-72
A Time to Betray [CIA agent in Iranian Revolutionary Guards]
Blake Escape, The
Disrupt and Deny
Falkland Islanders at War
Games of Intelligence
George Blake, No Other Choice
George Blake Superspy
Historical Dictionary of Sexpionage
Out of the Shadows [Life of CSE Canadian Intel Officer]
Real Special Relationship, The

Nigel West
Reza Kalili
Randle and Pottle
Prof. Rory Cormac
Graham Bound
Nigel West
George Blake
H Montgomery Hyde
Nigel West
Ron Lawruk
Michael Smith

EMPIRE, COMMONWEALTH AND GEOPOLITICS

Empire to Commonwealth 1919 to 1970
India in the Caribbean
Prisoners of Geography [Global Geopolitics]
Washing of the Spears, The, Rise and Fall of the Zulu Nation

JB Watson
ed. Drs Dabyeen & Samaroo
Tim Marshal
Donald R Morris

NOT CATALOGUED

Black Treasures of Scotland Yard, The
Official Encyclopaedia of Scotland Yard, The
Collins Gem Dictionaries:
German
Spanish

Guy R Williams
M Fido and K Skinner

Airport International [Dated]

Brian Moynahan

END